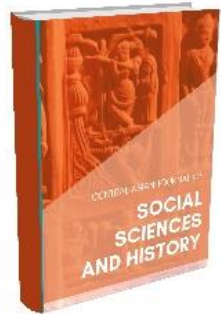




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Journal homepage: [www.http://cajssh.centralasianstudies.org/index.php/CAJSSH](http://www.cajssh.centralasianstudies.org/index.php/CAJSSH)



Administration of Public Secondary Schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria: Problems and Solution

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Abstract:

The administration of Public Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) in Federal Capital Territory is faced with many problems. This paper discusses the problems facing Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) programme in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. Primary data and secondary data were used to provide empirical support for the paper. Online publication and print materials on secondary school administration within and outside Nigeria were sourced and used. The paper identified inadequate funding, shortage of professional teachers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate instructional materials and over-population. To address these problems, the writers came out with the following suggestions that; the federal capital territory administration should increase the funding, employ more professional teachers, infrastructural facilities, instructional materials, fight corruption, provide adequate security in all public secondary schools, and improve supervision of all public secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 29 Sep 2021

Received in revised form

30 Oct 2021

Accepted 20 Nov

Available online 23 Nov 2021

Keywords: Administration, Education, FCT, Secondary, School, Problems

1. Introduction

The Federal Capital Territory Abuja is the capital of Nigeria which is located in the North Central part of the country. The Federal Capital Territory is under the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA). Federal Capital Development Authority is in charge of the construction and infrastructural development of Abuja city. The Federal Capital Territory is made up of six area councils which are: Abaji, Abuja Municipal, Bwari, Gwagwalada, Kuje and Kwali area councils. The population of Abuja as at 2006 census was 776,298 making it one of the most populous cities in Nigeria, occupying eighth position. The United Nations observed that Abuja was growing by 139.7% between year 2000 to 2010. This growing rate makes it one of the fast-growing cities in the World. Abuja is the political administration of Nigeria and also a key capital on the African continent due to Nigeria's geo-political influence in regional affairs. A Federal Minister is appointed by the President to oversee the political administration of the Territory (Ogunode, 2021, Peter, 2020).

Education in Federal Capital Territory is under the administration of the Federal Capital Territory Education Secretariat. Federal Capital Territory Abuja is home to many educational institutions both public and private schools. The educational system in Federal Capital Territory follows the guidelines as stipulated in the National Policy of education (2013). Education in FCT consists of three forms: Basic Education (ten years), Secondary Education (three years) and higher education which includes Universities, Colleges of education, Poly-technique education, Vocational education (four, six years depending on the course of study). Other forms of education in Federal Capital Territory include adult education, special education and mass education.

The administration of Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) in FCT is under the administration of the Federal Capital Territory Education Secretariat. For effective coordination and management of Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) in FCT Secondary School Education board was established in FCT. The objectives of FCT secondary school board **include:**

- a) To provide all Junior School Leavers in the FCT with opportunity to attend Senior Secondary Education without discrimination
- b) To develop and promote Nigeria languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage.
- c) To inspire students with a desire for self-discipline, self-improvement and achievement of excellence.
- d) To ensure that all FCT Public Senior Secondary Schools fully implement the National Policy on Education (NPE).
- e) To encourage community participation through Parent-Teachers Association (PTA) and School Based Management Committee (SBMC) activities.
- f) To recruit teaching and non-teaching staff and also embark on capacity building of staff with the view to improving their performance.

The mandates of FCT secondary school board include;

- a) Undertaking new capital projects;

- b) Setting up an effective functional supervisory unit
- c) Management of Public Secondary Schools in the FCT.
- d) Training and retraining of teaching and non-teaching staff.
- e) Posting and deployment of staff including inter-state transfer
- f) Carryout such other functions as the secretariat may from time to time assign to it.
- g) Disbursement of funds accruing to it from the government of FCT Administration.
- h) Recruitment, appointment, promotion and discipline of teaching and non-teaching staff of the Board

Also, the Office of the Director SEB, in line with the National Secondary Education Commission Act No 47 Of 1999 is mandated to perform the following functions; management of Senior Secondary Schools in FCT, Setting up of an effective, functional supervisory unit, Approves media publications of the Board's activities, Directs and receives report on the Board's audit matters, Receives legal advice on policy matters of the Board, Dealing with leave matters, including annual vacation, The recruitment, appointment, promotion, discipline of staff, Liaises with sister Agencies/Departments on education matters, Ensuring the annual reports are rendered by Heads of schools & teachers and Disbursing funds accruing to it from both Federal and FCT Administration

(<http://www.fctseb.gov.ng/administration.php>)

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja is home to about 77 government Secondary Schools (FCTseb, 2020). These public secondary school include both day and boarding Schools in all the six Area Councils. It has been observed by Projectextra (undated) that most of the resources available in the schools are not properly managed by the various school administrators and the body governing the secondary schools. The management and administration of the Nigeria education system is by law in the hands of the three tiers of government which are the federal, state and local governments although it is complemented by private individuals or missionaries. The inability of the school administrators both at the external level and internal level to handle these challenges is affecting the performance of Public Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) in FCT.

