



CENTRALIZATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY REGULATIONS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN RIVERS STATE

Richard Anietie

anietierichard@gmail.com

Kolubowei Woyengikuro

koluboweiwoyengikuro@gmail.com

Seimogha Rita Matthew Odou

seimoghatutu1976@gmail.com

School of Graduate Studies

Ignatius Ajuru University of Education
Department of Educational Management

ABSTRACT

The study investigated centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State. For the purpose of guiding the study, four (4) research questions and three two (2) null hypotheses were generated. Descriptive survey design was adopted in the study, with a population of all the 1808 academic staff in federal university and university of education present in Rivers State. Through a stratified random sampling technique, a sample of 327 academic staff was determined using Taro Yamane formulae. To elicit information for analyses, a self-structured questionnaire tagged Centralization for Higher Education Decision Regulation Questionnaire (CHEDRQ) which was face and content validated by two experts in the field of education administration and education leadership. Using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, a reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. Mean score and standard deviation and rank order was used to answer research questions while z-test was used to analyze the null hypotheses. The study revealed that centralization of decisions regarding policy directives is very paramount in order to ensure harmony in the university system and hence recommended that the various leaders in the university should ensure that there is a synergy between the policy regulators and the universities, through consultations and collaborations.

Keywords: Policy, centralization, decision, higher education, policy regulations.

Introduction

Policy is the blue-print that gives an institution the direction that it must go and also the type and nature of goals it must mobilize its resources to pursue. Practically, every country of the world has a template of what the educational system must pursue. But over the year, the Nigerian government has made a big push toward the advancement of educational course. In fact different governments and at different ideology has lifted education as an article that can be easily sold to the populace. Notwithstanding, the various effort put by the government has been seen as one which has been determined by arrays of factors. These factors have been as a result of continuous modification of the educational policies to fit-in the various problems that are bedeviling the entire system. Despite the huge potentials that have been seen in the well implementation of educational policies some advanced nations of the world, the Nigerian educational system is still suffering from grip of failure in the policy implementation phase. It is believed by scholars by Ololube (2019, October, 12), that the most difficult phase of the entire policy formulation process is anchored on the policy implementation phase. The offshoot of implementation has been central to poor planning of the implementation phase (Odou & Anietie, 2019).

Educational system does not operate under or in the absence of a standard framework; rather there are policies that are set in place to guide the policy implementer and other educational stake holder, about the collective consensus of what constitute a standard operation of the educational policy. A policy is like the law that tells the individuals what to do and not how to do them. Hence this issue of policy implementation has been closely related the strategic plans of how the policy can be implemented. Since educational policy gives a road map or direction for actions, it therefore means that every educational system must be regulated to ensure that it is duly implemented. There has been also a discuss and argument that the major problem in the educational policy implementation bother heavily on the fact that those who makes these policy end up not involved in the actual process of policy implementation. While this has been an issue that has made scholars to think within and outside context, the other option left seems to be that those who are to implement the policy can conveniently apply the policy as it applies to them. And if this is the case, it therefore means that policies are not just a guide, rather, it is a guide that must be well interpreted to ensure that it is well implemented as expected.

While various universities are expected to implement the policies that determine, what they do (the kind of education to be offered in the university), when to do (the conditions that must be met before taking off an institution or programme), whom to do (the manpower

requirement before a programme is accredited), how to do (the facilities and other physical conditions that must be met before the programme or institution must be allowed to start or continue); the policy however does not state the extent this things must be done, hence need for central coordination of certain issue of policy clarification in the implementation phase.

Policies in Nigeria, especially the educational policies are implemented by those who by special or certain conditions are not the main actors in the implementation of the university policies. Based on the uncertainty that there may be possibility of digressing from the main intention of the education policy through some level of policy twists, they are exceptions in the policies that ensure that levels of accreditations, approvals, and support based on the policy guide by various agencies. There is need also that while there is establishment of universities by both government and private sectors, there is every tendency that there is need to regularly put up a framework that would will be able to still ensure that the government through her designated ministry or special agencies to centrally regulate the activities of the various universities to ensure that the policy implementation is ensured. It is worthy to note that the university system within its level has university brief, brochures, Senate Committee on Academic Programme.

