

Politics of Education: Effect on Government Policies and Programmes' Implementation in Public Secondary Schools in IKOM Education Zone of Cross River State

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study investigates the influence of politics on the implementation of government educational policies and programmes in public secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria, with emphasis on political interference, favoritism, corruption, and inequitable resource allocation. **Method:** A descriptive survey design was employed, drawing from a population of 1,487 teachers, 115 principals, and 38 school supervisors. A stratified and purposive sample of 150 respondents (90 teachers, 45 principals, and 15 supervisors) was selected. Data were gathered through questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis, and analyzed using descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, regression analysis, and thematic interpretation. **Results:** The findings revealed that political interference disrupts policy implementation, influences teacher deployment and administrative appointments, and creates disparities in resource distribution. Furthermore, corruption and patronage hinder programme effectiveness, while politically favored schools benefit disproportionately from infrastructure and resources. **Novelty:** The study provides empirical evidence linking political dynamics directly to the success or failure of educational policies in Nigeria, underscoring the urgent need for depoliticized governance, equitable distribution of resources, and strengthened accountability systems to promote sustainable educational development.

INTRODUCTION

Education is universally acknowledged as a cornerstone for national development, serving as a catalyst for social, economic, and political progress. In Nigeria, the federal and state governments have introduced various educational policies and programmes aimed at improving access, quality, and equity in education (NPE). However, the successful implementation of these policies is often influenced by political factors, which can either facilitate or hinder educational progress. In Cross River State, the politics of education plays a significant role in shaping the outcomes of government policies and programmes. Political considerations such as changes in government, partisanship, administrative appointments, and allocation of resources often determine how effectively educational initiatives are executed [1]. For instance, frequent shifts in political leadership can lead to inconsistent policy implementation, with new administrations introducing different priorities that may disrupt ongoing programmes. Similarly, political interference in the appointment of principals or the allocation of funds can result in inefficiencies, favoritism, and inequitable distribution of resources among schools [1].

Moreover, the intersection of politics and education in Cross River State affects multiple aspects of the schooling system, including infrastructure, teacher availability, curriculum implementation, and monitoring of schools. Political patronage and corruption can lead to mismanagement of educational funds, while inadequate political will or lack of continuity in leadership can impede the proper execution of educational reforms. These challenges are further compounded by socio-economic factors, population growth, and the increasing demand for quality education in both urban and rural areas. Despite these challenges, there have been notable efforts by the Cross River State government to improve education through policy reforms and targeted programmes (CRS MOE). Initiatives aimed at improving teacher training, enhancing school infrastructure, and ensuring compliance with educational standards have been introduced. However, the effectiveness of these programmes often depends on the political climate and the extent to which political interests align with educational goals (CRS Watch). Understanding the impact of politics on the implementation of educational policies and programmes is crucial for developing strategies that ensure sustainability, equity, and quality in the state's education sector. This study seeks to examine the extent to which political factors influence the execution of government policies and programmes in schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, highlighting both challenges and opportunities for improvement.

Statement of the Problem

Education is widely recognized as a key driver of socio-economic development, yet the implementation of government educational policies and programmes faces persistent challenges. In Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, these challenges are compounded by political factors, which significantly influence how policies are executed in schools. Political interference, administrative instability, and partisanship often result in inconsistent policy implementation, undermining the intended objectives of government programmes such as curriculum reforms, teacher training initiatives, and infrastructural development [2], [3]. This disrupts long-term educational planning and negatively affects schools' ability to meet set educational standards [4], [5]. Another issue is inequitable resource allocation, driven by political favoritism. Schools in politically influential areas may receive more funding, better facilities, and qualified teachers, while schools in less favored areas are neglected. This disparity creates regional imbalances in educational quality and access, exacerbating educational inequalities within the state [6], [7].

Additionally, corruption and mismanagement of educational funds present significant obstacles. Political manipulation in recruitment, promotion, and deployment of teachers can compromise the quality of education and reduce accountability in schools [8], [9]. Furthermore, inadequate political will to sustain educational reforms often leads to underfunding, dilapidated infrastructure, and shortage of qualified personnel, which collectively hamper effective policy implementation [10]. Given these challenges, the effectiveness of government policies and programmes in improving educational outcomes in Cross River State is severely limited. There is a need for empirical research

that systematically examines the extent to which politics affects educational policy implementation, identifies the main obstacles, and provides recommendations for mitigating the negative impact of political factors on education.