In 2018, WASSCE results Ranking was done in Nigeria and FCT was ranked in 14 position with the huge resources invested on the secondary school education. It was observed by Okereke (2019) that States that may not have provided as much as the FCT in terms of infrastructure and human resources have consistently maintained a better performance in the same examinations. It is imperative to discuss the problem facing the administration of public secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1 Concept of Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD)

Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) is the education children receive after a successful completion of ten years of Basic Education and passing the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and Junior Arabic and Islamic Studies Certificate Examination (JAISCE). It includes: (i) senior secondary education, (ii) higher school; and (iii) continuing education given in Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs) to either Basic Education graduates who are not proceeding to Senior Secondary Schools, or

Senior Secondary graduates that are not proceeding to the tertiary level, as a means of preparing them for the world of work, wealth creation and entrepreneurship.

The objectives of Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) are to:

- a. Provide holders of the Basic Education Certificate and Junior Arabic and Islamic Studies Certificate with opportunity for education of a higher level, irrespective of gender, social status, religious or ethnic background;
- b. Offer diversified curriculum to cater for the differences in talents, disposition, opportunities and future roles;
- c. Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades;
- d. Provide entrepreneurial, technical and vocational job-specific skills for self-reliance, and for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development;
- e. Develop and promote Nigerian languages, art and culture in the context of world's cultural heritage;
- f. Inspire students with a desire for self-improvement and achievement of excellence;
- g. Foster patriotism, national unity and security education with emphasis on the common ties in spite of our diversity; and
- h. Raises morally upright and well-adjusted individuals who can think independently and rationally, respect the views and feelings of others and appreciate the dignity of labour. The realization of the objectives of Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) depends on effective administration and planning (Ogunode, 2020).

2.2 Secondary School Administration

Secondary school administration is the systematic arrangement of human and materials of the school to implement the schools programme with the aims of realizing the objectives of the schools. Secondary school administration is the application of various school resources to actualize the programme of the school. Okeke (2014), views secondary school administration as involving the provision and maintenance of the necessary manpower to those who teach children with a view to bring about the desired change in the children's behaviour. National Open University of Nigeria (2011) observed that, as the name implies, it is the type of administration that occurs at the secondary school level. It is also known as secondary school administration and involves the principal, vice - principals and sometimes heads of departments. Secondary school administration is also the process through which the secondary school principal (administrator) plans, organizes, coordinates, directs and controls the affairs and actions as well as the human, material and financial resources in the secondary school maximally to ensure that the corporate goals of the secondary schools are achieved. It is the responsibility of the principal to mobilize and harness all human efforts in the school where he functions as the administrator.

Etuk (2007), outlined the following under listed functions of school administration as staff personnel administration, student personnel administration, finance and physical resources, and school community relationship management.

Secondary school administration is the arrangement of human and materials resources of the school to realize the objectives of the secondary school. Secondary school administration is the internal management of the teacher, students and the materials resources for the realization of the secondary school objectives. The school principals face numerous administrative problems which militate against operative running of their schools. Projectextra (undated) and Okwori and Edem (2012) were of the opinion that school administrator is one saddled with the responsibility of administering and managing school by making things happen and by organizing human, financial, and material resources in order to achieve the objectives of the institution within the targeted period. The post of a school administrator is the most challenging assignment that faces the school managers.

3. Problems Militating Against Effective Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) School Administration in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

The Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) programme in Federal Capital Territory is faced with administrative problems. Some of these problems include inadequate funding, poor academic performance, shortage of professional teachers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate instructional materials, insecurity, over-population, corruption and ineffective supervision.

3.1 Inadequate Funding

Inadequate funding is a major problem hindering effective administration of public secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory. Funding is vital to the realization of secondary schools' objective. Adequate funding of secondary school is key to the development of secondary school education. It is unfortunate to realize that as important as adequate funding is to the development of secondary school education in FCT that the funds allocated to the secondary school is not adequate. **Anthony** (2019) observed that the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Education Board has identified poor funding as a major problem facing the secondary school education in FCT. Projectextra (undated) did a study that examined the Management of Resources in FCT Government Secondary Schools Abuja, Nigeria and the result collected revealed that human resources and school funds were not well managed in the FCT secondary schools while the facilities, curriculum and time resources were well managed by the school heads.

