

IMPARTING VALUES THROUGH CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES IN UNITY SCHOOLS, FCT, NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA: THE PRINCIPALS' MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

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Abstract

This study examined the principals' management strategies for imparting values through co-curricular activities in Unity Schools, Federal Capital Territory, North Central Nigeria. The descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The target population for the study was all the teachers and the Senior Secondary (SS) 3 students of 2018/2019 academic session in the six Unity Schools in FCT, North Central Nigeria. The sample size for this study comprised 120 teachers and 180 students. The sampling method used was simple random sampling techniques. Each of the Unity School in the study area was treated as a strata and from each school, 20 teachers and 30 students were randomly selected. The questionnaire title 'Imparting Values through Co-curricular Activities in Unity Schools: The Principals' Management Strategies' was administered to the respondents after validation. The instrument was validated by experts in Test and Measurement from the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council Sheda, Abuja. Cronbach Alpha was used to find the degree of internal consistency and a value $r=0.89$ was obtained. The analysis of data collected from the respondents was carried out using mean scores and standard deviation. The findings established that co-curricular activity is an instrument for imparting values to students in Unity Schools. The findings further revealed management strategies adopted by the principals in ensuring quality co-curricular activities delivery in the schools. The study recommended among others the creation of office of the Vice Principal Co-curricular activities in the Unity Schools for effective management and that each student should participate in at least two activities to form part of their examinations.

Key Words: Imparting, Values, Co-curricular activities, Unity school, Principals, Management strategies

Introduction

Co-curricular activity helps in developing students' values, improve students' academic performance and acts as a great tool for nation building. It also helps in physical development, spiritual growth, social development and intellectual development of students. Co-curricular activities enrich students' learning experience beyond classroom activities (Dowshen cited in Robert 2018). They enable students to develop essential attitudes for classroom learning and skills for their daily lives such as leadership training, thinking skills, adventure training and community service. Co-curricular activities help students to develop multidirectional relationships between academic and psychological outcome, including school achievement, educational

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aspiration, self-esteem, political attitudes, personality development and character formation (Gyanunlimited, 2012).

Harris (1960) in citing Encyclopedia of Educational Research of 1960 defines co-curricular activities of the schools as, "Programs and events carrying no academic credit, sponsored and organized by pupils or students organizations or by institutions designed to entertain, instruct and or provide exercise of interests and abilities; subject to some measures of control by the institutions". Chalageri and Yarriswami (2018) cited the International Dictionary of Education 1977 which defines co-curricular activities as activities sponsored or recognized by a school or college which are not part of the academic curriculum but are acknowledged to be essential part of the life of an educational institution. In Federal Government Colleges, activities outside the curriculum which help in the achievement of the school objective are classified as co-curricular activities. They are categorized into two groups, subject based and non-subject based clubs. The subject based clubs are; JET Club, Literary and Debating Club, Mathematics Club, Young Farmers' Club, Geography/Conservation Club, Historical and Commonwealth, Chess/Scrabbles, Gymnastic, Economic/Stock Exchange, Business Education, Young Christian Association, Muslim Students' Association, French, Music. The non-subject based clubs includes; Press Club, Language Club, Drama Club, Nigeria Girls or Boys Guide, Anti-AIDS/Health Club, Anti-Corruption Club, Cultural Club, Young Readers, College Choir, NAFDAC Consumers' Safety Club and Road Safety Club (Federal Government Girls College Calabar, 2016).

