SECONDARY EDUCATION POLICY REFORMS IN NIGERIA: IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract
This paper focused on secondary education policy reforms, implementation and prospects. The area of the study was Enugu Education Zone. Two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. The study adopted descriptive research design. The population of the study was 2205 respondents consisting of 2174 teachers and 31 principals from the 31 secondary schools in the zone. A sample size of 369 comprising 338 teachers and 31 principals was used for the study using Taro Yamane to determine the sample size of the teachers only. All the principals were used while a sample of 338 teachers was sampled using a proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection built in two clusters was a well-structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled Secondary Education Policy Reforms and Implementation (SEPRI). The instrument was structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The instrument was validated by three experts in Faculty of Education and reliability co-efficient ascertained using Cronbach Alpha method and it yielded 0.81 and 0.85 respectively. Mean and standard deviation were used in answering research questions while hypothesis was tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that principals and teachers acknowledged the problems confronting educational policy implementation including poor funding, among others as well as the areas that needed attention for a better future for Nigerian youths as: developing in the students the ability to adapt to the changing world, complete adherence to guidelines in national policy on education, among others. The study concluded that educational policy reforms in secondary education in Nigeria face many problems; however, there is great prospect if only the expected areas of attention could be tackled. Based on the findings, the study recommended that secondary education system needs to be re-oriented to impart a broad repertoire of life skills especially non-occupation and specific practical capabilities achievable through tracking of students into academic and vocational streams.

Keywords: Secondary education policy, reforms, implementation

Introduction

The Nigerian education system has experienced a lot of changes in her educational policy. Education is a potent tool for all round development of an individual or a nation. Education policy is directed towards increasing the quality of life of a people. Hence, Mbachu and Hamilton-Ekeke (2013) noted that education is a process of human enlightenment and empowerment for the achievement of better and higher quality of life; a sound and effective system of education results in the continuous development of learners' potentialities, the strengthening of their skills and the fostering of positive interests, attitudes and values. All progressive societies have recognized the enormous potential of education and have committed themselves to the universalization of education with its explicit aim of providing quality education for all. Thus, the National Policy on Education (2013) stated that education fosters the worth and development of the individual, for each individual's sake, and for the general development of the society. Hence, there is need for functional education for the promotion of a progressive, united Nigeria, to this end, school programmes need to be

relevant, practical and comprehensive, while interest and ability must determine the individual's direction in education (Mbachu & Hamilton-Ekeke (2013). The Nigerian educational system is administered and managed by the federal, state and local governments and governance may be shared between them at varying levels. Federal Ministry of Education handles national policy formation and ensures quality control in all the educational system. It is also responsible for federal higher education. The state governments are responsible for the administration of secondary education and the local government handles the basic education in their domain.

Secondary education is a crucial tier in the hierarchy of education in Nigeria and the form of education that students receive after their primary education The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) defined secondary education as the education children receive after primary education and before tertiary education. It is the intermediate between the primary and tertiary levels of education (Solanke, 2012). The scholar further stated that it completes the provision of basic education that began at the primary level and aims at laying the foundations for lifelong learning and human development, by offering more subjects-or skill-oriented instruction using more specialized teachers because it is the pivot of higher education in that it influences to a large extent the quality of the input and output from tertiary institutions. Simply put, secondary education typically takes place after six years of primary education and it is followed by higher education, vocational education or employment. It is of high priority on the agenda of all governments, who are constantly under pressure to analyze the outcomes of education policy and its implications for management in education.

A policy is a set of ideas or a plan of what to do in particular situations that has been agreed to officially by a group of people, a business organization, a government, or a political party. Ball (2015) defined policy as set of interrelated decisions taken by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where those decisions should, in principle, be within the power of those actors. Olibie, Egboka and Ofojebe (2017) stated that educational policy consists of the principles and policy decisions that influence the field of education, as well as the collection of laws and rules that govern the operation of education systems. Educational policy is simply a set of guidelines or rules that aims at improving the quality of education and performance of teachers at schools, colleges, and universities. It is a specification of principles and actions, related to educational issues, which are followed or which should be followed and which are designed to bring about desired goals in the education sector.

