

Managing School Plant for Effective Service Delivery in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State of Nigeria

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Abstract The paper defined public secondary schools as schools which are catered for by the Rivers State government, by providing all the necessary infrastructures for effective teaching and learning. Service delivery is the ability of making use of available educational services to achieve educational goals and set objectives. School plant refers to everything within the school premises which includes the site, buildings, equipment and all essential structures, permanent and non-permanent as well as machines and laboratory equipment and others. Management of school plant requires good leadership, effective monitoring, maintenance culture; corrective, preventive and predictive maintenance etc. Issues of maintenance of school plant was raised: overcrowding; non-delegation of tasks by the principals of schools; vandalization of school property etc. Ways of maintaining school plant for effective functionality are listed and discussed, they include parent teachers association (PTA); community stake holders; staff and students; periodic inspection and principals should not give out any part of school plant for commercial purpose. Conclusively, since public schools harbour a large population of the Nigerian children, effort should be made to effectively manage school plant for effective teaching and learning. Some recommendations were proffered, which include updating of school plant whenever the population increases. Education managers should not rest on their oars and quality control should be advocated etc.

Keywords Managing, School plant, Service delivery, Public secondary schools

1. Introduction

There has been a drastic decline in some of the essential services required in the country's educational system. This must have affected students' performance in the two public examinations: Joint Admissions and matriculation Board (JAMB) & National Examination Council (NECO) students write in Nigeria. In Rivers state there are both public and private secondary schools; but the writer focuses her attention on the public schools due to her experiences during the teaching practice supervision exercise which she has been part of on a yearly basis. Public schools are those secondary schools funded by the state government. The latter also selected their own teachers who take care of the students and the facilities in the school compound. The state government is expected to take full control of those secondary schools by providing all the necessary infrastructures for effective teaching and learning. Some of these infrastructures are non-existent in some schools and at times the existing ones are in a very bad state. For the past few years the results of these two examinations were nothing to write home about. Other factors might have affected the

students' performance such as indiscipline which Amanchukwu (2010) revealed that led to the declining standard of education in Nigeria. Our involvement in the teaching practice supervision exercise in various state secondary schools ignited our interest in writing this article. There is actual lack of educational facilities and the few available ones are in a terrible state.

Educational Services are seen as those essential services required enhancing the education of the learners. These services will sharpen their intellect and prepare them for future leadership roles in the nation. When school children are inadequately exposed they perform poorly both in examinations and in any task they are given to perform. Service delivery is an essential aspect of schools and if poorly done due to nonexistence of school plant or lack of maintenance the situation will be chaotic. The National Policy on education (2004, p. 51) stated that "educational services facilitate the implementations of educational policy, the attainment of policy goals and the promotion of effectiveness of educational system." It further emphasized that the goals of education services shall be to:

- Develop, assess and improve educational programmes;
- Enhance teaching and improve the competence of teachers
- Make learning experiences more meaningful for children;

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Published online at <http://journal.sapub.org/hrmr>

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- Make education more cost-effective
- Promote in-service education; and
- Develop and promote effective use of innovative materials in schools. One would accept that the development of these goals rests on collective efforts which include the input by the Federal, State and Local governments. The national policy on education also stated that the achievement of these goals depends greatly on the following:
 - Setting up of Teachers' Resources Centres, by the State and Local governments, where teachers will meet for discussion, investigations, study workshop, short courses and conferences. These centres shall also be used for development and testing of teaching materials.
 - Building of Educational Resources Centres by the Federal and State governments, whose activities shall be multi-disciplinary. Their functions shall include the enhancement of the study of language, science and mathematics. They shall provide for the need of special education and serve as foci for the educational innovation introduced by the Nigerian Research and Development Council (NERDC).
 - Federal and state governments shall set aside a predetermined percentage of their education funds to support educational research, development and innovation.
 - There shall be a national book policy which devises strategies for book development in the country. Some of the functions of the NERDC shall be the promotion of the development, production and distribution of books for all levels of education and the encouragement of indigenous authorship.
 - The Library is looked upon as the heartbeat of education enterprise. Well- equipped library is a platform for sharing knowledge and is aimed at rejuvenating Nigerian schools through the provision of current books, journals and other information resources using digital technology.