Objectives of the Study

To investigate the effects of political factors on the implementation of government educational policies and programmes in schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, it intends

1. To examine how political interference influences the formulation and execution of educational policies in Cross River State.
2. To assess the impact of political considerations on resource allocation and infrastructural development in schools.
3. To identify the challenges schools face in implementing government educational programmes due to political instability and administrative changes.
4. To evaluate the role of political patronage and corruption in affecting the quality of educational outcomes.

Research Questions

1. How does political interference affect the formulation and execution of educational policies in Cross River State?
2. In what ways does political influence determine resource allocation and infrastructural development in schools?
3. What challenges do schools encounter in implementing government educational programmes due to political factors?
4. How do political patronage and corruption impact the quality of education in the state?

Hypotheses

1. Political interference does not significantly affect the implementation of government educational policies and programmes in schools in Cross River State.
2. Political influence on resource allocation and administrative appointments has no effect on the quality of education in schools.
3. Corruption and political patronage do not significantly hinder the successful implementation of educational policies.

Literature Review

Concept of Politics of Education

The politics of education refers to the ways in which political processes, actors, and institutions influence the formulation, implementation, and outcomes of educational policies and programmes. It encompasses the decisions made by government officials, political parties, and other stakeholders that affect access to education, resource distribution, administrative appointments, and the prioritization of educational goals [4], [5].

Education is inherently political because it is both a public good and a tool for shaping societal values, skills, and governance. The allocation of resources, determination of curriculum content, recruitment and deployment of teachers, and

infrastructural development are all influenced by political interests. In Cross River State, the interplay between politics and education is evident in the inconsistent implementation of policies, favoritism in the allocation of resources, and the prioritization of politically advantageous projects over schools' actual needs [2], [7].

[8] maintained that one of the key dimensions of the politics of education include political interference arising when political actors often influence decisions on school administration, staffing, and resource allocation. This can lead to appointments based on loyalty or patronage rather than merit, affecting the efficiency and effectiveness of school operations.

Frequent changes in government or political leadership can result in shifts in educational priorities, causing disruptions in ongoing programmes. Policy instability undermines long-term planning and creates uncertainty for educators and administrators [4]. In the same vein,

Political favoritism and corrupt practices can result in the mismanagement of educational funds, inequitable resource distribution, and neglect of schools in politically disadvantaged areas. Such practices significantly hinder the quality and accessibility of education [9].

Decisions regarding which schools receive funding, infrastructure, or teachers are often influenced by political considerations rather than need-based assessments. This leads to disparities in educational outcomes across different regions of the state [7]. Policies and programmes are sometimes used to achieve political ends, such as gaining popularity or rewarding supporters, rather than solely addressing educational needs. This politicization of education affects the fairness and efficiency of policy implementation [5]

In the context of Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, political factors have historically shaped the execution of educational programmes such as teacher training, curriculum reforms, and infrastructure projects. The effectiveness of these initiatives is often contingent on the alignment of political interests with educational objectives. Understanding the concept of politics of education is therefore crucial for analyzing how government policies are implemented in schools and for identifying strategies to mitigate negative political influences.

Concept of Government Policies and Programmes in Education

Government policies in education refer to the set of principles, directives, and strategies formulated by federal, state, or local authorities to guide the planning, management, and delivery of education within a society. These policies provide the framework within which schools operate and include laws, regulations, curricula standards, funding guidelines, and educational reforms designed to achieve national educational goals [3], [4].

Educational **programmes**, on the other hand, are specific initiatives or projects implemented to operationalize these policies. They are action-oriented and designed to achieve measurable outcomes, such as improving access, quality, and equity in

education. Programmes may focus on infrastructure development, teacher training, curriculum development, student assessment, or provision of learning materials [6], [7]

Ajayi (2019) opined that government policies and programmes should be purposeful and goal-oriented; policies and programmes are developed to achieve clearly defined educational objectives, such as increasing literacy rates, promoting STEM education, or enhancing teacher quality. They should be **guided by National Educational goals**. In Nigeria, policies are informed by national frameworks such as the National Policy on Education (NPE), which sets standards for curriculum, teacher qualifications, and access to education [6]. Policies are translated into action through programmes, which include specific projects, timelines, and resources for execution. For example, the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme operationalizes the policy goal of free and compulsory basic education for all children in Nigeria.