In Nigeria, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) provides an elaborate account of all policies regulating secondary education. The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC, 2015) considers the National Policy on Education (NPE) as a statement of intentions, expectations, goals, prescriptions, standards and requirements for quality education delivery in Nigeria. It is a legal document elaborating on the guidelines, principles, philosophy, procedures, rules and practices regarding the operation of various education systems (Olibie, Egboka & Ofojebe, 2017). As the document is legally valid, it is essential that all educational activities be operated in accordance to it; furthermore, the actions of various stakeholders and actors in education must be guided by the national policy. Iman (2012) observed that this policy commenced as the aftermath of Nigeria's participation in the First Conference of Africa Minister of Education held in Addis Ababa in 1961. Members at the conference adopted a resolution to increase educational prospects on the continent. They realized the importance of education to meet post-colonial and international needs. The outcome of the conference resulted to Nigeria conducting an innovative

curriculum conference in 1969 and formulated policy guidelines on standards, procedures, strategies and coordinating roles for qualitative delivery; these guidelines were in line with Addis Ababa resolutions (Olibie, Egboka & Ofojebe, 2017).

Ultimately, the first edition of National Policy on Education was framed in 1977. The policy was revised in the second edition in 1981, third and fourth editions in 1998 and 2004 respectively. Further revisions were made in 2007 and 2013 as the fifth and sixth editions, respectively. However, the fifth (2007) edition was a draft and the publication of the 2013(sixth) edition was yet in progress after its approval by the 59th session of National Council on Education (NCE) on 28th June, 2013. These and other policy documents are adjunct policies and relevant not only for secondary education but also for all other sectors. The National Policy on Education and associated policies provide the standards to be maintained while altering the educational system. The policy values the role played by education and realizes that it must be sensitive to demands of the changing society. Nigeria evolving society demands newer skills of its citizens and a re-definition of the concept of what constitutes an educated citizen: a self-motivated person with the ability to think, solve problems, and use higher-order intellectual skills to process information and make informed decisions (Nigerian Education Research and Development Council, NERDC, 2015). NERDC stated that the new curricula and standards seek to strike a balance between the quantity of necessary knowledge and skills on the one hand, and the acquisition of intellectual, social and citizenship dispositions on the other hand. The secondary education policies predict functional and qualitative secondary education for Nigerian citizens. It is hoped that secondary education will help an individual and the society at large to respond to the challenges and to take advantage of the new opportunities (Kolo, 2015).

The goals of policy originate from the ideological principles of a nation. A policy regulates the functioning of government and related private institutions, especially in areas catering to services intended to solve a given problem (Mansfield & Thachik, 2016). This is relevant to secondary education where several policy and curriculum provisions are made in the Nigerian NPE. No policy on education can achieve its goals without appropriate policy implementation strategies. The Nigerian policy on education makes it apparent that the Nigerian secondary education system is value-laden and aims at the betterment of the citizens in order that they may live a better life and contribute to the advancement of society (Olibie, Egboka & Ofojebe, 2017). Secondary education is the pivot of our educational system because it is the intermediate between the primary and tertiary levels. It is of great importance because it determines and influences, to a large extent, not only the input to our tertiary institutions but also the quality of the products. Effective policy implementation at the various levels of the education system is mandatory. However, implementation of the policy is always a challenge. For about forty years now, Nigeria has been unable to successfully implement the NPE, the policy which came into existence in 1977, after over four years of deliberations at various levels (Odukoya, Bowale & Okunlola, 2018). This is because there are apparent serious problems in the area of implementation. According to the scholars, some of the challenges include: unequal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at all levels, policy on language, frequent changes in policies, among others. Hence, the scholars stated that the problem in this country is that we often pick and drop policies as we want and that in the US, the two tier secondary school system still operates delivering wonderful results and so there is nothing wrong with the 6-3-3-4 system; rather, our problem is that we simply have not implemented it well and now another system has been picked. Solanke (2012) opined that an important loophole is that those who will implement the policy were not fully involved in the policy enunciation.