The co-curricular activities provide a 'rooted' and 'grounded' educational experience for students that will enable them to live a successful life in the society after school (Singh & Mishra, 2015). Similarly, co-curricular activity encourages students to take control of their academic and values' development. These values, according to the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) Section 1 (32) are; discipline, integrity, dignity of labour, social justice, religious tolerance, self-reliance and patriotism. These are the positive values expected of a citizen in Nigeria. Co-curricular activities play very significant roles in inculcating different values in students and develop their all-round personality. Busi (2017) opines that co-curricular activities provide ample opportunities for the inculcation of democratic values and self-discipline. Gyanunlimited (2012) describes co-curricular activities as those activities that facilitate the development of various domains of mind and personality such as intellectual development, emotional development, social development, moral development and aesthetic development. These prepare students for careers, workmanship, responsibilities, honesty, trustworthiness, tolerance, friendship, compassion, love and develop qualities of leadership, dignity of labour and physical development. These activities help students to develop responsibility, leadership, trustworthiness and stewardship values. These values retain in students' lives permanently and prepare them for professions. Daniyal, Nawaz, Hassan and Mubeen (2012) opine that through participation in co-curricular activities, students can learn to communicate, to cooperate with other people and in addition to enrich their live experience. Co-curricular activities take care of students' in different developmental needs such as their sense of moral values and attitudes, skills and creativity. These enable them to practice the cardinal virtues of sincerity, truthfulness, modesty, self-denial, loyalty, patience, perseverance, industriousness, honesty and cleanliness. Others are obedience, generosity, composure, magnanimity, naturalness, simplicity, courage, serenity and cheerfulness. Moreover, co-curricular participation is related to higher school retention

rates. It promotes students' current sense of well-being and life satisfaction that carries over to community participation in adulthood. Udosen (2018) observes that co-curricular activity is a panacea to conflict and violence and dearth of co-curricular activities and extra-curricular activities in primary schools in Nigeria aid conflict and violence.

It is clear that educational management in secondary schools involves the application of management principles in designing, developing and effecting resources towards achievement of educational goals (Okumber cited in Nzoka & Orodho, 2014). Therefore effective co-curricular activities management by the principals shall promote students' values' development and achieve the key objective of setting up the Unity Schools by the Gowon administration which was to ensure national integration of the post war generation of Nigerian. The National Policy on Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) specifies value systems acceptable to the learners through the quality of educational instruction. These include moral and spiritual values, dignity of the persons, self-reliance, communal responsibility, patriotism, sense of national unity; respect the views and feeling of others. Other values are honesty and integrity, hard work and merit, hospitality and religious tolerance. Priya (2016) stated that the purpose of value education is to develop integrated and balanced personality. According to the author, values are not inborn but are acquired and inculcated and these include love, truth, peace and integrity.

In any educational institution like the Federal Unity Colleges, the major role of the principal is to manage both academic and non-academic activities of students. The non-academic activities, which are the co-curricular activities, are an integral part of our students' holistic education. It is a means to enhance social interaction, develop student's potential at the cognitive, affective and psychomotive domains of learning. It is the responsibility of the principal to plan, organize, supervise and evaluate the co-curricular activities in the school. The principals implement the co-curricular activities in the unity schools by making provision for human and material resources, integrate various activities and ensure that students participate in every co-curricular activities. This is because co-curricular activities provide an opportunity for harnessing the hidden potentials of these youths, discourage anti-social behaviour, and promote social integration, gives senses of belonging, commitment and responsibility to school community and the nation at large. The National Policy on Education (NPE) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2014) Section 2 (32) clearly states that co-curricular activities such as sports, clubs and societies are important instruments for character development and shall be positively encouraged. The school principals have important roles to play in achieving the government objective of providing universal and equal access to quality basic and secondary education that will ensure self-reliance, self-improvement, foster national unity, preparation for further education, good citizenship and effective participation in democratic governance as outline in the National Policy of Education Section 3 (36).

However, the co-curricular facilities in most of our unity schools seem to be inadequate may be due to poor funding, trained co-curricular activity oriented teachers are lacking as well as participation of students in co-curricular activities seem to be low may be due to lack of interest and poor principals' management strategies. Some schools' principals lack capacity for planning, organization, supervision and evaluation of these co-curricular activities due to lack of training. Many stakeholders in the school system seem to be of the belief that co-curricular activities consume academic time

unnecessarily while teachers are overloaded with work without incentives and rewards. These are some of the major set-back to the principals' co-curricular activities' management strategies that should enhance students' values' development of unity schools, FCT, Nigeria.