The success of educational policies and programmes is largely contingent upon sufficient financial resources, political commitment, and administrative competence. Political will is essential to ensure policies are implemented as intended [2].

Effective policies and programmes should have clear benchmarks for evaluating progress. Monitoring mechanisms, such as school inspections, assessments, and audits, are necessary to ensure accountability and quality [8].

Some of these policies and programmes in Cross River State include

1. **Universal Basic Education (UBE):** Aims to provide free, compulsory primary and junior secondary education [6].
2. **Teacher Training and Professional Development Programmes:** Designed to improve teaching quality through workshops, seminars, and certification courses.
3. **School Infrastructure Development Initiatives:** Focused on constructing classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and providing learning materials.
4. **Curriculum Reforms:** Periodic updates of curriculum to meet national and global standards and promote relevant skills.
5. **School Monitoring and Supervision Programmes:** Ensuring schools comply with set standards and policies [3], [7].

Understanding the concept of government policies and programmes in education is critical for analyzing the mechanisms through which political factors either facilitate or impede the execution of educational initiatives in schools.

Policy Implementation

Policy implementation in education refers to the process through which government policies and programmes are executed at the school level. It involves translating policy directives into tangible actions, such as curriculum delivery, teacher deployment, resource allocation, school supervision, and infrastructural development [3], [4]. Successful policy implementation requires adequate planning, sufficient funding, skilled personnel, and effective monitoring mechanisms.

In Cross River State, the implementation of educational policies and programmes faces several challenges that often stem from both structural and political factors. These challenges can impede the achievement of policy objectives and reduce the overall

quality of education. Politicians often influence the execution of educational programmes, affecting decisions regarding staffing, funding, and infrastructural projects. This interference can lead to favoritism, patronage appointments, and neglect of schools in politically less influential areas [2], [9]. Also, changes in government policies, lack of continuity or political priorities can disrupt ongoing programmes. New administrations may alter or abandon previously initiated policies, leading to discontinuity and inefficiency in schools [4], [5].

[7], [8] maintained that many educational programmes fail due to inadequate financial resources. Insufficient funding affects the procurement of teaching materials, infrastructural development, and payment of staff salaries, thereby undermining policy objectives. It can be affirmed that shortage of qualified teachers, administrators, and support staff can hinder the successful implementation of policies. Poorly trained personnel may lack the capacity to deliver quality education, implement curricula, or manage school resources effectively [3]. Misappropriation of educational funds and resources is a significant barrier to policy implementation. Corruption reduces the availability of resources for schools, disrupts programme execution, and compromises educational quality [8], [9].

In another development, the Federal Ministry of Education (2015) and Eze (2018) are of the opinion that the lack of proper monitoring mechanisms means that schools may not adhere to policy directives or programme guidelines and that weak supervision contributes to non-compliance with standards, ineffective teaching, and substandard infrastructure; Poverty, population growth, and community attitudes toward education can also influence policy outcomes. Schools in marginalized or rural areas often face greater challenges in implementing government programmes due to economic constraints and low community support.

The implementation of educational policies and programmes in Cross River State is a complex process influenced by political, financial, administrative, and socio-economic factors. While government policies and programmes are designed to improve access, quality, and equity in education, their success is often constrained by political interference, resource inadequacies, and systemic inefficiencies. Addressing these challenges requires strong political will, adequate funding, competent human resources, and effective monitoring mechanisms to ensure sustainable educational development [2], [3], [8].