It is not the best for a few secondary school heads, bureaucrat and higher institutional lecturers, politicians alone to formulate policy on secondary education without carrying out national research involving a cross section of secondary school teachers. Solanke equally noted that political leadership perception of education is another problem affecting educational policy in Nigeria and most leaders do not take educational investment as futuristic investment, as a foundation upon which the future of a nation is built. Hence, the funds voted for education is consequently grossly inadequate. Secondary education level as important as it is though serving as link between primary and tertiary institutions in the country, in all honesty, has not enjoyed adequate and sufficient attention from the governments at different periods right from the military era to the present democratic dispensation (Nanbak, 2020). Nanbak opined that FG at different times has somehow left this tier of education chiefly in the hands of state governments, voluntary agencies and private individuals. Hence, evidence abounds to show that there is actually poor quality of education presently at this level. Agim (2012) stated that WAEC even indicted teachers for poor coverage of the syllabus by the teachers as well as poor funding which resulted in poor teaching facilities and dilapidated buildings, among others. Ajaja (2010) averred that poorly conceived programmes and poor implementation coupled with world-wide drop in oil prices are the major culprits in the crippling of economic conditions. Garba (2012) also identified and classified the challenges and concerns in the education system into some focal areas as follows: access and equity, standard and quality assurance, strengthening institutional management of education; teacher education and development; technical and vocational education and training; funding partnerships; resource mobilization and utilization.

Other challenges confronting policy implementation in Nigeria according to Joel, Ogi and Ikpe (2019) include: overestimation of available resources, under estimation of cost of implementing a plan, inaccurate statistical data, incompetent staff, lack of political support, conflict, over reliance upon external assistance, among others. Nigeria has experienced several reviews, reforms, innovations in educational policies and programmes. Also, frequent changes in policies and government tend to have negative impact on the policies and programmes of education. Giving credence to the above, Odukoya (2015) observed that between 2000-2016, the nation passed through five different regimes. Within this period Nigeria had litany of ministers, governors, and commissioners with different views on how to administer the affairs of the education sector. This gave rise to inconsistencies that even up till date Nigeria is not moving forward as regards educational policy and programmes. Lack of continuity actually hinders national development. After several revisions of NPE, none of the editions of the policies has adequately addressed the issue of adequate implementation in education (Joel, Ogi & Ikpe, 2019). In every policy programme, there are basic requirements stated for each level of education. These requirements include infrastructures, equipment and instructional materials for learning, personnel to implement education programmes, among others (Joel, Ogi & Ikpe, 2019). The scholars noted that to meet up with provisions of all these facilities, there is need for adequate funds but unfortunately financing Nigeria's education system has reached a crises point that valuable manpower are lost to overseas countries where they are better paid and taken care of.

The importance of secondary education has led to various reforms all aimed at improving the system. This is to ensure that the goal of secondary education is achieved. If reform is made functional it will help the nation to achieve most objectives as noted in the NPE. If the policies and programmes are well funded, implemented and monitored, it will yield desired results (Joel, Ogi & Ikpe, 2019). Government must, therefore, play its vital role by ensuring that policies are implemented and monitored to achieve the desired objectives in education. In identifying solutions to the perceived inadequacies of secondary education in

Nigeria, the need arises to devise a system that will be more effective in helping young people to better realize their potentials at work and to take their place in the society as productive, responsible and democratic citizens. This implies that secondary education must provide effective preparations for those proceeding to academic and professional tertiary education as well as for those entering the world of work as trainees, wage employees or as self-employed entrepreneurs.

Reform means to transform, to restore, to rebuild, to amend to make better, to remove defects from, to redress, to bring to a better way of life, to break up in reorganization, amendment or transformation, especially of a system or an institution (Agim, 2012). Education reform refers to systematic and intentional changes and improvements made to the educational system to address identified challenges, enhance learning outcomes, and promote equitable and effective education for all students. It is the name given to nation's goal of changing public education mainly to meet new priorities and objectives. According to Oviawe (2010), education reform can be seen as a change in education system that may be planned, perceived, conceived, spontaneously realized, induced or deduced to bring about improvement in educational services offered to the citizens. It is an art to improve the educational system by making or causing to happen that which will bring changes and innovations which affect individuals and the society positively (Solanke, 2012). Education reform simply refers to the chronology of significant, systematic revisions made to amend the educational legislation, standards, methodology, and policy affecting a nation's public school system to reflect the needs and values of contemporary societal goal of changing public education in terms of educational theory and practice.