Ogunode (2021) pointed out that inadequate funding is one of the major problems facing the administration of secondary school education in Nigeria. The budgetary allocation for the administration and management of secondary school education in Nigeria is inadequate. The inadequacy of fund and lack of political will by the government to adequately fund public education, especially to meet the financing targets outlined in the SDG Framework for action that is "Countries invest up to 4-6% GDP and 15-20% of their national budgets in education is a major problem responsible for poor funding of education. For instance, Ogunode & Onyekachi (2021) observed that in 2018, N605.8bn, out of N9.12tn budget, representing 7.04 percent was allocated to education; in 2019, it was N620.5bn, representing 7.05 percent of the N 8.92tn budget. In 2020, N671.07bn of N10.33tn, which amounted to 6.7 percent was allocated to the sector; while in 2021 the sector got N742.5bn of N13.6tn budget, representing 5.6 percent. Ogunode & Onyekachi (2021) outline the factors responsible for government inability to adequately fund education as follows Short fall in national revenue, competition from other sectors, corruption, insecurity, natural disaster and lack of

political will to implement UNESCO recommendation on education. They also pointed out the effects of underfunding education in Nigeria which include inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate professional teachers, shortage of instructional materials, poor quality of education, poor capacity development, poor supervision and strike actions.

3.2 Poor Academic Performance

The problem of poor academic performance of students in public secondary schools in FCT is another problem facing the administrators of public secondary schools. Okereke (2019) observed that despite efforts being made by the administration to ensure that Education in the FCT remains qualitative and affordable, it is yet to translate in output on the performance of students in the nationally organized Examinations in Nigeria. For instance, the FCT has at least in the past seven years maintained a distant 14th position in the states' ranking of Students' performance in the West African Examination Council organized examination. While States that may not have provided as much as the FCT in terms of infrastructure and human resources have consistently maintained a better performance in the same examinations.

3.3 Shortage of Professional Teachers

Many public Secondary Schools in Federal Capital territory is not having adequate professional teachers. This submission is attested to by Audu & Ogunode (2021) who submitted that one of the problems facing the secondary school education in federal capital territory is shortage of professional teachers. Also, Anthony (2019) pointed out that the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Education Board has identified shortage of specialized teachers as major challenges facing both primary and secondary schools in the territory. Nationwide, inadequate professional teachers have been a major issue with the public secondary schools according to Ogunode (2021), FCT seb (2019); Ige (2016) and Ikgbusi and Iheanacho (2016). Teachers' shortage in Federal capital Territory, Abuja, according to Ogunode & Jegede (2020) are more pronounced in sciences programmes like mathematics, chemistry, Biology and Physics. The shortage of professional teachers in these public secondary schools is responsible for high teacher-students ratio. Many teachers especially the science teachers teach more students than what the national policy on education prescribed on 1:35 per class. The shortage of professional teachers is also responsible for the poor quality of secondary school education in the territory. When few teachers are taking more than the prescribed classes the resultant effects will be poor academic outcome. Many reasons account for shortage of professional teachers in public secondary schools in FCT and in Nigeria as a whole was identified by Ogunode & Paul (2021) to include inadequate funding, limited teacher education institutions, corruption, lack of manpower planning, brain-drain and poor motivation while Ogunode and Adamu (2021) also identified low productivities, poor quality of teaching, overcrowdings, poor quality of education as the effects of shortage of academic staff.

3.4 Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities

Another problem facing the administration of public secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory is inadequate infrastructural facilities. The problems are reaffirmed by Anthony (2019) who submitted that the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Education Board identified shortage of classroom congestion as major challenges facing both primary and secondary schools in the territory as a result of inadequate facilities. Audu & Ogunode (2021) in their research work concludes that inadequate infrastructural facilities are major problem facing public secondary schools in FCT. Many of the newly established public secondary schools are located in rural areas and majorities do not have adequate facilities. Due