Public Choice Theory

Public Choice Theory provides a framework for understanding how individuals within government and public institutions make decisions that are often shaped by personal interests, incentives, and political considerations rather than by the collective good. Developed by Buchanan and Tullock (1962), the theory challenges the assumption that public officials act purely in the interest of society. Instead, it posits that politicians and bureaucrats behave much like individuals in the private sector, seeking to maximize their own benefits, whether in the form of political power, financial gain, or public approval. In the context of education, Public Choice Theory offers valuable insights into

how political actors influence policy design and implementation. Rather than allocating resources equitably across schools, politicians may direct funds and projects toward communities that form their political base or provide electoral support. Similarly, the appointment of school administrators may be based on political loyalty rather than professional competence, thereby undermining effective management and accountability [2], [5]. In other cases, educational policies may be altered or implemented selectively to gain popularity or political advantage, rather than to address systemic challenges in the sector.

The relevance of Public Choice Theory to this study lies in its ability to explain the persistence of political interference, corruption, and favoritism in the management of education in Cross River State. By framing these issues as outcomes of self-interested behavior among political actors, the theory highlights the difficulty of aligning individual or partisan goals with the broader objectives of improving educational quality and equity. Ultimately, it underscores the need for strong institutional checks and transparent governance mechanisms to ensure that educational policies serve the interests of learners and communities rather than those of political elites.

Empirical Studies

[3] examined policy implementation in Nigerian secondary schools and found that political favoritism influenced the distribution of teachers, educational materials, and infrastructural development. Schools in politically favored areas received more attention and resources, while those in less influential regions lagged behind, highlighting the link between politics and unequal policy outcomes.

[7] Investigated resource allocation and political influence in Nigerian schools and found that schools in politically strategic locations received more funding, modern facilities, and qualified teachers. Conversely, schools in less politically connected areas experienced shortages of materials, overcrowded classrooms, and poorly trained teachers. These disparities resulted in uneven educational quality and performance across regions

RESEARCH METHOD

The study adopts a descriptive survey research design. A survey approach enables the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon [3]. The population for this study consists of all educational stakeholders in Cross River State, including principals, teachers in public secondary schools, Education officers at the local government level and officials from the State Ministry of Education. According to the Cross River State Secondary Education Board (2025), there are 113 public secondary schools and over 1,487 teachers and 113 principals six L.G.A. that make up the zone, forming the accessible population for the study. A representative sample of 150 respondents (90 teachers, 45 principals and 15 supervisors) were selected from the population, ensuring coverage of urban and rural secondary schools. The Stratified Random Sampling was used to stratify schools based on location (urban vs. rural). This ensures representation across different contexts and

the Purposive Sampling to select the respondents. The study will employ multiple research instruments to ensure the collection of comprehensive and reliable data. First, structured questionnaires were administered to teachers and school administrators. These questionnaires contained Likert-scale items designed to capture respondents' perceptions of political influence, resource allocation, policy implementation challenges, and the effectiveness of educational programmes. By using this structured approach, the study generated quantifiable data that can be analyzed statistically to identify trends and relationships. In addition to questionnaires, semi-structured interviews was conducted with selected education officers and ministry officials. The instruments were subjected to expert review by specialists in educational administration, who evaluated the items for content validity. In addition, a pilot test was conducted in ten schools that are not part of the main study. Responses from the pilot test were analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. In line with established research standards, a reliability coefficient of 0.70 was obtained. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were applied in analyzing the data. Quantitative data from the questionnaires was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and mean scores to summarize the responses. In addition, inferential statistical techniques, including chi-square tests and regression analysis, was used to test the hypotheses and to examine the relationships between political factors and policy implementation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Research Question 1:

How does political interference affect the formulation and execution of educational policies in in Public Secondary Schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State?

Table 1. Respondents' Perception of Political Interference in Public Secondary Schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Interpretation
Politicians influence teacher appointments	50	70	20	10	3.8	Agree
Funding allocation is affected by politics	60	65	15	10	4.0	Agree
Policy continuity is disrupted by political changes	55	60	25	10	3.8	Agree

Table 1 presents respondents' perceptions of political interference in education within the Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State. Findings indicate a strong consensus that politics significantly affects school management and policy implementation. The statement "*Politicians influence teacher appointments*" recorded a

mean score of 3.8, suggesting that recruitment and appointments are often politically driven rather than merit-based. *"Funding allocation is affected by politics"* had the highest mean of 4.0, reflecting strong agreement that resource distribution is shaped by favoritism rather than equity. Similarly, *"Policy continuity is disrupted by political changes"* scored 3.8, showing that frequent leadership shifts disrupt long-term educational reforms.