It becomes very clear that provision of education services and their usage should be taken seriously for the Nigerian child to measure up creditably in the comity of nations. Service delivery is the ability of making use of available educational services to achieve educational goals and objectives. However, this can be made possible by the teachers' good use of these delivery services and taking good care of them. Teachers should be educated on how to use those services for effective teaching and learning.

2. Concept of School Plant

School plant is described as the site, the buildings, the equipment and all the essential structures, permanent and semi-permanent as well as such machines and laboratory equipment, the blackboard/chalkboard needed for effective teaching and learning. Castaldi (1994) was of the view that in

the beginning there was no educational facilities; that there were no classrooms and no desks for learners to sit or write on. Research showed that Plato and Aristotle met with students to exchange and discuss ideas in the open air and in any convenient location perhaps in the shade of a temple or wall. Nowadays, these school plants are seen in the school compound for effective teaching and learning but how they are being managed is a different ball game. This becomes a challenge to the school managers as a whole to ensure that they are well maintained. Enaohwo and Eferakeya (1989) defined school plant as the entire physical infrastructural facilities provided in the school for the purpose of educating the child. The writer added that when these aspects of school plant is lacking the result will be poor learning and poor representation in all spheres of life.

Ojelede (1998) stated that school plant comprises the school site and all the structures that have been put in place to aid effective teaching and learning in the school system. Furthermore, Yusuf (2008) defined school plant as space interpretation of the school Curriculum. It will be impossible for the curriculum to be implemented if the physical facilities required for teaching and learning are not available. Absence of school plant makes teaching ineffective and desired learning will not take place. It becomes necessary to ensure that such plant is properly planned and maintained to facilitate the effectiveness of school system. The writer expresses that in some state secondary schools the classrooms are jam packed with children and, of course, poor teaching and learning manifests itself. Teachers could not move around to give the learners individual help where needed because there is no space in between the benches in the classrooms (Teaching Practice supervision experience).

In collaboration, Ajayi (2007) and Yusuf (2008) maintained that school plants comprise the machinery which in turn includes machines and tools used in the workshop, in addition to duplicating machines. They also pointed out that school site, which is the landscape on which the school's permanent and non-permanent structures are built, are part of school plant. They also included buildings, equipment, furniture, vehicles of various types, electrical fittings, books, water supply infrastructure, and accessories like playgrounds, lawns, parks and farm, as part of school plant. The writer is lending her opinion by saying that school plant is all embracing in the fact that it comprises every single item starting from the gate of the school to the walls covering the school compound. This should be drawn into the ears of the school children who did not know that the school ground and everything in it belong to them and they should take good care of them.

3. Geographical Location / School Plant

According to Whawo (1993), the geographical location of the school is a determining factor; computers and the likes are also inclusive, and so on. The major task of educational administration is to utilize all available resources in an effort

to achieve the objectives for which schools are established. The procurement and maintenance of school equipment costs school proprietors a lot of money; this cost factor accounts for the unavailability of very essential school facilities in most government-owned primary and secondary schools in Nigeria. Research findings support the contention that a strong relationship exists between the quality of a school plan and the academic achievement of students (Ololube, 2009). The majority of parents, who are aware of this, spend time searching for well-equipped schools with high quality infrastructural facilities for their children and wards.

The material resources of education also known as “school plant” or “educational facilities” are the “things of education.” According to Castaldi (1977), educational facilities are those things of schooling which enables a skilful teacher to achieve a great level of instructional effectiveness that extremely exceeds what is possible when they are not provided. The ‘things of education’ or educational facilities are therefore numerous. Whatever materials and or services that helps to facilitate teaching and learning rightly fall under the term school plant or educational facilities.