Nigeria as a nation today is declining in her values system due to the grip of ethnicity, lack of patriotism, indiscipline, injustice, religious intolerance, kidnapping and armed robbery. Others are; cultism, political thugs, unemployment, senseless killing, willful destruction of other peoples' properties, forgery, shameless indulgence in corporate harlotry, drug abuse, examination malpractices, election rigging among others. These are some of the vices destroying the social, political, economic and cultural fabrics of the Nigeria state. Kidnapping and arms robbery have turned to an intractable crisis posing a major threat to national and regional security. These rural bandits engage in violent acts like, attacking, abducting, killing, robbing villagers and travelers along Kaduna-Abuja road and Abuja-Lokoja road. Most of these bandits and ethnic militias are youths that should be engaged in co-curricular activities that impart values needed in building a peaceful, prosperous and equitable society. Some of these security challenges in Nigeria especially in the FCT could therefore have been avoided if the youths are engaged in co-curricular activities. This concern and the acknowledgement of the place of co-curricular activities as an instrument of values' development constitute the statement of problem for this study. This was why this study title "Imparting values through co-curricular activities in unity schools, FCT, Nigeria: The researchers believe that the findings could help policy makers make informed decision on co-curricular activities for quality education delivery. The school principals should be engaged in initiating a deliberate strategy to impart values to students through co-curricular activities.

In order to impart values in students, the principals must be alive to their responsibility. Systematic planning is expected of the principals to ensure that activities are educationally justifiable. The principal as part of planning responsibility must ensure that the activities are neither too many nor too few, so that there will not be a burden on students curricular activities should reflect the needs and interest of students and planned in accordance with available fund, equipment, time, facilities and human resources (UNESCO, 2005). Adventist Education (2015) states that a principal must take note of the following as part of planning strategies. The number and nature of activities, funding, calendar of events, appointment or election procedures, goals and objectives, local culture and traditions are supervisory expectation. Appropriate selection and registration of activities are very important so as to determine the usefulness and discourage activities that are nocturnal in behaviour. A principal is responsible for drawing up a yearly plan for co-curricular activities in school. He/she plans for students' differences in interests, abilities and socio-economic background. The principal can appoint a coordinator to plan the financial budget, control the expenses of various activities or to assist in administering the fund. A principal may set up a committee in this regard bearing in mind the time schedule and the arrangement of facilities.

A principal is responsible for the administration and organization of teaching and learning processes in the school (UNESCO, 2005). Sustainable organizational strategies are required of the principals. The formulation of rules and regulations to maintain discipline is one of the principals' co-curricular organizational strategies. These rules spell out penalties for any offence and regulate the relationship between teachers and

students as they participate in the organization of co-curricular activities. This can take the form of students' activities constitution jointly formulated by the students and school authority. The principals should participate in setting up school clubs, promoting new activity, assist in problem-solving and ensure the achievement of pre-set objectives. He or she should pay particular attention to safety measures and remind teachers and other staff to abide by the safety guidelines. According to UNESCO (2005), the following factors are to be considered in the formation of a club. These are: the name for the club, a constitution, the purpose of the club, membership eligibility or requirements, nature of club officers and leadership, club sponsor and teacher, programme of activities, attendance requirements, time and frequency of meetings. The principal as part of sustainable organizational strategist must ensure that competent and dedicated students are appointed as leaders in all students' club activities and societies. These leaders must be monitored by the school authority. Membership of clubs or societies should be voluntary. Special attention should be paid to outdoor activities for which the school should ask in writing for the parental consent of the participants. According to Adventist Education (2015), schools should inform parents of the details of any organized co-curricular activity. Letters to parents should state the date of the activity, time, venue and teachers-in-charge, etc. Teachers must confirm the agreement of parents and collect the notes duly signed indicating their consent. After the activity, the notes on parental consent should be kept for a period of time for record purposes. When organizing outdoor activities for students, the school should notify the police for security measures. This is a safety precaution that the school must take to protect the students and the school itself in the event of any incidence. The principal should ensure that all activities are conducted safely by arranging for sufficient teachers to be on duty to invigilate such activity. Facilities, equipment and safety devices should be constantly checked to ensure proper working conditions and to avoid accidents. In the case of an accident, teachers-in-charge should take good care of the victim to prevent further mishaps. Community involvement can also take the form of sponsorship of co-curricular activities in line with school policy.