Nigerian education system has been in the process of restructuring. The process has witnessed several reforms, for instance, the education system moved from 6-5-4 system of education to 6-6-4 system, then from 6-6-4 to 6-3-3-4 system, and lastly from 6-3-3-4 system to 9-3-4 system of education which is presently being operated. These education reforms involve change in organizational and governance structure, redesign of teacher work, reallocation of resources, but not in improvements in the process of teaching and learning (Oviawe, 2010). None of these reforms has emphasized on curriculum that could lead to effective improvement in the usefulness of the students in the world of work. According to ProctorEdu (2024), education reform initiatives may encompass a wide range of changes, including curriculum revisions, instructional strategies, teacher training and professional development, assessment methods, school funding, and educational policies. The goals of education reform often include raising academic standards, closing achievement gaps, fostering innovation in teaching and learning, and preparing students to meet the demands of the evolving workforce and society (ProctorEdu, 2024). Education reform efforts are driven by research data, and evidence-based practices, with the aim of continuously improving the quality and accessibility of education. Ministry of Education, India (2020) indicated that education reform must ensure quality education within an equitable and inclusive classroom environment that takes care of diverse background, different academic abilities and makes them active participants in the learning process; It must focus less on content retention and more on building critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

Numerous studies have explored the subject of educational reforms in African countries, providing valuable insights into the various dimensions of policy implementation and their impact on students' performance, the outcomes of specific reform initiatives, shedding light on both successes and challenges. The UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report (2020) highlighted concerns about the persistence of substandard education in some African nations despite efforts to improve quality. Factors such as teacher training, curriculum relevance, and

assessment methodologies have been scrutinized to understand their implications for student performance (Alam & Mohanty, 2020). The issue of access to education, particularly for marginalized groups, has been a focal point of many studies. Researchers have investigated the impact of reforms aimed at increasing enrolment rates and reducing disparities in educational opportunities. A growing body of research explores the integration of technology in educational reforms. The use of ICTs in classrooms and for remote learning has gained attention. Studies assess the effectiveness of the technological interventions in improving students' engagement, access to information, and overall learning outcomes (Datnow, 2020). Datnow noted that the role of teachers as key agents in the success of educational reforms has been a subject of investigation and that research has examined the impact of teacher training programs, professional development initiatives, and challenges educators face in implementing reformed curricula, so, it is evident from studies that outcomes of educational reforms are multifaceted, influenced by a myriad of contextual factors. While some reforms yielded positive results in certain areas, challenges persist, necessitating ongoing reflection, and evidence-based policymaking to enhance their impact on students' performance in African nations especially Nigeria.

Many countries today including Nigeria face challenges in the global environment such as those induced by the market, development in ICT and the demands of global knowledge economy. These trend not only affect the shape and mode of operation but also the very purpose of secondary education system. Consequently, the sub-sector faces new challenges which cannot be effectively addressed with obsolete tools. There is need for reforms that can help young people cope effectively with the challenges and enable them develop into productive and well equipped individuals for life and work in the dynamic technology-based knowledge society. There is need for the production of individuals who will be self-reliant and self-sustainable in the society. A system must be devised which will be more effective in helping young people better realize their potentials at work and to take their place in the society as productive, responsible and democratic citizens. This implies that secondary education ought to provide effective preparations for those proceeding to academic and professional tertiary education as well as for those entering the world of work either as trainees, wage employees or as self-employed entrepreneurs. Such educational reforms must necessarily comprise a harmonious balance of academic disciplines, generic practical and social skills, and civic responsibility. The consensus opinion of UNESCO (2004) educationists was that providing sound foundation of knowledge in a cluster of essential generic competencies at secondary school is an effective means of shaping an individual's personality. Curricula contents will consist of core competencies and other optimal competencies depending on the particular needs of the society. The convergence of knowledge and practical skills is imperative for life in the 21st century.

The century is known for increase in unemployment rate worldwide and no hope for young Nigerians. For the better future for Nigerian children, youths and Nigeria as a country, attention must be paid to the following areas according to Oviawe (2010): Information and communication technology(ICT), infrastructural facilities, management, human resources, parental involvement in students learning, marginalized groups, collaboration, among others. Olibie, Egboka and Ofojebe (2017) noted that efforts must be initiated towards setting high expectations for students, increasing students' access to technical education, improving students problem-solving skills, providing work-based opportunities for students learning so that they are actually prepared for useful living and higher education. For Joel, Ogi and Ikpe (2019), attention must be paid to provision of funds for policies and programmes, involvement of competent administrators and curriculum planners, specification of time to work on every policy formulated as well as ensuring that policies are made stable, retention

of reliable data, among others. Other areas of attention include reducing streaming students into areas they have little aptitude, providing the child with different basic/life skills for entrepreneurship advancement and that can enable them function effectively in the society, offering divers curriculum that cater for differences in students talents, among others.