Educational facilities therefore are directly related to the school curriculum. Mgbodile *et al.* (1986), describes school plant as the space interpretation of the school curriculum. The programs of the school are expressed as it were through the school site, buildings, playgrounds, arrangement and design of the buildings etc. Well-designed functional school buildings with a wide array of teaching aids provide effective delivery of the school’s curriculum and are positively related to academic achievement (Ezewu, 1983; Bloom, 1978; McCabe *et al.*, 1975).

One of the strongest problems with the Nigerian educational system is the inappropriate school plant planning. Therefore, the logical place to start school plant planning is the development of an educational program. The school educational program should strongly influence the design of school buildings. The basic principle here is that no educational facility should impose unwanted restrictions upon the educational program. Unfortunately most of our school buildings especially the public school buildings set up by communities in the 1980s were just set up as buildings to house students without regard to proper planning in terms of what educational purposes the buildings should serve or their place in the delivery of the school programme (Ogbodo, 1995).

School plant planning experts agree that curriculum development is a crucial aspect of school plant planning. No architect can design a functional school building for a given educational need without a clear description of the educational program (Castaldi, 1977). It is advised therefore that considerable time should be devoted in developing the curriculum of the school before actual planning or design of buildings by the architect. The architect should not only know what subjects would be taught but should know the basic educational concepts and student experiences that underlie the design of the buildings. He should know what equipment is needed and how much space the teachers feel a

student needs to perform each type of educational experience (Ogbodo, 1995).

Insufficiency of significant information which should be the starting point for school plant planning often results in the design and construction of school plants that are not attuned to the specific needs of pupils who would use them or the community in which the school is located which of course inhibits the progress and development of education in Nigeria. Edem (1987) maintained that it is the duty of the Ministry of Education to make furniture, equipment, books, and expandable materials available to schools. Their inadequacy constitutes another source of frustration and disillusionment among teachers. African leaders earnestly desire good education programs for their people, but in many cases the resources are so meager that little progress can be made. Whatever resources are available, however, are often not properly utilized due to poor planning which ignores educational goals and types of schools and the number of classrooms required if the quality of education is to be maintained. Financial allocations are, therefore, usually made to the items on which the money is spent rather than to what is to be achieved.

In consequence, effectiveness comes to be assessed more in terms of how little money has been spent rather than by how much has been achieved, thus leaving schools inadequately equipped and staffed. The problem is further aggravated by the fact that, quite often, the planners do not relate school facilities to the learning process. Learning is expected to occur even in the absence of books, seating, and writing materials, and any falling in educational standards is blamed on the teachers and children. It is re-emphasized that achievement depends on the optimum performances of all of a school’s administrative elements: the technical, the managerial, and the institutional subsystems.

Therefore, the most indispensable social services that are rendered by any government to the public are the provision and sustenance of educational services because they overtly or covertly affect all its citizenry. It is primary, secondary and tertiary training programs that are meant to develop the human resources that are needed for socio-economic and political development. The training of teachers, payment of salaries, provision of school equipment and other services that make the educational system survive is very expensive. That is why every government in the West allocate substantial amount of their annual budget to the education sector.

Some governments even make primary and secondary education free, which means allocating more finance to get the system going. The main idea is not just to make the funds available to cater for the education needs alone, modalities have to be put in place to ensure the effective utilization of the funds so provided to run the educational system in order to meet target goals (Ololube, 2009). Therefore, a great deal of managerial time, energy and commitment have to be used to justify the essence of the finance. These funds are generated through taxes, grants, fees, levies and rates, contribution from organizations, borrowing, foreign aid, etc.

School funding may be done through the federal, state and local government.

It is always easy to quantify material inputs. A government may wish to pursue a policy of equalization of inputs in schools. In such cases, quantifiable inputs like buildings, qualification of teachers, pupil-teacher ratios, class-size and expenditure per pupil should be properly determined by the government which ensures the even distribution of resources to schools.

Social justice demands that all schools be given the same treatment. In this regard however, let us have a glance at the disparities between the urban and rural schools in terms of their educational facilities. With regard to almost every conceivable social amenity, the urban areas fare better than the rural areas. This disparity is especially apparent in the area of educational facilities.

