



AN EVALUATION OF THE EXTENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF ETHICAL ISSUES IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CALABAR METROPOLIS OF CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA: IMPLICATION FOR MORAL RE-ARMAMENT IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

¹Ogbeche, M. M.

²Asuquo, M. E.

³Anam, E. G. & Ayem, B. O

²Corresponding Author¹ maryogbeche1985@gmail.com;

² mikeasuquo2015@gmail.com,

³ekpenyonganwananam@gmail.com,

ayembenjamin294@gmail.com

^{1,2&3} Department of Educational Management,
Faculty of Educational Foundation Studies,
University of Calabar, Calabar

Abstract

Core values in the school system are prerequisites in guiding behaviour, fostering of unity and cooperation as well as in the modification of students' attitude. Therefore, this study was specifically designed to evaluate the extent of implementation of ethical issues in secondary schools with implication for moral re-armament in educational management in public secondary schools in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River, Nigeria. The population of this study was 26 public secondary schools across the study area. The study was a census study since the entire population was considered manageable by the researchers. Questionnaire that was used for data collection was designed and developed by the researchers. The questionnaire was entitled "The Extent of Implementation of Ethical Issues in Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire (TEIEIPSSQ)." Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument. The reliability coefficient of the instrument ranged from 0.76 to 0.84. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Among others, the result showed that, allowing students to report to the appropriate quota when they are harassed, awarding well behaved students, preventing students from copying during examinations, students not being allowed to feel ashamed and students not being harassed by teachers were ethical issues found to have been implemented to a high extent in public secondary schools the study area. On the other hand, students not being allowed to be bullied in my school, using positive verbal methods to redirect students' behaviour, are treating of students equally without bias, provision of conducive learning environment and giving of more attention to students were found to be implement in a low extent. Hence, it was recommended among others that, principals of secondary schools should make efforts in ensuring that every aspects of ethical issues in their respective schools are effectively implemented to facilitate moral rearmament in the school system

Keywords: Implementation, Ethical issues, moral-rearmament, educational management

Introduction

Education at all levels is meant to facilitate individual's intellectual as well as social growth and development. In addition, enhancing skills and knowledge acquisition to facilitate individual self reliance, education empowers individuals to make significant contributions to a nation's socio-political, technological as well as in the area of economic growth and development. Like other level of

education, the importance of secondary level of education in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. Secondary education in Nigeria is inevitable because it serves as a platform for learners' continuous developed in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains in order to be self-reliance and make significant contributions to the society.

Secondary education provides learning environment in which learners are educated to acquire societal values. In specific term, post basic education provides all basic education leavers with opportunity for education at tertiary level irrespective of sex, social status, religious affiliation and economic background. In addition to providing learners with fundamentals knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship, education advancement, inspiring national consciousness among the learners, training of man-power in such areas as science, technology and commerce, provision of opportunity for education of a higher level irrespective of differences in religion and socio-economic background, as well as in developing and promoting Nigerian languages, inculcation of moral values in the learners for self-improvement Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013). The aspect of moral values as stated in National Policy on Education by the Federal Government of Nigeria informs implementation of ethical issues in the school system particularly at the secondary school level which is the focus of this study.

The need for effective implementation of ethical issues is to facilitate fairness, justice, academic integrity, respect and students' well-being as oppose to bullying, cheating, exploitation, dishonesty, inappropriate teacher-student relationship, discrimination or being biased and harassment in the school system. Ethical issues in the school system are the justifiable means of having effective and responsible citizens. Ethical issues are directed to produce informed, competent and responsible citizens by equipping them with the civics knowledge, civics skills and civics dispositions so that they can efficiently take part in the political, social and economic affairs of the society (Tafese, 2018). Ethics issues in the school system helps in ensuring that the educational system serves the best interests of students and society, maintaining its integrity as well as fostering trust and confidence in educational services, programmes and activities..Therefore, there is therefore need to ensure that ethical issues are effectively implemented in educational system to ensure that students do not violet moral principles, codes of conduct, values and expected standard of behaviour in the schools system and after graduation (Nguyen, Ngo, Hong, Dang & Nguyen (2023). Implementation of ethical issues involves the process of ensuring that ethical principles, practices and codes of conduct are integrated and effected in all aspects of school activities (teaching, learning, extra curricula activities) as well as in the general school management or administration. Implementation of ethical issues also entails deliberate and consistence promotion of certain accepted attitudes and beliefs in students though parenting, education and training so as to shape their thoughts, characters and actions.