Research Question 2

In what ways does political influence determine resource allocation and infrastructural development in public secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State?

Table 2. Political Influence on Resource Allocation and infrastructural development in public secondary schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Interpretation
Schools in politically favored areas receive more resources	65	55	20	10	4.1	Agree
Infrastructure development is politically biased	60	60	20	10	4.0	Agree
Lack of political support delays school programmes	55	65	20	10	3.9	Agree

Table 2 presents findings on how political influence affects resource allocation and infrastructural development in schools. Results reveal a strong consensus that politics plays a decisive role in shaping the distribution of resources and the pace of development. The statement *"Schools in politically favored areas receive more resources"* recorded the highest mean score of 4.1, indicating strong agreement that political favoritism influences funding, staffing, and materials, creating disparities between regions. *"Infrastructure development is politically biased"* had a mean score of 4.0, suggesting that school projects are often driven by political connections rather than actual needs. Finally, *"Lack of political support delays school programmes"* scored 3.9, reflecting agreement that developmental initiatives are slowed or abandoned in schools without political backing.

Research Question 3

What challenges do schools encounter in implementing government educational programmes due to political factors in Public Secondary Schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State?

Table 3. Challenges to Policy Implementation government educational programmes due to political factors in Public Secondary Schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Political interference	115	76.7
Corruption and mismanagement	100	66.7
Policy instability due to political changes	110	73.3
Underfunding of schools	105	70.0
Shortage of qualified personnel	90	60.0

Table 3 presents the challenges schools face in implementing government educational programmes due to political factors. Findings show that political interference (76.7%) was the most frequently cited challenge, reflecting how political actors disrupt decision-making and programme delivery. Policy instability (73.3%) was also prominent, with frequent political transitions leading to abandoned or inconsistent reforms. Underfunding (70.0%) further hinders schools, especially those in less politically favored areas, limiting resources and infrastructural growth. Corruption and mismanagement (66.7%) compound the problem, as diversion of funds and poor accountability weaken programme execution. Finally, shortage of qualified personnel (60.0%) highlights the consequences of politically motivated recruitment, which often sidelines merit and undermines quality.

Research Question 4

How do political patronage and corruption impact the quality of *education* in Public Secondary Schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State?

Table 4. Impact of Political Patronage and Corruption on Quality of Education in Public Secondary Schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Interpretation
Political patronage leads to appointment of unqualified teachers/administrators	70	60	15	10	4.1	Agree
Corruption diverts funds meant for school development	75	55	15	10	4.1	Agree
Patronage results in uneven distribution of educational resources	65	60	20	10	4.0	Agree
Corruption reduces accountability in school management	60	65	20	10	3.9	Agree
Political favoritism lowers staff morale and professionalism	55	60	25	15	3.8	Agree

Table 4 presents findings on the impact of political patronage and corruption on education quality. Results show strong agreement that both factors negatively affect standards, accountability, and resource distribution. The statements "*Political patronage leads to appointment of unqualified teachers/administrators*" and "*Corruption diverts funds meant for school development*" both recorded the highest mean score of 4.1, indicating that favoritism in appointments and fund diversion severely undermine school management, instructional quality, and infrastructural growth. "*Patronage results in uneven distribution of educational resources*" (M = 4.0) further shows that political favoritism drives inequality between schools. Additionally, "*Corruption reduces accountability in school management*" (M = 3.9) reflects weak monitoring and misuse of resources, while "*Political favoritism lowers staff morale and professionalism*" (M = 3.8) highlights the demotivating effect of sidelining merit in appointments and promotions.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1

Political interference does not significantly affect the implementation of government educational policies and programmes in Public Secondary Schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State.