This situation holds true in virtually all countries, but it is more exaggerated in developing countries where a wide gap exists between the educational levels of urban and rural dwellers. It is not surprising therefore to find that the schools in urban areas are better constructed, better maintained and better furnished. This is not to say however that public schools in urban areas are in good shape (Ololube, 2009). Far from it, many urban schools are in a terrible state of disrepair and lack even in basic facilities. Although this is so, in relation to rural schools, urban schools are generally better maintained and equipped. The reasons for this are not far-fetched. The towns have concentrations of population, which often seem politically more articulate than their rural counterparts. Education and maintenance policy makers are more sensitive to such areas. In addition, offices for the administration of schools are invariably in urban areas so the factor of proximity accounts partly for the observed disparity. According to Ogbodo (1995), children of senior government and education officials attend schools in urban areas so these officials are likely to be more intimately acquainted with the physical state of the urban schools than the rural schools. It is important that government policies with regard to maintenance should be aimed at removing this disparity (Ogbodo, 1995).

The policy of equalization of inputs may be pursued through the equalization of tax bases to enable schools in poor local government areas to have enhanced tax bases. Another device would be to use equalization of per pupil or per capita expenditure services. A third option may be to equalize physical inputs like books, materials and non-academic staff. Apart from the equalization goal, some measure of equity is desirable; equity is more than equality. Though it is abstract and less liable to quantification, it encompasses justice, equality, humanity, morality and right.

The success or failure of the education industry to attract enough government revenue may be conditioned by several factors. One such factor is the rate of growth of the national economy. Should economic growth for instance, lag behind the demand for education, the annual increments to educational budget are likely to decrease leaving little or no room for expansion. Another factor that plays a role is the

condition of world market as most third world countries depend on it for the sale of mineral oil and agricultural products. Competition from other sectors of the economy and local politics among competing political parties are also factors to consider (Ololube, 2013).

In Nigeria, education funding is the responsibility of the federal, state and local government levels. The funds are provided for approximately 45,020 primary, 6,100 secondary schools and about 159 Universities, 100 colleges of education and polytechnics. The private sector establishes about 11,000 nurseries, 5,600 primary and 800 secondary schools throughout the country. There is a discrepancy in funding contributions between federal, state and local governments as stated in the concurrent list of the constitution. For example, Rivers State alone houses approximately 245 public secondary schools and provides funding for them (Ministry of Education, 2011). The differences between the public schools and the private schools are very glaring. The private schools are supposed to be complimenting the public schools; instead they are often seen as rivals because most of the private schools are better equipped than the public ones.

Indeed the education sector is a huge area of investment for the various levels of government. Despite heavy government spending, schools have leaking roofs, gaping holes for windows, unreadable white boards instead of blackboards, no visual teaching aids or wall posters, and no libraries or teaching facilities. Giudice (1999, pp. 51-60) states that Nigerian education has suffered at the hands of a succession of often-brutal military regimes. Government corruption and total neglect have taken a grim toll on the institutions, where academic quality has seriously eroded. Today almost everything- textbooks, laboratory equipment, classrooms, and e-mail addresses- is in short supply.

4. Managing School Plant

School plant, as was already mentioned, involves every single thing within the school premises, should be taken care of in order for efficient services to be realized in the school system. Management of school plant entails good leadership, effective monitoring of both the users and the plant itself; applying sound maintenance culture of those facilities and other things required for the school plant to give maximum services (Allen, 2015; Ehiametalor, 2001; Castaldi, 1994; Lawanson & Gede, 2011; Xaba, 2012). The fundamental purpose of teaching and learning practice is to bring about in the learner desirable transformation in behaviour through critical thinking (Asiabaka, 2008). The process does not take place in a vacuum but rather in an environment set aside to facilitate learning. Facilitation of learning ushers in a new dawn in the lives of a learner and the entire community, making it possible for them to be enlisted among those who would develop a nation (Xaba, 2012).

Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert (1996) described the environment of an organization as all elements relevant to its operation and they include direct and indirect action

elements. According to them, school facilities constitute the major components of both direct and indirect action elements in the environment of learning. Direct action elements are those actions which the teacher emphasis on while teaching; while indirect action elements relates to those actions which manifest themselves unconsciously by the learners. For example, when the learners put into practice what they have learnt without being reminded.

