Examining Social Justice Issues in Education and the Management of Student Development in Delta State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between equal opportunity to learn, meeting basic needs, lesson preparation by teachers, and students' development in Delta State, Nigeria. The study was guided by three objectives. This study adopted the quantitative research design. The population of the study consisted of principals and teachers in government-owned secondary schools in the state; which consisted of 453 principals and 14,269 instructors/teachers in government-owned secondary schools. A proportionate sample of 175 principals and 364 teachers was selected from each of the state's three Senatorial Districts. Participants were chosen from a sample of the state's public senior secondary schools using a proportionate sampling technique. The approach employed to gather the data was a questionnaire; and quantitative statistical tools was used to analyze the results. Findings showed that there are no appreciable differences in Delta State, Nigeria when it comes to teacher training, meeting fundamental requirements, equitable access to education, and managing students' growth. In order to foster empathy in students and help them develop critical thinking skills, the researcher advised educational management to ensure that all students, regardless of age, had equal access to education.
Keywords: Social Justice, Development, Basic Needs, Management, Nigeria.

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INTRODUCTION

The educational standards of a school are significantly influenced by the students' growth in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. The integration of these three domains determines how learners participate in social life and, therefore, influences their social sustainability and the generation of new ideas. Nigeria nowadays is flooded with violence, kidnapping, drug abuse, sexual abuse, mental illness, poverty, bandits, Boko Haram and many other fundamental issues that are pertinent to the nation's politics, economy and culture. The purpose of social justice, thus, should be judgmentally addressed to safeguard students' development. Throughout the world, social justice issues have turned out to be deeply embedded in the fabrics of society and are vital parts of everyday discourse in education, despite the tendency of eliminating gaps between the poor and the rich (Lawrence & Egbule, 2021)

Education plays a crucial role in making students develop by equipping learners positively for their entire life's sojourns, careers and challenges. Secondary education is subdivided into two different segments that are seamlessly connected (junior and senior secondary education) based on the framework of National Policy on Education of FRN (2013) and the duration shall be 6 years. Secondary schooling plays necessary roles in making an individual to be self-developed and self-reliant towards evolving the country. Secondary education is defined as the schooling learners acquire after higher education. It is at this phase of training that students are prepared for higher institutions.

Social justice in education is concerned with education equality and a desire to raise educational attainment and improve students' development (Dover, 2015). It implies that social justice in education facilitates ethical discourse that gives room for high academic attainment by sustaining relationships with learners from all backgrounds and maintaining value orientation towards learners' development. Social justice in education can be seen as the process, principles and policies adopted by the government or institutions to ensure that students' welfares is accorded optimum attention in order to ensure maximisation of students'

development (Cho, 2017). It is very clear that if students were given equal opportunity to learning, provided with basic needs and taught by prepared teachers they would perform reasonably better for their development (Odofin & Ebenuwa-Okoh, 2023). Social justice in this study refers to equal opportunity to learning, provision of education of basic needs and teacher preparation of lesson for effective management of students' development.

Equal opportunity to learning can be seen as a way of making educational services accessible to every child irrespective of their background, abilities and interest (Aksu & Canturk, 2015). In general, equal opportunity to learning is seen as equality of being able to access available resources and being able to utilise them towards achieving the stated educational goals and objectives. In the view of Odofin (2020), equal opportunity to learning is required in a democratic system which can create and contribute to develop understanding, acceptance and human security. Education should be essential, free, reachable, acceptable and adaptable to social change and to the best interest of the child, which is responsive towards the development of student knowledge. In a democratic system, learners should have the opportunity to achieve the highest possible standards by having equal access to learning irrespective of their culture, religion, background, age, ethnicity, language or gender (Egbule, 2020)