Statement of Problem

So many lofty educational policies have been made in the past and are still being made at present but to no avail. Nigerian educational system has failed to provide answers to the enormous educational issues in the labour market. The alarming rate of graduate unemployment resulting from job miss-match and inabilities to put to effective practice what is learnt in school after schooling speaks volumes. The researchers are therefore suspicious of the implementation phase as the root cause of the ineffective practice and upturn of the educational objectives at the long run. This is because the implementation phase demands the application of educational resources in terms of material and non-material. The researchers are bothered whether attention is paid at the prominent areas that require attention for the realizations of educational reforms in secondary schools in Nigeria as well as whether educational resources and other important factors necessary for achievement of goals are adequately provided at the implementation stage specifically at the wake of new policy review, hence the study.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the challenges confronting educational policy implementation and expected areas of attention for the realization of the policy reforms. Specifically, the study sought to:
1. Identify the challenges confronting educational policy implementation in Nigeria
2. Find out the expected areas of attention for the realization of educational policy reforms in secondary education in Nigeria

Research Questions
1. What are the challenges confronting educational policy implementation in Nigeria?
2. What are the expected areas of attention for the realizations of educational policy reforms in secondary schools in Nigeria?

Hypothesis
There is no significant difference between mean ratings of the principals and the teachers on the expected areas of attention for the realization of educational reforms in Nigeria.

Methods

The design of the study was descriptive survey research design. The area of the study was Enugu Education Zone (consisting of Enugu North, Enugu East and Isi-Uzo Local Government Area of Enugu State. The population of the study was 2,205 respondents comprising 2,174 teachers and 31 principals of the 31 public secondary schools in the three (3) local government areas that made up Enugu education zone. There are nine (9) secondary schools with 9 principals and 990 teachers n Enugu North, ten (10) schools with 10 principals and 861 teachers in Enugu East and twelve (12) schools with 12 principals and 323 teachers in Isi-Uzo Local Government Areas **(Source:** Post Primary School Management Board (PPSMB), Enugu State, 2023)**.** The sample size was 369 comprising of 31 principals and 338 teachers determined using Taro Yamane formula in determining the sample size of the teachers. All the principals were used since their population is manageable. In sampling the teachers, a proportionate stratified random sampling technique was used to sample teachers from the secondary schools in zone to ensure greater representation of the sample relative to

the population. This resulted to a total of 338 teachers representing 123 teachers from Enugu North, 131 teachers from Enugu East and 84 teachers from Isi-Uzo LGAs.

The researchers developed a well-structured questionnaire titled Secondary Education Policy Reforms and Implementation (SEPRI) and containing 35 items as an instrument for data collection. The instrument was built in two clusters, A and B. Cluster A dwelt on the challenges confronting educational policy implementation in Nigeria while Cluster B focused on areas of attention for the realizations of the educational policy reforms in secondary schools in Nigeria. The researchers distributed copies of the questionnaire to the respondents in the secondary schools after being validated by 3 experts with the help of 3 research assistants who were from each of the local government areas. Four-point scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree(3), Disagree(2) and Strongly Disagree(1) was employed in the design of the instrument. The result was analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer research questions and t-test for the hypothesis. The mean score of 2.50 and above was used as the benchmark for acceptance of items of questionnaire, while any mean score below 2.50 was rejected.