Statement of problem

Taking a look at the Nigerian's national policy on education would attest that the national policy has the national potentials squeeze into a well articulated and documented statements that is certain of where the educational system must lead the nation to attained. Regrettably, the major problem of Nigerian educational system in not in the routine exercise of continuous policy review with a commensurate key forces that must drive complete implementation of the policy. For several decades, none of the Nigerian educational system has been ranked among the first one thousand best universities in the world, and also, there has been an unpleasant feedback from the employers of labour that the graduate are not on graduation equipped with skills that are required in the labour market. After some years of reoccurring feedback that shows dissatisfaction of the employers about the university graduate, the policy is however reviewed while the issue bothering on implementation still remains. Hence, this may be because the policy does not have the central set up that mat see to the regulation of the policy implementation at the various levels of education. Hence, there is need to investigate centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State.

Purpose of the study

The major objective of this study is to investigate centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State. But specifically the study will:

1. Find out the various agencies that would ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State.
2. Outline the various policy problems that can be curbed to ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State.

3. Find out the mean ratings of state and federal universities lecturers on the various agencies that would ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State.
4. Find out the mean ratings of state and federal universities lecturers on policy problems that can be curbed to ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State.

Research question

1. What are the various agencies that would ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State?
2. What are the various policy problems that can be curbed to ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State?
3. What are the mean ratings of state and federal universities lecturers on the various agencies that would ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State?
4. What are the mean ratings of state and federal universities lecturers on policy problems that can be curbed to ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of state and federal universities lecturers on the various agencies that would ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State?
2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of state and federal universities lecturers on policy problems that can be curbed to ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State?

Literature review

Theoretical framework

This study is based in theory X and Y which was propounded by Douglas McGregor in his book "the human side of Enterprise in 1960. The theory was in the bid to explain the various types of behaviour that can be found in an organization. Succinctly, the major argument is based on the fundamental distinction between management styles as to how it can be used to follow the two types of personalities that are present in the organisation.

Theory X

Theory X is the kind of management style that was adopted in the 20th century. This was because the major emphases on this period were based on work and task delivery; hence it gave a type of theory that was very applicable at that time. According to the argument brought forward

by theory x, it is assumed that the average Humana being has an inherent dislike of work and will avoid it if possible, because of the human dislike for work, most people must be coerced, controlled, directed, and threatened with punishment to get them to put forth adequate effort towards the achievement of organisational objectives. The theory X is of the view that when policies are out in place, that since it has been the basic nature of human to avoid the work of Policy implementation, there is bound to be the tendency of trying a policy twist or to completely avoid the work that is required to implement such policy. hence the government and the other policy makers must through their carious agencies find out what type of pressure, supervision through centralization of supervisory role to ensure that the policy are implemented to the later. However, these assumptions that are given for theory X that it will lead to mistrust and resentment from those they manage. Hence, the carious policy makers would rather give the policy implementers a sense of resentment and mistrust, though it has been argued that since the human will always project their own interests, the theory X will be untimely by nature to human hence they are to make the employee to pursue task accomplishments with the sole purpose not reward. Educationally, this is application to this study because then policy are made by the policy makers, the human nature's which is resisted to work but with much affinity to enjoyment will look for ways ensure that the policy is not entirely implemented in order to reduce work load and find time to pursue more of their personal needs over the needs of the institution. Hence the need for agencies to regulate the policy implementation process and give sanctions, rewards, punishment as applicable to ensure that policies are dull implemented.

Theory Y

Theory Y assumes that people are rational enough to exercise self direction in way that they will be able to be committed to the organisational objectives. Hence, rather than the carrot and stuck approach which will be a move to force the employee to do the work which they will not do, the employees should be allowed the employees to enjoy the trust and responsibility as that is the only way that would lead them to Manning up their duties. According to theory Y, employees do which to works and produce results as this alone is a great motivator to them. Hence the theory in conclusion assumed that: the balance of physical work is as natural as play and rest, adopting threat as a means of getting employees to do the work is not the only option available for enduring that the work is done, rather the employees will naturally be self- directed and exert self control in the work which they are committed to do, commitment to objective is the result of reward which is associated with achievement which is as the result of performing or doing their work. An average human being learns under a good condition, not to accept but also to seek responsibility, as avoidance if responsibility, lack of ambitious , and emphasis on security are generally based on accumulated experience which are not inherently generated, the capacity to use imagination, ingenuity, and creativity in the solution of organisational problems is widely distributed in the population, and also, the intellectual potentials of the average human being are only partially utilized. Thus educationally, the theory X requires that there should be policy