By implication, the essence of implementing ethical issues is to ensure that acceptable attitudes, values, behaviours, habits and ideas are instilled and inculcated into all students through careful, persistence, sustained, careful and effective curriculum implementation. Ethical issues are moral issues manifesting in moral practices, accepted principles, right conducts and standards that govern every member in an organization of which educational organization is not an exception. Inclusion of moral values as stated in the Nigeria's National Policy on Education by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) informs emphasis on the concept of moral re-armament in the school system.

Moral re-armament as a concept is traceable to a Christian group operating from the 1920s until present day. It is directed toward changing the world by converting all men and women to follow absolute honesty, absolute unselfishness, absolute love and absolute purity (Jenner, 2023; France, 2024). Hofmann (2021) also viewed moral re-armament as an international religious movement that caught the attention of politicians, industrialists, and union leaders around the world in the 1940s and 1950s. As a global issue, moral re-armament in this context viewed as a movement that aims at promoting and sustaining principles of morality (honesty, purity, unselfishness and love) in various aspects of life of which educational sector is not an exception. Moral re-armament stresses the need for ethical standards to be upheld to a very high extent in order to build and sustain a better educational system and the society at large. In the process of teaching learning, students' moral values are considered as a long life process (Chowdhury, Yesmin & Obaydullah, 2019). In this connection,



scholars have been conducted to in relation to ethical issues and moral re-armament in the school system.

For instance, Githui (2013) carried out a to diagnose the ethical and moral issues in the teaching and training modalities offered by higher learning institutions in tune with relevance to entrepreneurship among the graduates in Kenya. The paper employed ethical theories such as Virtue ethics, Deontological ethics, Ethical learning and growth Teleological ethics to build its content. The study found that ethics as a discipline of critical thinking and learning have not been widely integrated in the current training and education system. It was also found that students who undertook ethical and critical thinking were more productive because of the high memory comprehension, retention and awareness of reality.

In another empirical research on teaching moral and ethics in primary education, Chowdhury, Yesmin & Obaydullah (2019) examined how moral and ethical development is promoted by the school curriculum, textbooks, teacher's performances, classroom practices, school culture and school learning. The study was qualitative in nature and content analysis technique was used for data analysis based on the various themes of the research instrument. The results of the study indicated that both teachers and students mentioned that students learn moral and ethical values in schools, home and society. The result also indicated that students learn moral values by following family, religion and culture values and norms as well as talking to friends, sharing things, caring others, ability to cope with the friends and new environment, working in a group, interacting with others, solving problems, understanding others feelings and oaths. In addition, it was found that, teachers taught moral values through different activities in the schools such as assembly, social and class activities. Chowdhury et al (2019) averred that moral and ethics should be taught as separate subject and be included in examination

In the East of Gojjam Administrative Zone, Ethiopia, Worku (2015) conducted a study on effectiveness of primary school principals in managing the implementation of civic and ethical education curriculum. Data collected through questionnaire and interviews were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The result indicated that, the curriculum of civic and ethical education in primary schools studied had been in the process of implementation without sufficient and meaningful support and active involvement of school principals. Again, primary school principals were not found to have satisfactorily discharge their responsibilities in relation to the implementation process of civic and ethical education curriculum.

Similarly, Hardiansyah & Mas' odi (2022) carried out a study that aimed at determining the extent to which students can apply democratic character in their daily lives as a result of the implementation of democratic character education. Data collected were through interview, questionnaire, and observation. It was found that implementation of democratic character education through social studies learning material on ethnic and cultural diversity in elementary schools was categorized as very good according to the character learning syntax and that students' level of understanding in implementing democratic character in everyday life was categorized as very good.

Statement of the Problem

Ethical issues in educational system are inevitable as they meant to shape and promote positive learning environment as well as facilitating decision-making and actions in educational system that align with moral principles in a bit to promoting fairness, respect and accountability in the school system. Ethical issues are specifically meant to prepare students to be responsible citizens. At the secondary school system just like other levels of education, it is expected that ethical issues be effectively imple

Despite the fact that ethical issues are prerequisite in advancing and promoting equity, consideration and respect for everyone, answerability, transparency, honesty as well as general principles. values and standards that guide behaviour and decision-making, incidents of physical bullying that manifests in forms of threats become a repeated phenomenon in secondary schools. Besides, verbal bullying in the secondary school has been on the increase. This manifests in insults and teasing among many teachers and students resulting in provocation.