Studies have shown that a close relationship exists between the physical environment and the academic performance of students. Nwagwu (1978) and Ogusanju (1980) maintained that the quality of education that children receive bears direct relevance to the availability or lack, thereof of physical facilities and overall atmosphere in which learning takes place. If the physical facilities are in short supply teachers would not be equipped to carry out their duties effectively, hence quality learning would not be expected. One can see that the quality learning cannot be overemphasized.

The school facilities (in other words school plant) consist of all types of buildings for academic and non-academic activities, equipment for academic and non-academic functions, areas for sports and games, landscape, farms and gardens including trees, roads and paths. Others include furniture and toilet facilities, lighting, acoustics, storage facilities and packing lot, security, transportation, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), Clearing materials, food services and special facilities for the physically challenged. These facilities play vital role in the actualization of the educational goals and objectives by satisfying the physical and emotional needs of the staff and students of the school. The following points should be looked into with regards to school plant maintenance.

Good Leadership

Facilities cannot manage themselves except there is good leadership that will set the ball rolling. Leadership, whether in the primary, secondary schools and tertiary institutions, has a vital role to play in the maintenance of school plant. Ministry workers do not stay in educational institutions on a daily basis in order to dictate what is going wrong or right with the school plant. The school authorities should be more concerned about what the students' needs are at their developmental stages and instructional levels. The students should be properly accommodated in their various classrooms and adequate facilities and equipment provided for their effective learning. Facilities and Equipment should be for both indoor and outdoor learning so as to cater for overall development of the learner. Those facilities and equipment should be properly maintained for them to render their services always, physically, mentally, emotionally, socially and others. Kenezovich (1975:563) emphasized that "the physical needs are met through provision of safe structure, adequate sanitary facilities, a balanced visual environment, appropriate thermal environment and sufficient shelter space for work and play." The learner's emotional needs are met by creating pleasant surroundings, a

friendly atmosphere and an inspiring environment. The head of an institution should make it a point of duty to appoint people whose task it is to check all these facilities and equipment and submit their report to the authorities for adequate attention. In that case, maintenance culture should be part and parcel of institutions of learning in Nigeria.

Effective Monitoring of the Users of school plant

Setting up monitoring team in every educational institution to check the school plant and the people using them and writing an official report about their findings, would go a long way making these school plant last long and remain valuable for effective use. When they are left unattended to, there is likelihood that they will deteriorate and will not be useful for educative process. The users should also be educated to make use of equipment they are meant for teaching and learning and that is why in-service training is recommended for both academic and non-academic staff. The training will help them understand the facilities and equipment better for service delivery. Leaving the equipment lying fallow in our various educational institutions or neglecting them is not for the best interest of education in our nation. Students should be meant to understand that the school plant is for the interest of all and all hands must be on deck to keep them in good condition so as to make them serviceable.

Enhancing School Maintenance Culture

Olutola (1981) described school plant as the keeping of school site, building and equipment in as near their original state of utility as possible. The writer maintains that tasks should be shared in our institutions of learning and every person should bear the consequences emanating from lack of care of his own task. Academic staff makes most use of the plant while administering their duties. The non-academic staff takes care of these facilities and equipment. They should organize random check from time to time so as to dictate in good time anything that might hinder effective teaching and learning. In some tertiary institutions, the works department staff play non-challant attitude when they are informed about the bad state of these plant. If these complaints are attended to in good time, there would be smooth running of an institution; otherwise, teaching and learning might be affected drastically. In some Nigerian public secondary schools, Rivers State as point of reference, there are laxities with regards to the maintenance of school plant. Some teachers do not care how the situation is; whether these plants are in good condition or not. They come to school, perform their duties and leave at the end of the day. Some of them complain that they have written a report to the ministry authorities but nothing has happened. For example, if there is no light in the classrooms, fans will not be working; the teachers and the taught will be sweating; evening lectures/private reading will not be achieved because the whole place will be in the dark and hot. There are myriads of examples but the most important message is that repairs should be done at the right time to save costs and make

educational goals and objectives achievable.