A principal is expected to play a supervisory role of integrating and coordinating the efforts of teachers, non-teachers, students, and parents to achieve the desired objectives of education and facilitate the over-all aspects of the teaching-learning processes (UNESCO, 2005). Principals should ensure that the work load of teachers and students are balanced through effective supervisory strategies. The school time-table should be properly scheduled to accommodate co-curricular activities and ensure that activities are properly supervised by the coordinators. Principals must work in close collaboration with the student leaders and provide them a voice in the decision-making process of the school (Adventist Education, 2015). Schools should be represented by members of staff (teachers) in all students' activities for appropriate supervision. As part of principals' co-curricular supervisory strategy, students should first of all be encouraged to take part in co-curricular activities and to gain experience from the process. Once students have been stimulated to try out the activities, they should be further motivated to do so by various means. An award scheme is one of the best motivators. These awards can be praise, certificates, trophies, cash prize or medals etc. According to UNESCO (2005), schools should provide financial assistance to the registered club or society and any other students' activities and the cost of joining students' activities must be minimal so that poor but good students are not discouraged.

Purposive evaluation is another co-curricular management strategy to principals. The purpose of evaluation is to help improve the planning of future activities. According to Adventist Education (2015) the principal must ensure that members of each activity play their respective roles and attend to safety measures to protect the participants. He or she should pay particular attention to the handling of monetary matters and make sure that the records are kept and in good order. The principal should also remind members to conduct regular stock-taking for all assets and facilities in order to safeguard the proper use of finances and resources. Records must be kept for all activities to serve as future reference. The school should also keep for each student an activity record; listing in detail the activities a student has joined as well as his or her performance. These records will be useful in writing student references and recommendations. These reports can also be used in assessing the feasibility of new activities or drawing attention to areas requiring notice. Another evaluation strategy of the principal is to assess the feasibility of new activities in line with the school policies and objective (UNESCO 2005). A principal is expected to have effective control measure of all the activities to achieve the desire goal.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to:

1. Ascertain the values students developed as result of principals' co-curricular activities management strategies in Unity schools, FCT, Abuja.
2. Examine the principals' co-curricular activities management strategies for imparting values in Unity schools, FCT, Abuja.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study;

1. What are the values students developed as a result of principals' co-curricular activities management strategies in Unity schools, FCT, Abuja?
2. What are the principals' co-curricular activities management strategies for imparting values in Unity schools, FCT, Abuja?

Materials and Methods

Descriptive survey research design was employed for this study due to the size of the population. The study was restricted to six Unity schools in FCT, Abuja. The population of the study comprised all the teachers and the SS 3 students in the six Unity schools. The sample size for this study comprised 120 teachers and 180 students. The sampling method used was the simple random sampling techniques. Six Unity schools in the Federal Capital Territory were treated as strata. From each school, 20 teachers and 30 students were randomly selected. The questionnaire was distributed among 180 students for research question 1 and 120 teachers for research question 2.

The instrument for data collection for this study was a structured questionnaire on a four (4) points modified Likert-type rating scale of: Strongly Agree=4 points, Agree=3 points, Disagree=2 points and Strongly Disagree= 1 point. The questionnaire were administered on the respondents after validation. Cronbach Alpha was used to find the degree of internal consistency and a value $r=0.89$ was obtained. All the copies of the questionnaire were immediately collated for analysis using mean scores and standard deviation.