In most cases, students and teachers are observed bullying one another by way of spreading bad rumours against one another, thereby damaging their relationship which is evidence in intentional exclusion from social groups. In most cases, incidents of intimidation, humiliation, poor social relations and threats are discusses among some secondary school students. With this situation, the researchers wondered what should have been the course of the aforementioned unethical issues, hence the need to evaluation of the extent of implementation of ethical issues in public secondary schools with implication for moral re-armament in educational management in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria,

Purpose of the study

This study was carried out to find out the extent of implementation of ethical issues in public secondary schools with implication for moral re-armament in educational management in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria. The study particularly focused on:

1. Identifying ethical issues in public secondary schools in Calabar Education Zone of Cross
2. Evaluating the extent of implementation of ethical issues in public secondary schools in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Research questions

1. What are the ethical issues in public secondary schools in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria?
2. To what extent are the ethical issues implemented in public secondary schools in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria?

Research hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Senior Secondary three (SS2) students in Calabar Metropolis and their counterparts in Calabar South regarding the extent of implementation of ethical issues in public secondary schools.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive survey research design. This design was considered to be appropriate for this study because it is directed to describe the phenomena as they occur and experienced by the respondents. According to Asim, Idaka and Eni (2017), descriptive design has to do with the collection of to provide an account and describe individuals, groups and situations. The Population of this study was twenty-six (26) public secondary schools in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria. The study area is divided into two (2) Local Government Areas; Calabar Municipality with eighteen (18) and Calabar South with eight (8) public secondary schools respectively. The researcher adopted census approach since the population was consider manageable by the researcher, hence there was no sample technique.

The instrument that was used for data collection was entitled; “Evaluation of Extent of Implementation of Ethical Issues Questionnaire (EEIEIQ)”. In order to ensure both the face and content validity of the instrument, the researchers consulted one (1) expert in educational management and two (2) other experts in Measurement and Evaluation respectively in the University of Calabar. The instrument was divided into two (2) sections, A and B. Section A of the instrument was design for the respondents to identity what the feel as ethical issues in their schools. The said section A was responded to by the school Principals. Section B was designed for the respondents to give their honest respond with respect to the extent of implementation of ethical issues in their respective schools. This section was responded to by Senior Secondary three (SS2) students. Sections A and B had fourteen (14) and ten (10) items respectively.

Section A of the questionnaire was designed based on a modified four-point Likert-scale of Stronly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagee (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). On the other hand, in Section

B, the response items were based on Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). Copies of the instrument were administered on the respondents by the respondents and the research assistants. The respondents were informed that their responses to the items on the questionnaire would be used for research purpose only and would also be treated with utmost confidentiality. After all the copies of questionnaire were administered to the respondents and retrieved, the data collected were coded and analyzed using mean, standard deviation and independent t-test.

Presentation of results

Research question 1

What are the ethical issues in public secondary schools in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria?

S/N	Ethical issues in public secondary schools	X	SD	Decision
1.	Safeguarding the welfare of the students	2.95	1.542	Agree
2.	Treating students with dignity	2.79	1.342	Agree
3.	Enhancing students' rights	2.78	1.392	Agree
3.	Constructive communication with students	2.86	1.456	Agree
4	Using positive verbal methods to redirect students' behaviour	2.75	1.332	Agree
5.	Promoting equity for all students	2.94	1.342	Agree
6.	Rewarding students' good behaviour	2.87	1.345	Agree
7.	Creating a physically safe learning environment for students	2.79	1.455	Agree
8.	Supporting students' mental health	2.88	1.444	Agree
9.	Promoting academic integrity	2.67	1.457	Agree
10.	Confidentiality of students' records	2.66	1.334	Agree
11.	Avoiding favouritism	2.75	1.456	Agree
12	Maintaining appropriate boundaries between teachers and students	2.98	1.543	Agree
13.	Teaching students about responsible use of digital devices (digital citizenship)	2.99	1.521	Agree
14.	Providing support for school environment that values students' diversity	2.81	1.472	Agree
Total mean Score (SD)		2.99	1.592	

Cut-off point = 2.50

Table 1 shows that the respondents (public secondary school principals) agreed that all the above fourteen (14) items were the ethical issues in public secondary schools in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. They are regarded as the ethical issues in public secondary schools in the study area because their respective means responses are all greater than the cut-off point of 2.50

Research question 2

To what extent are the ethical issues implemented in public secondary schools in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria?

