

# Planning Practices of Provosts of Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria

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## Abstract

This study was designed to determine the Planning Practices of Provosts of Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria. A survey design was adopted in carrying out the study which was guided by three research questions. The population of the study was 7 provosts of colleges of education in the 7 colleges of education in South East Nigeria and they were all used for the study due to the manageable size of the population. The instrument for data collection was a 20-item researcher-developed questionnaire which underwent validity and reliability tests. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The results showed, among others, that the planning practices of provosts of colleges of education in South east Nigeria include: Planning for school calendar of events, curriculum development planning, planning for procurement and disbursement of school funds, planning for personnel management and supervision of instruction.

**Keywords:** Planning Practice, Provosts, school funds, personnel management.

## 1. Introduction

In Nigeria, Colleges of education are integral part of the nation's educational system responsible for the production of qualified teachers for primary and junior secondary schools. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004), colleges of education are teacher education institutions designed to produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for primary and junior secondary levels of Nigeria's educational system. Anikwe (2009) observed that colleges of education provide professional training in education courses, teaching subjects, general studies courses and methodology leading to the award of the Nigeria Certificate in education (N.C.E). Ogbonnaya (2003) had earlier remarked that the goal of colleges of education is to equip individuals with advanced knowledge and skills which they need to effectively impart knowledge and skills to primary and junior secondary schools' students.

It is worthy of note that the achievement of the above laudable goal of colleges of education requires proper and effective planning practices. Planning has been conceptualized in different ways by different authors. Babalola (2003) defined planning as a process which essentially involves deciding in advance the specific future course of action to be adopted with a view to optimizing the use of limited organizational resources towards desirable and specific goal attainment. Mgbodile (2004) defined planning as the act of getting prepared in advance or preparing an action ahead of time to achieve a desired objective. The implication of these definitions is that planning is concerned with deciding in advance what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and who is to do it. Planning, therefore, entails thinking out in advance the things to do with a view to achieving specified goals and objectives. This means that effective planning is pivotal to effective realization of goals and objectives.

Educational planning, on the other hand, refers to planning in the field of education in order to achieve stated educational goals effectively and efficiently. Manilla (2005) noted that educational planning encompasses the activities of drawing up a detailed large-scale scheme and proposed methods of accomplishing educational aims and objectives. What one can deduce from these definitions is the fact that educational planning is a rational and scientific process by which colleges of education consciously direct their future action in order to make optimum use of their available resources in the pursuit of desirable educational goals.

Based on the above exposition, one can conclude that proper and effective planning practices are fundamental to the realization of the educational goals of colleges of education. In the view of Uwazurike (1991), planning practices encapsulate measures adopted to prepare in advance what to do, when to do it and how to do it. Peretomode (2003), on the other hand, viewed planning practices as the co-ordination or harmonization of the actual educational programmes in order to achieve educational objectives. However, planning practices are operationally defined in this study as the measures, steps or means put up by provosts of colleges of education in order to effectively co-ordinate the programmes of these institutions and achieve their goals effectively and efficiently.

However, there have been claims of poor planning practices on the part of the Provosts of colleges of education in South East Nigeria. For instance, Balogun (2006) and Agu (2008) observed that the quality of instructional delivery and consequently learning, has become so depleted in Nigeria's colleges of education (South East Nigeria inclusive), as a result of the poor planning practices of the provosts of these colleges of education. Akpan (2006) also observed that the colleges of education in South East Nigeria are no longer delivering quality education as a result of the ways in which their provosts plan for their calendar of events, the school curriculum, procurement and disbursement of funds, management of the factor resources, and supervision

of instruction for effective teaching and learning. Ajayi (2007) equally remarked that the colleges of education in Nigeria (South East Nigeria inclusive) are now engulfed in ugly state of affairs due to their planning practices and the problems they encounter in their planning practices. It is on this note that Agu (2008) cautioned that colleges of education should adopt the possible strategies for improving their planning practices so as to enable them do things rightly and achieve their set goals effectively and efficiently.

Based on the above views, the researcher was deeply worried by the dearth of empirical knowledge of the planning practices of the Provosts of colleges of education in South East Nigeria, the problems encountered by the Provosts in their planning practices and the strategies for improving their planning practices. It was, therefore, the problem of this study to fill this knowledge gap by empirically determining the planning practices of the provosts of colleges of education in South East Nigeria.