regulations to check and ensure that educational policy is being implemented and to ensure this, there is need to adopt means if sanctions and threats to bring about compliance with policy implementation, while the theory Y is of the opinion that educational policy willing be implemented when the implementers are allowed and given autonomy to implement the policies as they are willing to accept the responsibility without need for threat and coercion. This is also applicable to the current study because the policy implementers will be willing to show their potentials when they are given the room to do that, and also, there should be supportive supervision rather inspection which will according to theory x will not lead to mistrust and resentment.

Policy

Poly is a concept that has been given a wide range of definitions, but however policy is what government do, why they don't, and what difference does it make (Dye, 1995 in Dialoke, Ukah & Maduagwuna, 2017). Policy also the political decision for implementing programmes to achieve societal goals. This means that the government makes policy as part of their decision towards the steps that must be taken to ensure problem solution. It also involves the plan that gives direction or road map on addressing procedures of operations. Ozor (2004) in Dialoke et al (2017) established succinctly that policy is central Y to the operations and activities of both private and public institutions. In essence, the bulk of actions that are performed in the various organisations are as given by the organisational policy. Since various organizations makes policies, there is need to clarify those policies made by private individuals or institutions are tagged private policy while the one made by government is known as public policy (Ozor 2004 in Dialoke et al, 2017, Okebukola, 2006). Policy has been tackled by scholars from different perspectives. Policy can also be conceived as an action, a written documents, and statements regarding the different kinds of procedures that must be passed through to ensure achievement of organisational objectives. In abridgment, policy can be seen in a more elaborate form, as the an integrated course and programme of action that an organisation has put in place to guide actions that are targeted towards the advancement and achievement of the aims and objectives of the organisations (Ikelegbe, 2006, Odu & Anietie, 2019, Anietie, Odou & Uba, 2019).

Educational policy

Education like every other active sectors is guided by policy, in terms of education, it can be widely regarded as educational policy. Educational policy are what's provides a firm backing about the government and collective decisions about what should be the educational system is expected to achieve and how they should achieve that. More so, educational policies are the initiatives mostly by governments that determine the direction of an educational system (Okoroma, 2000 in Okoroma, 2006). Hence educational institutions just like every other organisation do not operate without policy that serves as a blue print for informed decision and operations (Odou, Anietie, & Ehule, 2019). Slightly different from the perspective of Odou et al

that educational policy gives a blue print for informed decision, more so, Fabunmi (2004) noted that educational policy is the framework within which education is administered in a given place and within specific period. Policy is also the official statement by governments on the chosen course of action and the procedure for achieving it (Nwangwu, 2003). Policy as proposed by Awokoya (1981) in Okoroma (2006) is directed towards increasing the quality of life of a people. Hence, to him, he is of the view that the major underlying factor for educational policy is to at the end of the day lead to improved standard of living through formulation of appropriate educational policies. However, educational policy is what defines what the government wants to achieve through education and how it can be procedurally achieved.

Centralization

The concept of centralization has been driven off by the policy of (de)centralization. Centralization is the process that involves concentration of certain or all the decision to a particular quarters or areas. According to Corporate Finance Institute (2019), centralization is the process which the activities involving planning and decision-making within an organisation are concentrated to specific leader or location or institution or agency. In the centralized institution, the decision making power is based on the head office or the central office. Even when there is a little relieved from the centralized institution, certain decisions are retained to the center (Education Fact Sheet, 2012). The concept of centralization is mostly used in the government setup where the decisions for certain governmental operations are coming from the centre. According to Surbhi (2017) centralization implies the power of planning and decision making are exclusively in the hand of the top management. It is a pattern that make power and policy formulation domicile in the hand of those at apex administrative level.

Higher education

Higher education is the level of education that given or attained when the secondary education level is completed. The higher educational level includes the polytechnics, monotronics, universities, and colleges. It is the level of education that is mandated to produce highly skilled manpower (UNESCO, 2005). Despite these expectations, the objective of the higher education, with university inclusive is clearly stated in the national policy on education.