Results
Research Question One: What are the challenges confronting educational policy implementation in Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation scores of principals and teachers on challenges confronting educational policy implementation in Nigeria

S/N	Items	Principals		Teachers		Grand Mean	Dec
		X	St	X	St		
1.	Frequent changes in educational policies/programs	3.10	0.83	3.08	0.82	3.18	A
2.	Over estimation of available resources	3.13	0.92	3.12	0.83	3.13	A
3.	Under estimation of cost of implementing a plan	3.32	0.79	3.23	0.83	3.28	A
4.	Over reliance upon external assistance	3.00	0.78	3.15	0.76	3.08	A
5.	Inaccurate statistical data	3.36	0.80	3.29	0.81	3.33	A
6.	Poor funding	3.59	0.50	3.87	0.76	3.73	A
7.	Poor articulation of policies in Nigeria	3.10	0.83	3.14	0.87	3.12	A
8.	Failure to take cognizance of infrastructural /instructional materials needed for implementation	3.13	0.92	3.04	0.85	3.09	A
9.	Inadequate support from governments for eventual implementation in classrooms	3.32	0.79	3.16	0.83	3.24	A
10.	Incompetent staff	3.00	0.77	3.12	0.79	3.06	A
11.	Inconsistencies in the channel of communication	3.10	0.78	3.14	0.82	3.12	A
12.	Insubordination and conflict	3.42	0.72	3.37	0.77	3.40	A
13.	More focus on access than on quality	3.10	0.83	3.10	0.85	3.10	A
14.	Rote learning with less focus on critical thinking	3.13	0.92	3.12	0.85	3.13	A
15.	No focus on creativity/innovation	3.32	0.79	3.17	0.82	3.25	A
16.	System of tracking achievement of learning outcomes is not robust.	3.00	0.78	3.14	0.79	3.07	A
	Aggregate Mean	3.20	0.79	3.21	0.81	3.21	A

Data in Table 1 revealed the mean ratings and standard deviation of responses on the challenges confronting educational policy implementation in Nigeria. Items 1-16 met the criterion mean value of 2.50 and above indicating acceptance of the items by respondents.

Research Question Two: What are the expected areas of attention for the realizations of the educational reforms in secondary schools in Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation scores of principals and teachers on the expected areas of attention for the realization of educational reforms in secondary schools in Nigeria

S/N	Items Directing attention to:	Principals		Teachers		Grand Mean	Dec
		Mean	Std	Mean	Std		
17.	Adequate provision of human resources	3.13	0.92	3.11	0.85	3.12	A
18.	Information and communication technology	3.32	0.79	3.16	0.84	3.24	A
19.	Developing in the students the ability to adapt to the changing world	3.00	0.78	3.13	0.77	3.07	A
20.	Adequate funding of education	3.36	0.80	3.33	0.81	3.35	A
21.	Adequate provision of infrastructural facilities	2.59	0.50	2.85	0.73	2.72	A
22.	Collaboration of both local, state and federal governments	3.10	0.83	3.12	0.85	3.11	A
23.	Reducing the possibility of streaming students into areas which they have little aptitude	3.19	0.75	3.20	0.77	3.20	A
24.	Involvement of parents in the children's learning	3.36	0.80	3.39	0.75	3.38	A
25.	Collaboration with non-governmental organizations	3.00	0.86	3.03	0.84	3.02	A
26.	Collaboration with town unions/private sector	3.07	0.89	3.19	0.82	3.15	A
27.	Directing the students to a better state of preparedness for higher education	3.07	0.89	3.23	0.79	3.15	A
28.	Complete adherence to guidelines in national policy on education	3.23	0.76	3.03	0.83	3.13	A
29.	Raising children who can think independently and creative	3.42	0.85	3.30	0.79	3.36	A
30.	Emphasis on acquisition of creative or critical skills	3.36	0.80	3.35	0.81	3.36	A
31.	Providing the child with different basic skills for entrepreneurship advancement	3.39	0.75	3.66	0.77	3.53	A
32.	Nurturing in them life-long learning skills	3.00	0.80	3.16	0.88	3.08	A
33.	Offering different curriculum that can cater for the differences in the students talents	2.59	0.50	2.80	0.70	2.70	A
34	Developing in the students life skills that can enable them function effectively in the society	3.32	0.79	3.20	0.82	3.26	
35.	Channeling students into vocational streams that can nurture creativity in them	3.42	0.72	3.29	0.77	3.36	
	Aggregate Mean	**3.36**	**0.80**	**3.35**	**0.81**	**3.36**	

Data in Table 2 revealed the mean ratings and standard deviation of responses on the expected areas of attention for the realization of the educational reforms in secondary schools in Nigeria. Items 17-35 met the criterion mean value of 2.50 and above indicating acceptance of the items by respondents.