### **1.1 Research Questions**

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What are the planning practices of Provosts of colleges of education in South East Nigeria?
2. What are the problems associated with the planning practices of Provosts of colleges of education in South East Nigeria?
3. What are the strategies for improving the planning practices of Provosts of colleges of education in South East Nigeria?

### **1.2 Research Method:**

#### **1.3 Research Design**

The researcher adopted a survey design in carrying out the study. Scutt (2007) opined that survey studies aim at determining and explaining perceptions and opinions of people on a given situation. This design was considered appropriate for the study as it enabled the researcher to determine and explain the perceptions and opinions of the respondents regarding the planning practices of provosts of colleges of education in South East Nigeria.

#### **1.3 Area of the Study**

The study was carried out in South east Nigeria. South east Nigeria comprises five states, namely: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu Imo states. South east Nigeria has seven public colleges of education and they were all involved in the study.

#### **1.4 Population of the Study**

The study population comprised the seven Provosts of the seven public colleges of education in South East Nigeria which are made up of three federal and four state colleges of education.

#### **1.4 Sample and Sampling Technique**

The entire population of the 7 public colleges of education in South East Nigeria were all used for the study. Thus, there was no sample and sampling for the study as a result of the manageable size of the study population.

#### **1.5 Instrument for Data Collection**

The instrument for data collection was a researcher-developed questionnaire titled "Planning Practices Questionnaire (CPPQ). It was divided into two parts, parts A and B. Part A was designed to obtain information on the personal data of the respondents while Part B comprised 20 items arranged in three clusters and they were designed to obtain information concerning the research problem. Cluster A dealt with the planning practices of Provosts of colleges of education. Cluster B dealt with the problems associated with the planning practices of Provosts of colleges of education, while Cluster C focused on the strategies for improving the planning practices of Provosts of colleges of education. The instrument was structured on four-point response options of Strongly Agree (4 points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 points) and Strongly Disagree (1 point).

#### **1.6 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument**

The initial draft of the instrument was face validated by three experts, two in Educational Administration and planning and one in Measurement and evaluation of the Enugu State University of Science and technology. The experts ascertained the suitability of the language structure the sequence of ideas and the relevance of the items. The suggestions of these experts were used to modify the instrument.

The reliability of the instrument was further ascertained by trial testing on nine Provosts of Colleges of education in South-South Nigeria which was outside the study area (Ronbach's Alpha method was used to determine the internal consistency of the items. The reliability co-efficient for Clusters A – C of the instrument were 0.25, 0.81, and 0.72 respectively while the overall reliability co-efficient was 0.76. This high variability

index showed that the instrument was reliable in collecting the required data for the study.

### 1.7 Method of Data Collection

The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the respondents in their various offices and institutions and also retrieved it from them after completion.

### 1.8 Method of Data Analysis

Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. In view of the fact that a four-point rating scale was used for the instrument, the decision rule was based on the mid-point for the scale which is 2.50. Thus, mean scores of 2.50 and above were accepted as indicators of Agree, while mean scores below the criterion mean of 2.50 indicated Disagree.

### 1.9 Results

The results of the study are presented on the tables below according to the research questions that guided the study.

#### 1.1 0 Research Question One

What is the planning practice of Provosts of colleges of education in South East Nigeria?

**Table 1:** Mean ratings and standard deviations of respondents on the planning practices of provosts of colleges of education.

S/N	Questionnaire Item	X	SD	Decision
1	Planning for school calendar of events.	2.79	1.02	Agree
2	Curriculum development planning for a work while teaching and learning.	2.74	1.00	Agree
3	Making plans for the procurement, disbursement and management of school funds.	2.58	1.00	Agree
4	Planning for the provision, utilization and maintenance of physical facilities, equipment and instructional materials.	2.48	1.01	Disagree
5	Planning for personnel management	2.61	0.98	Agree
6	Planning for supervision of instruction for effective teaching and learning.	2.72	0.98	Agree
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>2.65</b>	<b>0.99</b>	<b>Agree</b>

The data presented in table 1 show that the respondents agree with five out of the six listed items in Cluster A. These are items 1,2,3,5, and 6 which have mean ratings that are above the criterion mean of 2.50. On the other hand, item 4 was rated 2.48 which indicated disagree because it was below the acceptance level. Therefore, items 1,2,3,5, are the planning practices of provosts of colleges of education in South East Nigeria.

#### Research Question Two

What are the problems associated with the planning practices of Provosts of colleges of education in South East Nigeria?