Objectives of Higher Education Institution (HEI)

The educational system is one that is meant to train the needed manpower to meet the need of the national economy. The educational system is one that can translate national dreams to achievable and realistic one through stating the means to which these objectives can be achieved. In so doing, there is need for harmony in the entire educational system in a way that each level of the

educational system is always pointing at the achievement as stated in the National Policy on Education (2004) stated that:

- The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity.
- The inculcation of the right type of values and attitude for the survival of individuals and the Nigerian society.
- The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around, and
- The acquisition of appropriate skills and development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of his society.

Even as the above is the bigger picture of what the Nigeria educational system stands to achieve, more specifically, the higher education, with the university inclusive. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2004) made it clear that the Nigerian higher education is expected to provide professional that transcends to the national needs. Hence, this has been the central reason why the educational system, especially the university system is supposed to bridge the gap between the university and the needs of the National economy (Anietie, Odou and Uba, 2019, Omoregie, 2008). To achieve this, the objective of the Higher Education Institution as outlined by the NPE (2004), section 8 no. 59(a-g) within a seven context as to:

- Contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training;
- Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society;
- Develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments;
- Acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society;
- Promote and encourage scholarship and community service;
- Forge and cement national unity; and ,
- Promote National and International understanding and Interaction.

Policy regulations

It's always confusing to differentiate between Policies and Regulations. They seem so much similar but are different. Policies are rules that are made by organisations with the aim of achieving their predetermined aim and objectives. The policies are made by individuals as a map

that leads to the achievement of the organisational goals (Navya, 2016). However, policies on their own cannot not be complied with, owing to the explanation of the theory X that the natural human is much attracted to enjoyment and are resistant to work, hence, organisation need to find out ways to ensure that the policies that guide the operation of the organisation needs to be complied with through the introduction of regulations. Regulations are made to make employees to comply with the policy requirements as to ensure goals achievement. A regulation has the effect of a law and is considered as a restriction that is imposed by authorities, to make people follow the desired code of conduct (Navya, 2016).

According to Navya (2016), regulation includes the following points:

- Regulations are administrative in nature and allow for smooth operations in an organization or a department whereas policies are general in nature and made to help an organization achieve its goals.
- Regulations are made by the executive branch of the government whereas policies are made by individuals, organizations, and even governments.
- Regulations are restrictive in nature and impose sanctions upon people and companies whereas policies are unwritten but help in guiding the organizations to achieve their long term goals.
- Governments change but the basic foreign policy of a country remains the same.

Agencies that would ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities

Since there is need for there to be check and balances in the entire system to ensure efficiency and effectiveness, there have been several bodies and agencies that are exceptionally entitled to the responsibility to regulate the various policy implementations in the various universities in Nigeria. Some of the agencies that can regulate the various activities that relates to university operation from the admission to the regulation of academic activities.

Nigeria university commission

The Nigerian University commission is one of the agencies that are given the constitutional role of advising the federal the state government on all the various aspects of the university education and the establishment of a guideline for the development of the universities in the countries. The function of the NUC is stated broadly and are contained in the 4(1) of the NUC Act with its duties including the

- Advisory role to the government on every financial needs of the various universities in both financial and recurrent needs,
- receiving block grants from the Federal Government and allocate them to federal universities;

- taking into account, in advising the Federal and State Governments on university finances, such grants as may be made to the universities by State Governments and by persons and institutions in and outside Nigeria;
- Undertaking periodic reviews of the terms and conditions of service of personnel engaged in the universities and to make recommendations thereon to the Federal Government, where appropriate, etc.

The university commission is meant to check and regulate the policy implementation process that would ensure that the university policies are implemented to the later (Newton, 2007). The university commission is charge with function that allows them to determine the conditions that would lead to the establishment of the university and approval of programmes in the university. The university commission are also involved the in the accreditation of programmes and other related matters. Though there have been other issues relating to the concentration authorities in the hand of the NUC, hence leading to certain level of rigidity and inability of the university to be able to invent new ideas, innovations and be flexible to the current and trending needs of the economy by way of programme flexibility. The entire process and function of the university commission is to maintain standard and serve as quality control agency. The commission regulates the activities of both public and private universities using same standards, even with the presence of these regulatory agencies, there are still noticeable challenges due to corruption (Osuagwu, 2009). The commission though is aware that the system and operations are competitive and hence there is need for continuous supervision and regulation of the extent to which the various universities are able to comply with the standard that has been put forward. It through the relationship between the commission and the various universities that the government is well intimated concerning the general needs of the universities. This study will be centered on the two agencies, namely; Nigeria university commission works hand in hand with other regulatory bodies like the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board.

Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB)

The Joint admission and matriculation board was established to regulate policies that pertain to admission and matriculation of students. This mean that they are to centrally harmonize the entire process that has to do with admission of students. The board works closely with the Nigerian University Commission as regards the level or the carrying capacity of various universities. These various government agencies or commissions are to centrally regulate certain policy implementation covering their various role descriptions as stated in the act that established them. Thought ultimately, they are to regulate standard in the university through quality check at interval.

The board is established to conduct examinations into the Nigerian universities and other higher educational institutions throughout the country (Omoregie, 2008). The institutional autonomy to decide who to admit and on what criteria has invariably been transferred from tertiary institutions to this regulatory body. As regard the JAMB Act, the body has the sole

responsibility to set the admission standard and to determine whom and when to admit (National Universities Commission, 2005). Many factors such as a quota system, educational disadvantaged states policy and federal character have been introduced into admission process thereby putting merits into second position in some cases (Uvah, 2008). While JAMB determines the number of students each university is to admit, the NUC determines those courses that are to be offered, who will teach them and the qualifications of those to teach those courses.

Policy problems

Nigeria has put together some of the best policies and have spent a lot of the national fortune to ensure that the best policies are actually provided for implementation. These policies covers various areas, but despite the glorious and applauding policies with promises of better workability, the problem has been regrettably sad as there has been recurrent failures in almost all the policies put in place to guide the operations of the various sectors of the economy. Particularly, the Nigerian educational system had had some rounds of conferences concerning policy formulations that can turn around the entire educational system, but as usual, there has been only a change in policies to another without taking a bold step to deviate from paper presentation of policies to the actual implementation of the policies. In fact, scholars like Okoroma (2006); Odou and Anietie (2019) among others have been able to point out that the major reason why the policy family is not because of the quality of the policy, but by certain factors that has bothered around the implementation. Some of the factors that may have persistently been identified among others as follows:

Political undertones in education policy/ politicizing education

Education has been used by series of political class as a tool or strategy to get the support of the masses. It is however regrettably noted that after the political class gets to power, educational needs will be relegated to the background treated with levity. There is lack of commitment on the path of political class to ensure that the various educational policies, especially the university educational policies. Appointment to areas that has direct impact on the progress of education are barely done based on merit, rather they are mostly use as am means to reward political loyalist who have no technical knowledge regarding policy implementation.

Inadequate facilities

No matter the level of sophistication of any educational policy, whether from the previous or the currently adopted once, it can achieve little or nothing in the face of absence of standard and quality educational facilities. The educational facilities are the tools that are used to implement the policy. The educational facility constitutes the physical environment that supports the actual policy implementation.

Inadequate staffing

Adequate staffing is the core of policy implementation, and this is evident on the fact that policies are not drivers of themselves; they are used by people to ensure the achievement of the organisational aims and objectives. However, there may be staff but wrongly placed as these in most cases are done based on “man know man”. In some of the universities, there are incidence of stress that is coupled with the fact that lecturers are given work overload and series of other responsibilities outside the lecturing, research and community development.

Absence of adequate staff development programme

In-service training is not regular in the Nigerian university. Most times, the staff are engaged in the funding the self-development. When the staffs are not updated with the current realities and trends in the best international practices, they are not able to deliver by policy implementation (Tajomavwo, 2009).

Dearth of statistics

There is absence of reliable statistics which is a measure problem for policy implementation in the Nigerian universities. When there is no reliable statistics, the educational planners will only depend on statistics to make appropriate planning in the educational system. When there is no reliable data, it is bound that the planners of the university education system will plan using “cooked up” or falsified data, hence they will plan in error, and administrators and leaders will act based on error and the entire educational system is going to remain sluggish and unproductive.