Results

Table 1: Analysis of Values Students Developed as a Result of Principals’ Co-curricular activities Management Strategies

		N=180						
	Item Value Development	4	3	2	1	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1	Helps in inculcation of democratic values	102	48	14	16	3.31	0.95	Agree
2	Groom the students in the art of living and working together (cultural integration)	98	56	16	10	3.34	0.86	Agree
3	Teaches patience and empathy	86	66	20	8	3.28	0.83	Agree
4	Inculcates the value of honesty and integrity	78	72	18	12	3.20	0.87	Agree
5	Downplays sentiments in the interest of national unity	69	74	16	21	3.06	0.97	Agree
6	Fosters senses of communal responsibility and accountability	70	68	26	16	3.07	0.94	Agree
7	Promotes hard work and encourage dignity of labour	92	58	18	12	3.27	0.90	Agree
8	Encourages self-discipline	89	61	16	14	3.25	0.91	Agree
9	Promotes self-reliance	94	63	14	9	3.34	0.83	Agree
10	Inculcates the value of patriotism	80	66	20	14	3.18	0.92	Agree
11	Teach students to stand up for their rights (social justice)	98	54	12	16	3.30	0.94	Agree
Section Mean						3.25	0.89	Agree

Key: \bar{x} =Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, DE=Decision, SA=3.50 - 4.00, A = 2.50 - 3.49, D = 1.50 – 2.49 and SD =1.00 – 1.49.

The result in Table 1 shows that the respondents agreed that item 1-11 are the values students developed as a result of principals’ co-curricular activities management strategies in unity schools. The grand mean value which is above 2.50 decision level implies that the students agreed that items 1-11 are the values imparted to them as a result of management strategies adopted by the principal in ensuring quality co-curricular delivery in the schools.

Table 2: Analysis of Principals’ Co-curricular activities Management Strategies for Imparting Values in Unity Schools

		N=120						
S/No	Items	4	3	2	1	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
12	Ensure that co-curricular activities are educationally justifiable	65	46	6	3	3.44	0.71	Agree
13	Ensure that co-curricular activities reflect the needs and interest of students through proper planning	54	53	7	6	3.29	0.79	Agree
14	Ensure that clubs or societies are registered and have a patron	60	41	11	8	3.28	0.89	Agree
15	Allocate convenient time to students to enable them participate in co-curricular activities.	53	52	10	5	3.28	0.79	Agree
16	Ensure that the work load of teachers and students are balanced.	64	39	9	8	3.32	0.88	Agree
17	Ensure that appointment of officers are done according to the clubs or societies’ constitution and monitored by the school management	42	60	5	13	3.09	0.91	Agree
18	Formulate rules and regulation to control and evaluate all co-curricular activities	60	34	16	10	3.20	0.97	Agree
19	Ensure that parental consent are obtained especially for out-door activities.	43	36	39	2	3.00	0.87	Agree
20	Involvement of community members in form of sponsorship.	62	40	5	13	3.26	0.97	Agree
21	Ensure that discipline are maintained to ensure standard in co-curricular activities in the school	54	56	7	3	3.34	0.70	Agree
22	Ensure that activities are properly coordinated and integrated in the school system.	60	43	12	5	3.32	0.82	Agree
23	Ensure that problems are resolved in line with the school policies and practices.	63	41	6	10	3.31	0.91	Agree
24	Enforcement of safety measures in all co-curricular activities in the schools.	57	13	30	20	2.89	1.18	Agree
25	Ensure that records are maintained in all co-curricular activities.	52	41	9	18	3.06	1.06	Agree
26	Appraising of co-curricular activities in line with the school objective.	44	38	29	9	2.98	0.96	Agree
27	Assessing the feasibility of new activities in line with the school policies and practices.	57	40	11	12	3.18	0.97	Agree
28	Ensuring effective control measures in all co-curricular activities in the schools.	59	33	8	20	3.09	1.11	Agree
Mean						3.20	0.91	Agree

Key: \bar{x} =Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, SA=3.50 - 4.00, A = 2.50 - 3.49, D = 1.50 - 2.49 and SD =1.00 - 1.49.