**Table 2:** Mean ratings and standard deviations of respondents on the problems associated with the planning practices of provosts of colleges of education.

S/N	Questionnaire Item	X	SD	Decision
7	Insufficient funds for planning activities	2.74	1.04	Agree
8	Unreliable and inaccurate statistical data for planning activities	2.70	1.04	Agree
9	Frequent changes in educational policies	2.54	1.03	Agree
10	Inadequate planning facilities	2.56	1.05	Agree
11	Poor decision-making	2.62	1.05	Agree
12	Misappropriation of school funds for planning operations	2.59	1.07	Agree
13	Inadequacy of qualified staff	2.69	1.04	Agree
14	Political interference by the government	2.67	1.09	Agree
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>2.64</b>	<b>0.42</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Data in table 2 show that the respondents agree that all the 8 items listed in Cluster B are the problems associated with the planning practices of Provosts of colleges of education in South-East Nigeria. The respondents' agreement with all the listed items is shown in their mean ratings for these items which are all above the criterion mean of 2.50.

#### Research Question Three

What are the strategies for improving the planning practices of provosts of colleges of education in South East

Nigeria?

**Table 3:** Mean ratings and standard deviations of respondents on the strategies for improving the planning practices of provosts of colleges of education in South East Nigeria.

S/N	Questionnaire Item	X	SD	Decision
15	Increased funding of colleges of education for effective planning practices.	2.89		Agree
16	Making available reliable and accurate statistical data for planning activities	2.77		Agree
17	Adequate provision of planning facilities	2.55		Agree
18	Adequate provision of qualified staff	2.58		Agree
19	Proper management of school funds for planning operations.	2.62		Agree
20	Absence of political interference by the government	2.56		Agree
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>2.66</b>		<b>Agree</b>

The data presented in table 3 reveal that all the 6 items listed in Cluster C are the strategies for improving the planning practices of provosts of colleges of education in South east Nigeria. This is in recognition of the fact that these items were all rated above 2.50 which is the acceptance mean.

### Discussion

The result on table 1 shows that the planning practices of provosts of colleges of education in South East Nigeria include: Planning for school calendar of events, curriculum development planning, planning for the procurement and management of school funds, planning for the provision and management of physical facilities and equipment, planning for personnel management, and planning for supervision of instruction. This finding is in agreement with the view of Manilla (2005) that educational planning involves drawing up a detailed large-scale scheme and proposed method of accomplishing educational aims and objectives. This means that planning is fundamental to the effective realization of the educational aims and objectives of colleges of education.

The findings of the study also show that the problems associated with the planning practices of provosts of colleges of education are insufficient funds, unreliable and inaccurate statistical data, frequent changes in educational policies, inadequate planning facilities, poor decision-making, misappropriation of school funds, inadequacy of qualified staff, and political interference. The research finding is consistent with the view of Ajayi (2007) that there are problems encountered by colleges of education in Nigeria in their planning practices. The implication of this finding is that if these problems are unattended to, the planning practices of provosts of colleges of education will continually remain ineffective.

The research findings equally indicate that the strategies for improving the planning practices of provosts of colleges of education include: Increased funding of the colleges of education, making available reliable and accurate statistical data, adequate provision of planning facilities, adequate provision of qualified staff, proper by the government. These finding is in conformity with the view of Agu (2008) that there are possible strategies that can be adopted by colleges of education to improve their planning practices. Consequently, there is need for these strategies to be adopted by colleges of education so as to improve their planning practices for the benefit of effective school administration.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Planning is fundamental to quality education delivery in colleges of education. Essentially, the planning practices of provosts of colleges of education determine the level of realization of the goals of these institutions. This implies that the provosts of these colleges of education have to continually carry out effective planning practices in order to enable them achieve the set goals of their institutions effectively and efficiently. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Provosts of colleges of education should always see planning as an essential ingredient of quality education delivery and then carry it out effectively.
2. Provosts of colleges of education should take concrete steps to diversity their revenue base in order to enable them have sufficient funds for effective planning practices.
3. Provosts of colleges of education should initiate pains taking plans and appropriate actions to surmount the problems which they encounter in their planning operations.
4. Adequate plans should always be made for the provision, utilization and maintenance of physical facilities, equipment and instructional materials in colleges of education.
5. The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) and educational policy-makers should formulate relevant policies that will compel provosts of colleges of education to adopt the identified strategies for improving their planning practices for the benefit of effective school administration and quality education delivery.

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