Issues related professionalism of education

In other professions like the law, engineering, medical sciences and all other fields, there is an organized body of professionals that regulates the activities of its members, as regards the ethical and remuneration, and practices (Oto, 2006). When there are professionals in the actual implementation of educational policy, there is high tendency for them to understand the technical requirement of the policy and ensure that the policy is well understood and implemented to the later.

Corruption

Corruption is a major setback in the policy implementation in Nigerian university. This is because the different officers and administrators are engaged in different levels of corruption, without allowing due process. The funds that are allocated for policy implementation are embezzled or even misappropriated to ultimately satisfy self at the detriment of organisational development. More so, there is falsification of report on policy implementation, bribing, “sorting” (bribing lecturers or university to gain undeserved grades and promotion). This practice affects policy implementation in the universities in Nigeria.

Insufficient supervision

Supervision is not taken seriously to ensure that the policy implementation phase is effective. Most administrators of the universities are deemed very busy and hence leave the school into the hands of the lecturers believing that they are professionals in their different fields and hence they are bound to be effective (Oyewole, 2009). The major policy twists are seen when there are instead of supervision of subordinates by superior, there is “*godfatherism*”, cultism and the entire supervisory process if thought out, becomes witch-hunting process.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey design, this is because the researcher intends to describe variable as they exist without manipulation (Anietie & Zipamoh, 2017 in Odou, Anietie, and Ehule, 2019). The population of the study consists of all the 2558 academic staff in all the public universities in Rivers State. Among this population, the following were the individual population of the various institutions namely; University of Port Harcourt, 1379 (53%), Ignatius Ajuru University of Education; 429 (16%) and Rivers State University of Science and Technology; 796 (31%). More so, the population was further stratified to federal (1379) and state (1177) which is 54% and 46% respectively. The information was gotten from the brochures of the various departments. A stratified random sampling technique was used to determine a sample of 344 academic staff using Taro Yamane formulae. Also, among there were 186 (54%) academic staff from federal universities and 158(46%) respondents from state universities. In order to elicit information from the respondent, the researcher designed a research questionnaire tagged “Centralization for Higher Education Policy Regulations Questionnaire (CHEPRQ). For the validity of the instrument, the research questionnaire was accessed by experts in test and measurement and department of educational management to ensure that the instrument was face and content validated. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, a Pearson moment correlation coefficient was used to determine a coefficient of 0.78, hence the instrument was highly reliable. In analyzing, mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research question from the instrument designed in the Likert Modified 4-Point scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strong Disagree on the ratings of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. Also, z-test was used to analyze the hypotheses.

Data analyses and Discussion of findings

Responses to research questions

Research question 1: What are the various agencies that would ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State?

Table 1: mean ratings of state and federal universities lecturers on the various agencies that would ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State.

S/N	Agencies to ensure quality includes:	assurance	Federal N=186	S.D ₁	State N=158	S.D ₂	Mean Set	Decision
			x1		x2			
1.	The senate committee on academic programmes		3.0	1.73	2.9	1.70	3.0	A
2.	Nigerian University commission		3.4	1.84	3.2	1.78	3.3	A
3.	Joint Admission and matriculation board		2.7	1.64	2.5	1.58	2.6	A
4.	Exams committees		2.3	1.51	2.7	1.64	2.5	A
5.	Ministry of education		2.8	1.67	2.4	1.54	2.6	A
			2.84	1.67	2.74	1.64	2.8	

A=Accepted

NA = Not accepted

Mean criterion = 2.50

Mean >2.5 (accept), Mean <2.50 (not Accepted)

The table above shows the mean response of the various items on the table about the score and standard deviation of state and federal universities lecturers on the various agencies that would ensure policy centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State. From the table, it shows that the respondents accepted that the senate committee on academic programmes, Nigeria University commission, Joint Admission and matriculation board, exams committees, and ministry of education.