to inadequate classrooms, some of the newly established schools are observing afternoon lesson. It was observed by Ogunode (2021); Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory & Abubakar (2020); Ige (2013) and Mercy (2018) submitted that shortage of infrastructural facilities is a very big problem facing public secondary schools in Nigeria. Ike (2017) lamented that in a majority of Nigeria secondary schools, the classroom accommodation is grossly inadequate. As a result of the large enrolments in these schools, the classrooms are usually overcrowded, with up to sixty or more students receiving instructions in classroom designed for only thirty or, forty students. In most cases, the chairs and desk are not enough; you see them sharing chairs, standing up, or sitting on windows or broken desk! When students are overcrowded like this, there is a stalling of the teaching-learning process and a disruption of the children's mental activity, „a situation that generally militates against effective teaching and intellectual development of the children. Opeyemi & Kevwe (2015) submitted that adequate sanitary facilities and hygiene practices form essential components of an enabling learning environment and quality education, the reality is that many schools in the FCT either do not have toilet facilities at all or are overstretched, despite the federal government's budget appropriation of N50million for FCT public schools. In some schools, the toilet provided has either become disused, overused or so badly overtaken by faeces as to be unusable again. In such schools, children are expected to go to nearby bushes to defecate. The inability of the Federal government to provide adequate infrastructural facilities is preventing effective administration of the public secondary schools in the Territory. The problem of inadequate infrastructural facilities of public secondary schools in FCT is responsible for overcrowdings of classes and poor teaching, high teachers-students ratio. Due to shortage of classes in many FCT public secondary schools across the rural areas and cities many student attends classes under the trees which is not conducive for learning. Ogunode & James (2021) did a study and identified inadequate funding of secondary schools, poor infrastructural facilities planning, poor qualities of infrastructural facilities, institutional corruption, ineffective monitoring and evaluation of infrastructural facilities, increased in student population, damages of facilities by students of secondary school as causes of inadequate infrastructural facilities in Public Secondary Schools in Gwagwalada area council of FCT.

3.5 Insecurity Problems

Another problem preventing effective administration of secondary schools in Federal Capital territory is the problem of insecurity. Ogunode (2021) observed that insecurity in educational institution refers to a situation where human resources within the educational institutions are in the state of fear or threat and lack peace to carry out their respective function. It is a situation where both school administrators, teachers, non-teaching staff and students are in the state of fear. The pupils and teachers are vulnerable to the problem of insecurity as suspected kidnappers were recently arrested from the school building by officials of the Nigerian Army. “Due to the lack of perimeter fence over the school, kidnappers use the school's classrooms as hideout at night. Just last February, some kidnap suspects were arrested by soldiers from the nearby army barracks (Musa, 2020). Ogunode (2021) submitted that insecurity challenge is another major problem facing the secondary schools in Nigeria especially in the Northern part of the country. Insecurity preventing effective administration of secondary school programme in the country. Many school administrators, teachers, non-teaching staff and students have been killed and many infrastructural facilities destroyed by Boko Haram members. Secondary school programme have been disrupted due to closing down of school in Northeast Nigeria. A teacher of a public secondary school in Kuje area of FCT was reported kidnapped by (Daily trust, 2021).

3.6 Inadequate Instructional Materials

Research has it that many public secondary schools' teachers in FCT do not have adequate instructional materials for implementation of teaching programme and learning programme. The inadequate instructional materials are affecting the quality of teaching and learning in the public secondary schools in FCT. Students learn more when teachers used or applied instructional materials to deliver his/her lessons. Okhakhu, Oladiran, & Omoike, (2016) did a study and the findings showed that instructional resources play a significant role in enhancing performance of students in schools. Furthermore, the results revealed that schools with adequate quality of teachers and enough instructional material resources showed superiority in academic achievements test than schools without adequate teacher quality and instructional material resources. As seen in the findings from this research, it could be easily concluded that the main reason for lack of proper use of instructional materials in the secondary schools is the lack of users' education. Many factors account for inadequate instructional materials in FCT public secondary schools and they include inadequate funding of secondary school education, poor instructional materials planning, poor implementation of educational policies and corruptions. Audu & Ogunode (2021) did a study on investigation into Problems Facing Public Secondary School administrators in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja and the study revealed that instructional materials are among the problems facing the public secondary schools in FCT.

3.7 Over-Population

Another problem facing administrators of public secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory is the problem of over-population of students in the public secondary schools. The over-population is preventing effective administration of these public secondary schools. The population of students in the public secondary schools across the six area councils is high and alarming. Musa (2020) identified the influx of people into the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja from other parts of the country as one of the factors responsible for high enrolment of students in public secondary schools. For Abubukar (2020) the insecurity problem in some North central states and North-east have caused many people to relocate to the Capital city to settle down. Research has it that many public secondary schools in FCT are over-populated with students. The effects of this immigration into Federal Capital Territory are responsible for the inadequate classrooms and facilities in the existing public secondary schools in FCT. Fctseb (2019) observed that the uncontrolled population problem placed a high demand on the Administration for more establishment of schools and expansion as well as overstretched of our facilities.