Education basic facilities play a crucial role in the actualisation of educational objectives. In order to satisfy the physical and emotional needs of students, there should be provision of a conducive learning environment, guidance and counselling services, health service, safe structure, drinkable water, sufficient shelter space for work and play and health services for the overall development of students and achievement of educational system as stated in the National Policy on Education (2013). Therefore, these cannot be fully achieved without addressing the issues of social justice in education system. Counselling and guidance services are important for the development of learners because it is a desirable advisory technique used in helping students to achieve their goals and aspirations. It is a harmonising means of controlling students' emotional disturbances, frustrations and vaulting ambition to create conducive learning for them to develop positively (Abdullahi, 2017). The school environment is characterised by a conflicting fusion of behavioural problems resulting from differential attitudes of students which call for intervening devices for a conducive learning environment as well as helping students' effect positive desirable behavioural changes (Odofin & Igabari, 2023)

Teacher preparation of lessons provides a guide for managing the learning environment. It is an act by which teacher makes wise decisions about the strategies and methods to employ in teaching students systematically in the classroom towards their development (Olorundare, 2015). This means that the more prepared a teacher is, the livelier the teaching and learning will be. Preparations of lessons provide basic information, components, objectives and lesson details, including steps which describe actions to be undertaken by the teacher. In addition, it provides a framework for an effective teaching and learning process, allows teacher to focus on one objective at a time and communicate to learners what they will learn and provides additional support to students. An ideal teacher according to Egbule (2018) does not just go to the classroom to teach, since the textbook available in the market are of different qualities and not all of them may meet required standards of promoting effective learning.

Management of secondary schools should be geared towards achieving the objectives of educating the students to become useful and respected citizens. This could only be achieved by proper arrangement in the form of planning, controlling, co-ordinating the education system by the government, principals, staff and stakeholders in order to realise the desired objectives of producing good quality. Great emphasis is placed on services rendered to students because the schools are not only built to cater to the interest of teachers, parents and school administrators alone, but also for students' development (Onye, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

Several studies have been conducted on social justice and education system. Cho (2017) embarked on the navigation of social justice and diverse education. Congo-Poottaren and Sohawon (2014) investigated the enactment social justice and professional development. Guerra, Nelson, Jacobs and Yamamura (2013) conducted their research on the development of ten lightening leaders for social justice, paying attention to the programmatic elements that work or need improvement. Zhang, Goddard and Jakubiec (2018) investigated education and social justice leadership: a suggested survey was adopted together data. Mixed methods technique was used to analyse data. The results showed that there is a momentous and positive relationship between just and friendly school leaders and the community setting. There are numerous topics on social justice and education that are so far not studied by these researchers. These parts comprise social justice issues in education and management of students' development in Nigeria. Likewise, to the best knowledge of the researcher, there have been no researches in Nigeria up till now that have focused on the equal opportunity to learning, provision of basic needs and teacher preparation as serious indices to measure social justice. Hence, this study attempts to seal the holes open by the extant researchers.

Research Questions

The following research questions was raised to guide the study:

i. What is the relationship between equal opportunity to learning and management of students' development in Delta State?

ii. What is the relationship between provision of basic needs and management of students' development in Delta State?

iii. What is the relationship between teacher preparation and management of students' development in Delta State?

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the quantitative research design. The design was considered proper for this research since it will help the investigator to survey the collaboration that occur between social justice and management of students' development. The population of this study consisted of 453 principals and 14,269 instructors/teachers in government-owned secondary schools in Delta State. A proportionate sample of 175 principals and 364 teachers was selected from each of the state's three Senatorial Districts. Participants were chosen from a sample of the state's public senior secondary schools using a proportionate sampling technique. The approach employed to gather the data was a questionnaire; and quantitative statistical tools was used to analyze the results.