Based on the response of the various respondents, it shows that the senate committee on academic planning places a major on quality assurance in the universities. Some of the function of the SCAP is however overseen by senate for final passage to the appropriate committee. The Nigerian university commission with a mean of (3.3) shows that the respondent accepted on the role of the university commission on the supervisory roles on the commission as to stand as check for quality control. Joint admission and matriculation board with a mean set of (2.6) shows that the respondents accepted that JAMB is also an integral aspect of the quality control, such function are seen in their activities that are related to admission and regulations of the admission process. This is done by quota system, educationally disadvantaged state and accessing the carrying capacity of the various educational institution. This is aligned with the opinion of (Uvah, 2008), that many factors such as a quota system, educational disadvantaged states policy and federal character have been introduced into admission process thereby putting merits into second position in some cases. Still on the table, the exams committee that are constituted in the various faculties and universities with a mean set score of 2.5 was also accepted as one of the various agencies that can ensure policy centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities. Finally on table one, the ministry of education with the mean set of 2.6 was accepted to be one of the agencies that can ensure policy centralization. These agencies cover both the one at the federal and state level.

Research question 2: What are the policy problems that can be curbed to ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State?

Table 2: mean ratings of state and federal universities lecturers on policy problems that can be curbed to ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State.

S/ N	The policy problems in Nigeria university among others includes:	Federal N=186 x1	S.D ₁	State N=158 x2	S.D ₂	Mean Set	Decision
1.	Political undertones in education policy/ politicizing education	3.6	1.89	3.1	1.76	3.4	A
2.	Inadequate facilities	3.2	1.78	3.2	1.78	3.2	A
3.	Inadequate staffing	3.8	1.94	3.6	1.89	3.7	A
4.	Absence of adequate staff development programme	3.0	1.73	3.0	1.73	3.0	A
5.	Dearth of statistics	3.7	1.92	3.2	1.78	3.5	A
6.	Issues related professionalism of education	3.6	1.89	3.4	1.84	3.5	A
7.	Corruption	3.5	1.87	3.2	1.78	3.4	A
8.	Insufficient supervision	3.2	1.78	3.4	1.84	3.3	A
		3.45	1.81	3.26	1.8	3.3	

From table two, Political undertones in education policy/ politicizing education, adequate facilities, inadequate staffing, absence of adequate staff development programme, dearth of statistics, and Issues related professionalism of education were all above the mean criterion of 2.5, hence they are accepted to be the policy problems that can be curbed to ensure policy centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State.

Based on the table 2, the respondents accepted that there is political undertone/politicizing education, this opinion of the respondents' tallies with the researcher's

experience of the corresponding researcher for over fourteen years working as educational officers. Also, from the same table, the respondents accepted that the inadequate facilities (3.2) is one of the problem the can be curbed to ensure policy regulation. Inadequate staffing, absence of adequate staff development programme, dearth of statistics, and Issues related professionalism of education were all accepted as the policy problems and this facts were also supported by (Oto, 2006, Oyewole, 2009, & Tajomavwo, 2009).

Analyses of Hypotheses

Table 3: Mean, standard deviation and z-test of the difference in the mean ratings of state and federal universities lecturers on policy problems that can be curbed to ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State.

Variables	N	Df	Mean	SD	z-calculated	z-critical	Remark
Federal	186	342	2. 84	1.67	0.24	1. 96	Accept
State	158		2. 74	1.64			

Table 3 showed that the calculated z-value of 0.24 which is less than the critical z-value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted.

Table 4: Mean, standard deviation and z-test of the difference in the mean ratings of state and federal universities lecturers on the various agencies that would ensure centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State

Variables	N	Df	Mean	SD	z-calculated	z-critical	Remark
Federal	186	342	3. 45	1.81	4.3	1. 96	Accept
State	158		3. 26	1.8			

Table 3 showed that the calculated z-value of 4.3 at a degree of freedom standing at 342 which is greater than the critical z-value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is therefore not accepted. Hence the null stating that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of state and federal universities lecturers on the various agencies that would ensure policy centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities in Rivers State.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Centralization is a concept that has been eaten up by the waves of decentralization because of some of the glitches bothering on decision and bureaucracy. But however, the decentralization concept shown only little of achievement with duplication of function. Most scholars has been

motivated to investigate why there is policy twist and somersault in the various areas of the national sectors especially educational sector, which is supposed to be a viable laboratory for the social reconstruction. The paper looked critically at these issues within the context of various agencies that would ensure policy centralization for higher education policy regulations and policy problems that can be curbed to ensure policy centralization for higher education policy regulations in public universities. Concept, comment and potions of different authors were considered and reviewed to ascertain a consensus view of the concept of policy, centralization. Opinion of respondents considering the various subjects under review to ascertain their strength in their mean responses. Hence, the study concluded that centralization of decisions regarding policy directives is very paramount in other to ensure harmony in the university system and quality control; hence the study recommended that recommended that the various leaders in the university should ensure that there is a synergy between the policy regulators and the universities, through consultations and collaborations.