In addition, Oluchukwu (1998) emphasized that in view of the huge cost of procurement of new material, maintenance culture should be upheld in schools or be made a priority. When school plant is taken care of, they last long thereby saving costs for the government. All hands must be on deck in maintaining school plant which involves keeping of grounds, buildings and equipment in their original condition of completeness or efficiency. Ajayi (2007) opined that school plant maintenance are all activities embarked upon with a view to sustaining initial use value of the school plant. This involves sweeping of the floors, surroundings, dusting, mopping, scrubbing and so on. Kenezevich (1975) was of the view that the time it takes for a structure to become obsolete and archaic is a function of the quality of the original construction and material as well as the quality of housekeeping and maintenance.

Olagboye (1998) and Ajayi (2007) having worked independently, identified five types of maintenance in the school system. These are:

- Corrective maintenance: Repairing of faults on time, for example, electric faults in the school buildings, mechanical faults in generating sets and vehicles etc.
- Preventive and predictive maintenance;
- Shut down maintenance; in this case, this must be done when the learners are on vacation so as to avoid accident or unnecessary disturbances.
- Running maintenance- This is done when the plant or a component of it is operating;
- Breakdown maintenance: This focuses on rectifying breakdowns in any component of the school plant. For example, the lighting system in the laboratories; this should be attended to instantly so as not to disrupt teaching and learning.

Lack of maintenance of school plant in the Nigerian educational institutions is a recurring decimal and the sooner attention is paid in that area the better for the managers of education. It is always better to carry out maintenance as the structure starts wearing off or the signs appear in any aspect of the building or grounds as a whole; leaving it for too long escalates the faults thereby causing more repairs.

5. Issues of School Plant Maintenance

Certain issues might affect school plant maintenance in various ways:

- One of the ways is that initially, it might be that the school plant was put in place to accommodate a certain number of learners. As years roll by, more children are enrolled in the school system and no additional structures were built. Things will start breaking down and learners would start struggling for the few available facilities/equipment. The

typical example is when the learners start rushing for a few seats available for their lectures; some of these benches are damaged and at times injuries occurs among the students. This is part of the dilemmas in the classroom as identified by Amanchukwu & Obijuru (2013). It is absolutely necessary to add more facilities and equipment as population increases to avoid unnecessary disruptions during teaching and learning.

- Many people claim to know how to repair a lot of things in the school premises and end up doing shabby job that do not last. It becomes obvious that either we do not employ the services of the right people or we are trying to cut corners; that actually create more problems than expected and leads to more wastages.
- Another important factor is that many Heads of secondary schools do not delegate duties. They want to have an eye on everything that is being done thereby delaying other areas that need urgent attention. There should be decentralization of authority and duty so as to achieve success, since the essence of management is to achieve success.

It has been observed that government property suffer a lot of neglect. The users of these properties occasionally feel that they are government property therefore it is nobody's business. This non-challant attitude must stop so as to dictate faults in good time and adequate and instant repairs made to avoid wastages.

Lack of maintenance culture has eaten deep into the fabrics of the nation's citizenry. If the school authorities (Head teachers, teachers) and other workers take care of these properties, learners will emulate them and go a long way preventing damages to those properties.

- Some school Heads state clearly that even though they dictate these faults in good time the school does not generate enough funds for such repairs. In this case it becomes obvious that they are willing to carry out repairs but the financial resources are not there.
- At times one discovers that there is lack of cooperation in the school which makes it difficult for the principal to take vital decisions. If the idea is put into vote, the principal might not get enough votes to support his/her noble ideas about what he/she wants to do. There should be cooperative attitude among teachers in the Nigerian secondary schools for success to be achieved.
- It has been established that most of the time the ministry officials fail to attend to the needs of the schools due to lack of funds. The latter is necessary for the smooth running of the school. It is very essential to reserve some funds for emergencies at our various schools of learning if educational goals will be achieved.
- Vandalization of school plant is another factor that

should be looked into. Schools should teach the learners the culture of maintaining school property, which will help them not to destroy but cherish them.