S/N	Extent to which ethical issues are implemented in public secondary schools in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria	X	SD	Decision
1.	Students are not allowed to be bullied in my school	2.43	1.321	LE
2.	In my school, students are allowed to report when they are harassed.	2.53	1.556	HE
3.	My school only use positive verbal methods to redirect students' behaviour	2.39	1.362	LE
4.	In my school, all the students are treated equally without bias.	2.44	1.416	LE
5.	Well behaved students are always rewarded in my school.	2.56	1.593	HE
6.	Learning environment in my school is very conducive.	2.43	1.432	LE
7.	Students in my school are not allowed to copy during examinations.	2.55	1.562	HE
8.	Teachers in my school never made me feel ashamed.	2.76	1.554	HE
9.	I have never been harassed by my teachers	2.58	1.541	HE
10.	Teacher in my school give more attention to the students	2.45	1.372	LE
Total Mean Score and SD		2.58	1.543	

Cut-off point = 2.50

The result in Table 2 indicates the extent of implemented of ethical issues with their corresponding mean in public secondary schools in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. For instance, allowing students to report to the appropriate quota when they are harassed (2.53), awarding well behaved students (2.56), preventing students from copying during examinations (2.55), students not being allowed to feel ashamed (2.76) and students not being harassed by teachers (2.58) are implemented to a high extent in public secondary schools the study area. However, with items 1, 3, 4, 6, and 10, the extent of their implementation are low based on their corresponding mean scores.

Research hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of Senior Secondary three (SS2) students in Calabar Metropolis and their counterparts in Calabar South regarding the extent of implementation of ethical issues in public secondary schools.

School location	N	Mean	SD	t-test	Sig.
Calabar Municipality	18	2.54	1.51	1.12	.734
Teachers' job performance	8	2.51	1.47		

Significance at .05; df=24; critical t-value = 2.056; Calculated t-value = 1.23

The result of the analysis presented in Table 3 shows that the calculated t-value of 1.12 is less than the critical t-value of 2.056 at .05 level of significance and 24 degrees of freedom. The results inform that the null hypothesis must be retained. This means that, there is no significant difference in the mean responses of Senior Secondary two (SS2) students in Calabar Metropolis and their counterparts in Calabar South regarding the extent of implementation of ethical issues in public secondary schools. The results imply that, in terms of the location of schools, the mean score (2.54) of public secondary schools in Calabar Municipality and that of public secondary schools in Calabar South (2.51) are not significantly different. Meaning that the extent of implementation of ethical issues in public secondary schools in the two Local Government Areas seem to be the same.

Discussion of findings

The finding from research question one indicated that ethical issues in public secondary schools, safeguarding the welfare of the students, treating students with dignity, enhancing students' rights, constructive communication with students, using positive verbal methods to redirect students' behaviour, promoting equity for all students, rewarding students' good behaviour, creating a physically safe learning environment for students, supporting students' mental health, promoting academic integrity, confidentiality of students' records, avoiding favouritism, maintaining appropriate boundaries between teachers and students, teaching students about responsible use of digital devices (digital citizenship) and providing support for school environment that values students' diversity are ethical issues that must be implemented in public secondary school in order to enhance fairness, justice, academic integrity, respect and students' well-being as oppose to bullying, cheating, exploitation, dishonesty, inappropriate teacher-student relationship, discrimination or being biased and harassment in the school system. The result is in line with Tafese (2018) who stressed that ethical issues are directed to produce informed, competent and responsible citizens by equipping them with the civics knowledge, civics skills and civics dispositions so that they can efficiently take part in the political, social and economic affairs of the society.

From the research question two, the result indicated that allowing students to report to the appropriate quota when they are harassed, awarding well behaved students, preventing students from copying during examinations, students not being allowed to feel ashamed and students not being harassed by teachers are implemented to a high extent in public secondary schools the study area. However, students not being allowed to be bullied, use positive verbal methods to redirect students' behaviour, treating students equally without being biased, provision of conducive learning environment and giving students more attention are implemented in a low extent. Meaning that a whole lots are expected of public secondary school principals and teachers in ensuring that ethical issues in all ramifications are implemented to facilitate moral re-armament in the secondary school system.

Implication of implementation ethical issues for moral re-armament in educational management

In this contest, ethical issues are practices, actions and behaviours that are in line with education organizations' moral principles, values and standards. Ethical issues need to be improved upon and effectively implemented in the school system in order to continually inculcate acceptable attitudes, values, behaviours, habits, ideas and specifically, moral practices into the learners. The importance of sustainable moral conduct informs the need for moral re-armament (honesty, purity, unselfishness and love) in educational management, which involves effort directed towards ensuring that available educational human, financial, material resources as well as school activities and programmes are effectively and efficiently harnessed towards accomplishment of educational objectives. In this connection, scholars have opined that educational management is very crucial in the accomplishment of educational objectives (Ekpoh & Asuquo, 2017; Asuquo & Emeribe, 2021; Edet & Asuquo, 2019 ;Ogbeche, Asuquo & Emeribe, 2021). There is no doubt that implementation of ethical issues for moral re-armament has implication in educational management. This is manifested in a circumstance where honesty, purity, unselfishness, love as well as accountability abound with respect to ethical issues in the secondary school system.