Ho: There is no significant difference between mean scores of principals and teachers on the expected areas of attention for the realization of educational reforms in secondary schools in Nigeria

Table 3: t- test of two samples assuming equal variance of principals and teachers on the expected areas of attention for the realizations of the educational reforms in secondary schools in Nigeria

Status	N	X	SD	DF	t-value	t-crit. value	p-value	Alpha (α)
Principals	31	3.36	0.80	367	-1.36	1.96	0.18	0.05
Teachers	338	3.35	0.81					
Total	369	6.71	1.61					

Result in Table 3 showed that 31 principals and 338 teachers have mean ratings and standard deviations of 3.36 and 3.35 and 0.80, and 0.81 respectively. The degree of freedom of principals and teachers is 367 while their calculated t-test is -1.36 lower than the t-test critical value of 1.96 from t-distribution table. The p-value of 0.18 is higher than Alpha (α) 0.05 level of significance and the implication is that the t-test analysis failed to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, it concludes that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings and standard deviations of principals and teachers on the expected areas of attention for the realizations of the educational reforms in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed the challenges confronting educational policy implementation in Nigeria to include: Frequent changes in educational policies/programs, over estimation of available resources, failure to take cognizance of infrastructural and instructional materials needed for implementation, poor funding of education, focusing more on access instead of on quality, rote learning with less focus on critical thinking, less focus on creativity and innovation, among other ones. This actually indicates that all the items were agreed upon by both the principals and the teachers as the major problems confronting effective implementation of secondary education policies and reforms in Nigeria. These findings give credence to the articulations of Joel, Ogi and Ikpe (2019) who stated that many problems associated with policy implementation include: overestimation of available resources, inaccurate statistical data, incompetent staff, lack of political support, conflict, over reliance upon external assistance, among others. Also, Garba (2012) opined that implementation problems include: access and equity, standard and quality assurance, strengthening institutional management of education; teacher education and development; technical and vocational education and training; funding partnerships; resource mobilization and utilization. Equally giving credence to the findings, Odukoya (2015) observed that the frequent changes in government in Nigeria result to different leaders with different conceptions and policies on education for implementation and this actually result to inconsistencies that till date Nigeria is still battling with success education policy implementation.

The findings of this study also revealed that the expected areas of attention for the realizations of educational reforms in secondary schools in Nigeria include: adequate provision of human resources, information and communication technology, developing in students the critical thinking skills and ability to adapt to the changing world, adequate provision of infrastructural facilities, collaboration of both local, state and federal government/with non-governmental organizations, reduction of the possibility of streamlining students into areas which they have little aptitude, among others. The findings of the study is in line with Oviawe (2010) who stated that for a better future for Nigerian youths in education, attention must be paid to the following areas: Information and communication technology(ICT), infrastructural facilities, human resources, parental involvement in students

learning, marginalized groups, collaboration, among others Also, Olibie, Egboka and Ofojebe, (2017) noted that efforts must be initiated towards setting high expectations for students, increasing students access to technical students, improving students problem-solving skills, providing work-based opportunities for students learning so that the students are actually prepared for useful living and higher education. Joel, Ogi and Ikpe (2019) equally averred that attention must be paid to provision of funds for policies and programmes, involvement of competent administrators and curriculum planners, specification of time to work on every policy formulated as well as ensuring that policies are made stable, retention of reliable data, among others. The test of hypothesis showed that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of principals and teachers on the expected areas of attention for the realization of educational reforms in secondary schools in Nigeria.

Conclusion

It is obvious that educational policy reforms in secondary education in Nigeria face many challenges, however, there is great prospect if only the expected areas of attention could be analyzed, adopted and judiciously implemented. When policies that ought to be the road maps that guide the education sector of any nation are not fully or effectively implemented, that nation is so far from developing economically, politically and technologically and its dreams towards transformation will remain unachieved. Recommendations

1. Secondary education system needs to be re-oriented to impart a broad repertoire of life skills especially non-occupation-specific practical capabilities achievable through tracking of students into academic and vocational streams.
2. More funds should be allocated not only for the provision of infrastructural facilities in secondary schools but also it will help for sensitization workshops for teachers on the newly reviewed curriculum and for proper implementation of educational policies and evaluation of outcome
3. Government should encourage a teamwork between the policy planners and the policy implementers.

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