Table 5. Chi-Square Test for Political Interference

Variables				χ^2 Calculated	χ^2 Critical	df	Decision
Political interference vs policy implementation				25.6	9.49	4	Reject H_0

Table 5 presents the chi-square (χ^2) analysis results. The calculated value (25.6) exceeded the critical value (9.49) at 4 degrees of freedom, leading to rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative. This confirms that political interference significantly affects the implementation of government educational policies and programmes. The result implies that political influence—through biased policies, resource allocation, and policy disruptions—undermines effective and sustainable programme delivery. Thus, minimizing political interference is essential to strengthen policy continuity, fairness, and achievement of educational objectives.

Hypothesis 2

Political influence on resource allocation and administrative appointments has no effect on the Quality of education in Public Secondary Schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State.

Table 6. Regression Analysis of Political Influence and Quality of Education in Public Secondary Schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F- Statistic	Sig.
Political influence → Quality of education	0.72	0.52	0.50	30.45	0.000

Table 6 presents the regression analysis results on political influence and education quality. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.72$) indicates a strong positive relationship, while the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.52$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.50$) shows that political influence explains 52% of the variation in education quality. The F-statistic (30.45, $p < 0.05$) confirms the model's significance, leading to rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative—that political influence significantly affects education quality. These findings suggest that politically driven appointments and resource distribution strongly shape teacher quality, infrastructure, staff morale, and accountability. Where merit and fairness prevail, educational outcomes improve, but favoritism and corruption undermine standards.

Hypothesis 3

Corruption and political patronage do not significantly hinder the successful implementation of educational policies.

Table 7. Correlation Analysis

Variables	r	Sig.	Decision
Corruption & Policy Implementation	-0.68	0.001	Significant negative correlation

Table 7 presents the correlation analysis between corruption/political patronage and policy implementation. The correlation coefficient ($r = -0.68$, $p = 0.001$) indicates a strong, statistically significant negative relationship, showing that as corruption and patronage increase, effective policy implementation decreases. The null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the alternative, confirming that corruption and political patronage significantly hinder policy implementation. These practices lead to fund mismanagement, unqualified appointments, and uneven resource distribution, all of which weaken accountability and disrupt reforms.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that political interference significantly affects the formulation and execution of educational policies. Respondents indicated that appointments of school administrators, teacher deployment, and allocation of funds are often influenced by political considerations rather than merit. This finding aligns with **Public Choice Theory**, which asserts that political actors pursue self-interest, often at the expense of societal goals [11]

[2], [3], similarly emphasize that political interference creates policy discontinuity, disrupts programme implementation, and diminishes the quality of education. The study found that schools in politically favored areas received more resources, better infrastructure, and qualified personnel, while those in less influential areas were often neglected. The descriptive and inferential analysis confirmed that political influence in resource allocation significantly affects educational outcomes.

This result is consistent with Eze (2018), who documented disparities in school resources across regions in Nigeria due to political favoritism. Systems Theory supports this finding, as it highlights the interdependence of components within the educational system; disruptions in funding and resource allocation due to political favoritism can cascade into broader systemic inefficiencies.

Corruption and political patronage were found to be major barriers to the successful implementation of government programmes. Misappropriation of funds, delayed projects, and inequitable distribution of resources reduce programme effectiveness. Regression and correlation analyses indicated a significant negative relationship between corruption and policy success. This finding corroborates Nwankwo (2016) and World Bank (2018), who reported that corruption and mismanagement in Nigeria's education sector lead to poor infrastructure, insufficient teaching materials, and low teacher morale.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : The study revealed that political interference, favoritism, corruption, and systemic inefficiencies significantly undermine the formulation, execution, and effectiveness of educational policies in Public Secondary Schools in Ikom Education Zone of Cross River State, resulting in disparities in resource allocation and diminished quality of education. **Implication :** These findings highlight the urgent need for depoliticized education governance, equitable resource distribution, strengthened accountability mechanisms, and capacity building to ensure sustainable educational development and policy continuity. **Limitation :** Nevertheless, the study was geographically limited to Ikom Education Zone, which constrains the generalizability of its conclusions, as political and systemic influences may differ across regions with distinct sociopolitical contexts. **Future Research :** Subsequent studies should adopt a comparative or cross-regional approach, employ mixed-methods designs to capture both quantitative and qualitative insights, and explore long-term policy outcomes to deepen understanding of how political dynamics affect educational systems in broader contexts.

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