Conclusion

Ethical issues are inevitable in the management of secondary educational institutions just like it is applicable to other levels of educations. Ethical issues has implication in educational management because where ethical issues are effectively implemented in educational system, accountability, transparency, honesty, academic integrity, supporting and physically safe learning environment including, avoidance of favouritism and other ethical issue.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:



1. Secondary school principals should be conscious of the ethical issues in the secondary system
2. The principals of secondary schools should make efforts in ensuring that every aspects of ethical issues in their respective schools are effectively implemented to facilitate moral rearmament in the school system
3. The school principals should ensure that it is their sole responsibility to enforce ethical issue among teachers and students irrespective of the school location.

References

- Asuquo, M. E. & Emeribe, K. V. (2021) Managing Public Universities for Empowerment and Job Creation Propensity in the Era of Post Covid – 19 Pandemic: Perspectives of Undergraduates. *Nigeria Journal of Educational Administration and Planning*, 21(2), 216 - 231.
- Chowdhury, S. R., Yesmin, S., & Obaydullah, A. M. (2019). Teaching moral and ethics in primary education: Practices and challenges. *International Journal of Research Advance and Innovative Ideas in Education*, 5(1), 473-484. https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/78034991/Teaching_Moral_and_Ethics_in_Primary_Education__r_y_Education__
- Edet, A. O., & Asuquo, M. E. (2019). Principals' management ability and institutional sustainability of public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. *Prestige Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 2(1), 106-115.
- Ekpoh U. I., & Asuquo, M. E. (2017). Management techniques and sustainability of post basic education in Calabar Education zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. *Africa Journal of Studies in Education*, 12(2), 39-53.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013). *National Policy on Education*. Lagos: NERDC Press.
- France, G. (2024). 'A new world spelt out in new men': faith and Moral Re-Armament, c. 1920-1970 (Doctoral dissertation, University of Birmingham). <https://etheses.bham.ac.uk/id/eprint/14630/1/France2024PhD.pdf>
- Githui, D. M. (2013). Ethical issues in education and training in kenya: a critical analysis of teaching methodology. <https://repository.dkut.ac.ke:8080/xmlui/handle/123456789/121>
- Hardiansyah, F., & Mas'odi, M. O. (2022). The implementation of democratic character education through learning of social science materials of ethical and cultural diversity in elementary school. *Journal of Innovation in Educational and Cultural Research*, 3(2), 234-241. <http://www.jiecr.org/index.php/jiecr/article/view/101>
- Hofmann, R. (2021, January). The conservative imaginary: moral re-armament and the internationalism of the Japanese right, 1945–1962. In *Japan Forum*, 33(1), 77-102. Routledge. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09555803.2019.1646785>
- Jenner, P. G. (2023). *Propaganda theatre: a critical and cultural examination of the work of moral re-armament at the Westminster Theatre, London* (Doctoral dissertation, Anglia Ruskin Research Online (ARRO)). https://aru.figshare.com/articles/thesis/Propaganda_theatre_a_critical_and_cultural_examination_of_the_work_of_moral_re-armament_at_the_Westminster_Theatre_London/23758686?file=42195282
- Nguyen, A., Ngo, H. N., Hong, Y., Dang, B., & Nguyen, B. P. T. (2023). Ethical principles for artificial intelligence in education. *Education and information technologies*, 28(4), 4221- 4241. <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s10639-022-11316-w.pdf>
- Ogbeche, M. M., Asuquo, M. E. & Emeribe, K. V. (2021) Principals' Management Practices and Implementation of Entrepreneurship Education Programmes for Job Creation Intention Among Senior Secondary School Students in Cross River State, Nigeria. *Nigeria Journal of Educational Administration and Planning*, 21(1), 359-372



- Tafese, G. S. (2018). Assessment of challenges to civics and ethical education in Ethiopian secondary schools. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 9(4), 16-20.
<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234641365.pdf>
- Worku, M. Y. (2015). Effectiveness of primary school principals in managing the implementation of civic and ethical education curriculum. *Bahir Dar Journal of Education*, 15(1).
<https://www.ajol.info/index.php/bdje/article/view/249052>