RESULTS

Research Question One

What is the relationship between equal opportunity to learning and management of students' development in Delta State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Equal Opportunity to Learning

S/N	Statement	Principal Responses		Teachers Responses		Decision
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	Equal opportunity to learning encourages learners to empathize with others and develops the skill of critical thinking	2.93	0.97	2.95	0.97	Agreed
2	Equal opportunity to learning allows students to achieve the level of success and self-respect to which they are entitled	2.87	0.92	2.89	0.95	Agreed
3	Equal opportunity to learning helps learners acquire the social skills needed to interact effectively with others	2.93	0.91	2.80	0.98	Agreed
4	Equal opportunity to learning helps learners participate in extracurricular activities that foster positive development	2.82	1.01	2.78	1.04	Agreed
5	Equal opportunity to learning helps learners have more control over their life positively	2.90	0.95	2.92	1.03	Agreed
	Grand Mean	**2.89**	**0.95**	**2.87**	**0.99**	

Table 1 revealed that principals and teachers agreed to the statement measuring the relationship between equal opportunity to learning and management of students' development in Delta State as reflected in the high mean and standard deviation. The responses show a grand mean of 2.89 and standard deviation of 0.95 for principals' responses while a grand mean of 2.87 and standard deviation of 0.99 was adduced for the teachers. The implication here is that the principals and teachers agreed that when students are giving equal opportunity to learning, they will invariably be furnished with the needed skills to enhance their development.

Research Question Two

What is the relationship between provision of basic needs and management of students' development in Delta State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on Basic Needs

S/N	Statement	Principal Responses		Teachers Responses		Decision
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	Provision of basic needs makes learners think effectively and develop the skills for relevant judgment	2.90	0.97	2.84	1.00	Agreed
2	Provision of basic needs makes students understand and appreciate their role as citizens	2.71	1.04	2.93	0.97	Agreed
3	Provision of basic needs makes students understand the basic facts about sanitation needed to promote good health condition	2.79	0.97	2.95	0.91	Agreed
4	Provision of basic needs helps learners take right decision on how to make use of available resources at the appropriate time to improve their knowledge	2.86	0.98	2.90	0.96	Agreed
5	Provision of basic needs helps students in satisfying their needs in accordance with the institutional goals.	2.89	0.98	2.87	1.02	Agreed
	Grand Mean	2.83	0.98	2.89	0.97	

Table 2 revealed that principals and teachers agreed to the statement measuring the provision of basic needs and management of students' development in Delta State as reflected in the high mean and standard deviation. The responses show a grand mean of 2.83 and standard deviation of 0.98 for principals' responses while a grand mean of 2.89 and standard deviation of 0.97 was arrived at for the teachers. The results indicate that the principals and teachers agree that when there is adequate provision of education basic needs, students will maintain favourable setting for improving their learning and overall development.

Research Question Three

What is the relationship between teacher preparation and management of students' development in Delta State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on Teacher Preparation

S/N	Statement	Principal Responses		Teachers Responses		Decision
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1	Teacher preparation helps in the growth and development of the students domains of knowledge	2.87	0.94	2.93	0.97	Agreed
2	Teacher preparation helps in making adequate provision for students activities	2.77	1.03	3.01	0.93	Agreed
3	Teachers preparation helps to generate enthusiasm for learning among students	2.96	0.97	2.92	0.96	Agreed
4	Teacher preparation helps ensure continuous intellectual and social development of the learners	2.96	0.93	2.91	1.00	Agreed
5	Teachers preparation helps encourage development of learners' personality	2.86	0.98	2.90	1.01	Agreed
	Grand Mean	2.88	0.97	2.93	0.78	

Table 3 discovered that principals and teachers agreed to the statement measuring the relationship between teacher preparation and management of students' development in Delta State as reflected in the high mean and standard deviation. The responses show a grand mean of 2.88 and standard deviation of 0.97 for principals' responses while a grand mean of 2.93 and standard deviation of 0.78 was arrived at for the teachers. The results shows that the principals and teachers agree that when teachers prepare their lesson effectively, it will arouse students' interest in learning and prepare them for better future.