3.8 Corruption

Worried by the deplorable infrastructural facilities across public schools across the country, a non-governmental organization, Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) has asked President Muhammadu Buhari to probe billions allegedly missing from Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), including N3.2bn for Safe School Initiative. SERAP noted that the allegations of corruption in UBEC and SUBEBs violate the right to education of Nigerian children who continue to face unsuitable learning conditions, as shown by poor learning and boarding facilities at Government Science Colleges (Ripplesnigeria 2021). Ogunode (2021) opined institutional corruption is another problem facing the administration of secondary schools in the country. Funds released by the government for the administration of the schools some time ended up in the private hands. Funds meant for the capital and recurrent services in

the secondary schools are been diverted by the officials of the ministries. Funds budgeted for different programs in the ministries are being diverted into private banks. Many public funds meant for the development of education in Nigeria are diverted and mismanaged. The limited funds provided for the planning purposes in the various ministries, department and agencies of education are been diverted and this is affecting the planning of education.

3.9 Ineffective Supervision

Another problem facing the administration of public Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) in Federal Capital Territory is the problem of ineffective supervision by the various agencies saddled with the responsibility of supervising the public Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) in Federal Capital Territory. Supervision is key to the achievement of quality public Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) in Federal Capital Territory. Department of Quality Assurance (DQA) is saddled with the task of ensuring that the highest standards are adhered to and maintained by public and private schools within the FCT. This is done through the constant monitoring of school activities including resumption and mid-term school assessments of schools. The Department has use this planning tool of monitoring for efficiency of performance of teaching and learning system. The DQA's key functions are inspection, adherence to the dictates of management of schools and accreditations of public and private schools in the FCT (FCT Seb, 2019). Many quality assurance agencies within the territory are not provided with adequate supervision resources to enable them carry out their functions. There are many factors responsible for poor supervision of public secondary school in FCT. Ogunode & Ugbome (2021) identified inadequate funds for supervision of secondary school education in Federal Capital Territory as a major factor preventing effective supervision of secondary school education in the territory. The budgetary allocation for supervision of education is inadequate in the territory and this is affecting the various sub-programme of instructional supervision. Ogunode & Ugbome (2021) also observed that there are many challenges preventing effective supervision of secondary school education in FCT. Prominent amongst the problems include: inadequate funding, inadequate transportation facilities, distance, inadequate supervisors, insecurity, and shortage of supervision materials, poor capacity development programs and Corruption.

4. Way Forward

To address these problems, the paper recommends that the Federal Capital Territory administration should increase the funding, employ more professional teachers, increase infrastructural facilities, increase instructional materials, fight corruption, provide adequate security in all public secondary schools, improve supervision of all public secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

1. The Federal Capital Territory administration should increase the funding of public secondary school education in the territory. This will help the secondary school administrators provide the human and materials needed for the development of secondary school in the territory.
2. The Federal Capital Territory administration should employ more professional teachers and deploy them to the public secondary schools that needs teachers especially the sciences teachers.
3. The Federal Capital Territory administration should provide more infrastructural facilities to all the public secondary schools in the territory. This will help to improve quality education and reduce overcrowdings in the classes.

4 The Federal Capital Territory administration should provide more instructional materials to all the public secondary schools in the territory. This will make the various teachers access and use instructional materials to deliver their lectures in their respective classes.

5. The Federal Capital Territory administration should deploy human and materials resources to fight all forms of corruption in the administration of schools especially that of public secondary schools.

6. The Federal Capital Territory administration should tighten security in all public secondary schools in the territory. The Federal Capital Territory administration should partner with private organization and non-organization to provide school perimeter fence to all public secondary school territory.

7. The Federal Capital Territory administration should improve the supervision of public Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) in the territory by increased funding for supervision of secondary school, provision of adequate transport facilities, employment of more professional supervisors, adequate provision of supervision materials, training and retraining programs for supervisors, provision of adequate security for supervisors on official functions and eradicating all forms of corruption in the ministry of education so as to end diversion of funds meant for supervision.

5. Conclusion

Administration is key to the attainment of Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) programme in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. It is unfortunate that the administration of Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) programme in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja is plagued with many problems. This paper identified inadequate funding, shortage of professional teachers, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate instructional materials and over-population. To address these problems, the writers came out with the following suggestions that; the federal capital territory administration should increase the funding, employ more professional teachers, increase infrastructural facilities, increase instructional materials, fight corruption, provide adequate security in all public secondary schools, improve supervision of all public secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

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