The result in Table 2 shows that the respondents agreed that items 12-28 are the principals’ co-curricular activities management strategies for students’ values’ development in unity schools. The grand mean value which is above 2.50 decision level implies that the teachers agreed that items 12-28 are the management strategies adopted by the principal in ensuring quality co-curricular activities delivery in the schools.

Discussion of findings

Table 1 ascertained the values students developed as a result of principals' co-curricular activities management strategies in Unity schools, FCT, Nigeria. The finding of this study corroborates with the findings of Gyanunlimited (2012) who described co-curricular activities as those activities that facilitate the development of various domains of mind and personality and prepare students for careers, workmanship, responsibilities, honesty, trustworthiness, tolerance, friendship, compassion, love, dignity of labour, develop qualities of leadership and physical development. The finding is also in line with Daniyal, Nawaz, Hassan and Mubeen (2012) who observed that students can learn to communicate, to co-operate with other people and in addition enrich their lives experiences from co-curricular activities participation. The findings of the study also agreed with Udosen (2018) whose findings exposed the structures of conflict and violence and how dearth of co-curricular activities and extra-curricular activities in primary schools in Nigeria aided conflict and violence. The finding also agreed with Busi (2017) who opined that Co-curricular activities provide ample opportunities for the inculcation of democratic values and self-discipline.

Table 2 examined the principals' co-curricular activities management strategies for developing values in students. The findings agreed with the Adventist Education (2015) whose report states that a principal must appoint a coordinator to plan the financial budget, control the expenses of various activities and draw up a yearly plan for co-curricular activities in the school among others as systematic planning strategies. Furthermore, the findings corroborates with (UNESCO, 2005) which stated that formulation of rules and regulation; integrating and coordinating the efforts of teachers, non-teachers, students, and parents to achieve the desired objectives of education are part of effective supervisory strategies of the principals. Similarly, the finding agreed with (UNESCO 2005) which posit that evaluation helps to improve the planning of future activities, assessing the feasibility of new activities and ensuring effective control measures in all co-curricular activities. The researcher observed that the education system in Nigeria is dominated by examination oriented teaching, giving little emphasis to co-curricular activities which develop students' values system. The researcher is of the opinion that there is need for the creation of office of avice principal (co-curricular activities) that will coordinate co-curricular activities to enable students acquire values that will make them function as useful members of the society. This new office will mobilizes, allocates and utilizes resources needed for co-curricular activities in the schools, supervise co-curricular activities oriented teachers, and sensitize students on the importance of co-curricular activities. This will help engage youths in co-curricular activities that will impart values needed in building a peaceful, prosperous and equitable society.

Conclusion

This study concludes that co-curricular activity is an instrument for imparting values to students in Unity Schools. The study highlights the values students acquired as a result of principals' co-curricular activities management strategies in Unity Schools. These are: inculcation of democratic values, spirit of patriotism, honesty and integrity, communal responsibility and accountability, encourages acceptance and respect for others. Other values are self-discipline, dignity of labour, hardwork, self-reliance, patience and empathy. The study identifies systematic planning, sustainable organization, effective supervision and purposive evaluation as the principals' co-

curricular activities management strategies. The study recommended among others the creation of office of the vice principal co-curricular activities in the Unity Schools that will enhance effective management of available co-curricular activities that will develop students' values and make them useful members of the society.

Recommendations

The findings of the study necessitate the following recommendations:

1. The office of the vice principal co-curricular activities should be created and trained co-curricular activity oriented teachers should be employed in the unity schools. This will enhance effective management of available co-curricular activities that should develop students' values and make them useful members of the society.
2. Co-curricular activities prepare students practically for the future and therefore it should be made compulsory for all students. Each student should participate in at least two activities and let them form part of their examinations.
3. The federal government should organize seminars and workshops for school principals to improve their managerial skills for effective management of co-curricular activities in the schools.

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