DISCUSSION

The results in Table 1 express that equal opportunity to learning improves efficient management of students' development in Kwara State, Nigeria. This, in turn, encourages students to empathise with others and develop the skill of critical thinking; allows students to achieve the level of success and self-respect to which they are entitled; helps students to attain social skills required to interact efficiently with others; helps learners with opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities that foster positive development; and helps students to have more control over their life positively. The results from hypothesis one show that there is no positive difference between equal opportunity to learning and management of students' development. These findings conform to Genc and Eryaman's (2008) study, which

posits that the provision of learning opportunity improves individual talents and intelligence at maximum level and brings out development in students. These findings disagree with Sulton's (1991) study, which shows that fairness in bringing education to everyone does not essentially guarantee that results or benefits gained are steady.

The findings in Table 2 indicate that the provision of basic needs enhance s students' development in Kwara State. Such that it makes students think effectively and develop skills for relevant judgement; understand and appreciate their role as citizens; understand the basic facts about sanitation needed for promoting good health condition; helps students make the right decision on how to make use of the available resources at the appropriate time to improve their knowledge; and helps students in satisfying their needs in accordance with the institutional goals. The result from hypothesis two indicated that there is no positive difference between the provision of basic needs and management of students' development. These findings agreed with Takwate's (2018) study that the provision of education of basic needs in terms of learning facilities and guidance and counselling services has been found to be a significant determinant of students' development. These findings also concur with Odumbe, Simatwa and Ayodo's (2015) study that the availability of teaching and learning facilities, competent teachers and good physical environment has an impact on students' development. In addition, these findings agreed with Onasanya's (2016) study that provision of education of basic needs facilitates proper functioning of school and enhances quality learners. Furthermore, these findings in line with Farooq, Chandhry, Shafiq and Berham's (2011) study that adequate provision of needed facilities in school enhances the quality of students' academic performance.

The findings in Table 3 show that the teachers' preparation of lessons increases the effective management of students' development. Such that it helps in the growth and development of students' cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains, helps in making adequate provision for student activities, helps to generate enthusiasm for learning among students, helps to ensure continuous intellectual and social development of the learners and helps to encourage development of learners' personality. The result of hypothesis three presents that there is no positive difference between teacher preparation and management of students' development. These findings are in conformity with Olorundare's (2015) study, which shows that preparing for lessons help teachers to understand the methods of teaching to be utilised in classroom so as to make teaching more interesting, interactive and exciting to all categories of learners with the aim of achieving educational goals and objectives. These findings are also in line with Oduwaiye's (2016) study, which shows that lesson preparation helps in maintaining attention and concentration, and consequently order and discipline.

CONCLUSION

These findings will provide countless advantages to school managers. The outcome of the study will assist the management to recognise the necessity of social justice in providing equal opportunity to learning, education of basic needs and ensure proper teacher preparation for lessons in order to enhance the effective management of students' development. This study would also help teachers and principals to continue to make appropriate preparation of lessons to be taught so as to arouse the interest of learners in teaching. Furthermore, this study would be useful to researchers in the field of education in terms of reference citation.

Social justice is an imperative element in enhancing active management of students' development. Regarding the outcome of this study, it is resolved that there is no positive difference between equal opportunity to learning, provision of basic needs, teacher preparation of lessons and management of students' development as they were found to be connected to one another.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The government should provide equal access to education to all learners irrespective of their age so as to encourage students to empathise with others and develop the skill of critical thinking; it should allow students to achieve the level of success and self-respect to which they are entitled, help students attain the social skills required to relate well with others, support learners to actively partake in extracurricular activities that foster positive development as well as help students to have more control over their life positively.

Also, the government should ensure the adequate provision of basic needs to facilitate effective teaching and learning in order to make students think effectively and develop the skills for relevant judgement, make students understand and appreciate their role as citizens, help students understand the basic facts about sanitation needed for promoting good health condition, help students make the right decisions on how to make use of available resources at the appropriate time to improve their knowledge as well as help students in satisfying their needs in accordance with the institutional goals.

Furthermore, the government should encourage teachers to improve on the effective preparation of lessons so as to help in the growth and development of the students' cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains, help in making adequate provision for student activities, help to generate enthusiasm for learning among students, help to ensure continuous intellectual and social development of the learners and help to promote overall personality development of students.

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