- Regular supervision is not carried out by the ministry of education officials regularly and that contributed to the chaotic situation of school plant. When officials from the ministry do their work as and when due, sorry sight situations will be avoided and school activities will not be interrupted.
- Irregular attendance of school heads due to the reason that they are on maternity leave does not help matters. Rivers state has a lot of qualified and mature teachers who have passed the age of nursing babies but can afford to attend school, carry out their duties diligently. Their absence causes a lot of delays in taking decisions that affect the running of schools.

6. Ways of Maintaining School Plant for Effective Functionality

Principals of schools should be thinking of the best interest of the learners under their care and one way of showing this interest is maintaining of the school plant. The minds of staff and students should be prepared by making them understand that they are one family and that the structures in the school premises belong to them and it is their duty to keep them in good condition after each use.

Principals should not give out any part of the school plant for commercial use since the users are likely to cause some damages which will take a lot to repair.

The school managers should form committee to take care of school plant on a regular basis and present a written report to the school principal.

The community stake holders, if approached, will participate in maintaining the school plant. Robbery of properties on the school compound (for example, government girls secondary school, Rumuokuta some years back) was discovered to have been done by some boys from that community any time the school receives any new equipment. The school principal decided to make a formal report to the stake holders who swung into action and found the culprits and they made their parents replace those items and repair the damages done to the principal's office. That ended the robbery case in that school for that period.

The Parent-teachers-Association also is a very powerful organ to use to ensure that school plant is maintained regularly by making funds available. As we all know, lack of funds causes delay of any project. When funds are provided, the skilled men/women should be employed to swing into action for results to be achieved.

Principals should make it known to school staff that no school property should be converted to private property. This will surely prolong the life span of the property. If the school vehicle is used to carry out official duty it will last for a long

time, coupled with regular servicing.

There should be periodic inspection and repairs of school plant so as to make teaching and learning worthwhile.

7. Conclusions/Recommendations

Eye witness has shown that public secondary schools are very important in raising the greater tomorrows, therefore, effort should be put in maintaining the school plant for better teaching and learning. It should be a collective effort so as to achieve success.

The acute shortages of finances, the gross misappropriation of public funds and the misplaced priorities in the education sector have made it impossible for adequate promotion of education in Rivers State. In fact, the material resources base of the education industry are what determines the ability of the education system to achieve its objectives.

Public secondary schools in every state of the nation carry a lot of population therefore the school plant should be increased and updated to cue in with the technological learning. Teachers should also be given in-service training on the use of the facilities (ICT) and its maintenance (Ololube et al., 2013). As new programme is being introduced into the educational institutions, followed by the delivery of new equipment and perhaps facilities, teachers should be sent on in-service training prior the arrival of the items. Teachers should be abreast with the new technology so as to make positive impact on the learners. These facilities and equipment, which are part of school plant, should be serviced regularly so as to maintain smooth running of the school programme. Teaching and learning should not stop because the school plant, due to neglect, is not taken care of as it should.

Principals should not rest on their oars simply because they have delegated duty to staff; they should take extra mile to look at what has been done. This type of supervision will make the staff be diligent in whatever task they are given.

Education managers especially those from the ministry of education should carry out maintenance of the school plant instantly as they receive report from the schools concerned; this will prolong the life span of the plant. Preventive maintenance of school plant would have been an ideal situation in which the skilled men should be sent by the ministry to examine all the items on the school premises to dictate which of them needs to be worked on. This could be done during long vacation when the school is not in session and students are not there.

Quality control is in the heart of education managers and it should be taken more seriously by going for regular inspection to schools. Education managers should organize workshops to enlighten the teachers on the use of the new equipment being delivered to schools. If this aspect is neglected, the facilities/equipment will be left fallow. If one casts his mind to the period when computer was distributed to the various Unity schools, most of them were left in their containers for so long without use. The simple explanation

was that teachers were not conversant with it therefore cannot make use of it. Teachers should be given in-service training on how to use the equipment.

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