Reference

- Anietie, R., Uba, T.L., & Odou, R.S.M. (2019). Insurance policy integration for curbing educational waste in public secondary schools in Rivers State. *International Journal of Advanced Studies in Social Science & Innovation*, 3(9)51-55.
- Corporate Finance Institute.com (2019, October, 31), retrieved from <https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/knowledge/strategy/centralization/>
- Dialoke, I., Ukah, F.O., & Maduagwuna, I.V. (2017). Policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria: the bane of underdevelopment. *International Journal of Capacity Building in Education and Management*, 3(2)22-27
- Education Fact Sheet. (2012). Printed by economic section, United States Embassy in Nigeria. Retrieved from <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov>.
- McGregor, D. (1960). *The human side of enterprise*. McGraw-Hill (annotated edn., 2006), McGraw-Hills.
- National Universities Commission. (2005). Purported rejection of state universities graduates by employers of labour, Monday memo, November, 4(45). retrieved from <https://groups.google.com/forum/m/#>.
- Navya, B. (2015, July, 19). Difference between policy and regulations. Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/difference-between-policy-regulations-navya-b>
- Newton, J., (2007). What is quality in higher education? A selection of papers from the 1st European forum for quality assurance; 23-25 November 2006, Hosted by the Technische Universitat Munchen, Germany. Nigeria
- Odou, R.S.M & Anietie, R. (2019). Secondary Education Funding Strategy for Educational goals Achievement in Rivers State. *International Journal of Research and Scientific Innovation*. Vol. 11(9)195- 201.
- Odou, R.S.M., Anietie, R., Ehule, G. E. (2019). Agenda setting and educational policy implementation in public universities in Rivers State. A paper accepted for publication by World Journal of Education Research.
- Odukoya, J.O., Bowale, E., & Okunlola, S. (2018). Formulation and implementation of educational policies in Nigeria. *African Educational Research Journal* Vol. 6(1), 1-4

- Okebukola, P.A. (2006). Intensive retraining programme for graduates of universities for better quality and standard. A Keynote Address at the First Oyo State Education Summit, Ibadan, July 10.
- Okoroma, N.S. (2006). Educational policies and problems of implementation in Nigeria. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, 46(2), 245-263. Retrieved on 1 November, 2019 from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED500000/ED500000.pdf>
- Okwuofu, O. & Aminu, Y. (2013). ASUU insists NUC should be scrapped, *The Nation Newspaper*. September 23: 6.
- Oladipo, A., O. Adeosun & A. Oni. (2010). Quality assurance and sustainable university education in Nigeria. retrieved from aadcice.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/.../sosh4_1-09.
- Omoregie, N., (2008). Quality assurance in Nigerian university education and credentialing. retrieved from Education winter <http://findarticle.com>
- Osuagwu, U. (2009). Corruption bane of Nigerian varsities poor rating – Okoko. retrieved from <http://theeconomyng.com/news181.html>.
- Oto, J.O. (2006). A critique of students vices and the effect on quality of graduates of Nigerian tertiary institutions. Retrieved from www.krepublishers.com.
- Oyewole, B.K., (2009). Instructional supervisory techniques and quality assurance in Nigerian universities; knowledge reviewed. *A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 19(5): 14-20.
- Surbhi, S. (2017). Difference between centralization and decentralization. Retrieved from <https://keydifferences.com/difference-between-centralisation-and-decentralisation.html>
- Tajomavwo, G.A. (2009). Characteristic of effective organization. A Paper Delivered At a Workshop on Enhancing Organizational Change and Effectiveness; Centre for Management Development, Shangisha, Lagos.
- UNESCO (2005). The EFA (Education for All). The Quality Imperative Global Monitoring Report Team Printed in France.
- Uvah, I.I. (2008). Accreditation in Nigerian universities: The role of the academic planner. Retrieved from www.codapnu.org/downloads/Accreditation.ppt.