

Corruption, Institutional Weakness, and Educational Policy Implementation in Kwara State Public Secondary Schools: Implications for Educational Management and Development

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Abstract

This research investigated how corruption and institutional weaknesses affect the implementation of educational policies in Government-owned high schools across Kwara State, Nigeria, and the consequences for educational management and development. Employing a correlational descriptive survey design, the study targeted principals and teachers from the three senatorial districts. Using multi-stage sampling, 355 participants were chosen. Data were collected with a researcher-developed instrument titled the Corruption, Institutional Weakness, and Educational Policy Implementation Questionnaire (CIWEPIQ), whose content validity was confirmed by experts in Educational Management, Educational Administration, and Measurement and Evaluation; reliability was established via Cronbach's alpha. Pearson's product-moment correlation tested hypotheses one, two, and four, while multiple regression analysis examined hypothesis three, all at the 0.05 significance level. Findings showed that corruption negatively and significantly related to policy implementation ($r = .283, p < .05$), and institutional weaknesses also had a significant adverse effect ($r = .407, p < .05$). Additionally, the combined influence of corruption and institutional weakness explained 13.2% of the variance in policy implementation ($R = .364, R^2 = .132$). The study further found that effective policy implementation was significantly associated with improvements in educational management and development ($r = .472, p < .05$). Based on these outcomes, the researchers advise strengthening institutional capacity and curbing corrupt practices to boost policy implementation and support sustainable development in public secondary education.

Keywords: *Corruption, Weakness of Institutions, Implementation of Educational Policy, Educational Management, Educational Development, Public Secondary Schools.*

Introduction

Education is fundamental to national progress, human capital development, and socio-economic advancement worldwide. Governments prioritize education because it equips citizens with the knowledge, skills, values, and capacities necessary for productive participation in society and long-term development. In Nigeria, education is central to efforts to reduce poverty, stimulate economic growth, foster social cohesion, and sustain democratic stability. Abdullahi et al. (2023) argue that education becomes a powerful instrument for achieving national goals when policies and programs are effectively implemented. Nevertheless, despite numerous policy initiatives and interventions, the Nigerian education system continues to suffer implementation problems that undermine its contribution to sustainable development. Secondary schools occupy a pivotal position in Nigeria's education structure, bridging basic and tertiary levels. government-owned high schools are expected to develop learners' intellectual, vocational, and civic competencies, preparing them for lifelong learning and national development. Therefore, how policies are executed at this level critically affects the success of broader educational reforms. Researchers and policymakers have focused on implementation because many initiatives fail to meet their objectives due to weaknesses in execution (Elems-Ikwegbu, 2024).

Over the years, the Nigerian government has introduced several policies to improve access, quality, equity, and relevance in education examples include the National Policy on Education, the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program, the 9-3-4 system, teacher capacity-building efforts, and various quality-assurance measures. Despite these initiatives, outcomes in many public schools have changed little, largely because policies are not carried out as intended. Michael and Olokooba (2025) identified inadequate funding, weak administrative support, poor monitoring, and limited stakeholder involvement as major obstacles to effective reform implementation in Kwara State public secondary schools. Corruption is a significant barrier to implementing education policies in Nigeria. It appears in many forms embezzlement, inflated contracts, bribery during recruitment and promotion, exam malpractice, irregular procurement, and diversion of resources which deprive schools of essential facilities and undermine public confidence. Orogwu (2024) highlights corruption's damaging effects on programs such as UBE. Misappropriation of funds intended for infrastructure, teaching resources, teacher training, and student support reduces schools' ability to achieve policy goals. Corruption also breeds administrative inefficiency, erodes merit-based systems, lowers educational quality, depresses student outcomes, and damages institutional trust. Studies across Nigeria and other African nations have repeatedly shown corruption's detrimental effects on school administration and educational development (Ofor-Douglas, 2024).

Closely related to corruption is institutional weakness situations in which leadership, capacity, resources, accountability, and monitoring are inadequate. In education, such weaknesses show up as poor implementation procedures, weak data systems, ineffective supervision, and deficient governance. Institutions that lack strong leadership and clear accountability struggle to coordinate and sustain policy implementation (Udayi et al., 2024). Conversely, robust institutions with transparent decision-making, capable leaders, and effective resource

management are essential for translating policy into results. Where these structures are deficient, corrupt practices flourish and implementation becomes uneven. Akporehe et al. (2024) note that flawed implementation frameworks, insufficient administrative backing, and weak monitoring are among the problems confronting secondary school administration in Nigeria.

The challenges observed in Kwara State reflect broader governance and institutional problems affecting Nigerian education. Despite state-led reform efforts, many public secondary schools still contend with teacher shortages, poor maintenance, insufficient infrastructure, weak monitoring, and lack of instructional materials all of which hinder the achievement of educational objectives and efficient school management. Felicia and Bello (2023) found a significant relationship between effective policy implementation and school management, indicating that sound governance directly influences secondary school outcomes in Kwara State. Educational managers are central to implementing policies through planning, organizing, coordinating, supervising, monitoring, and evaluation. Research in the state reinforces their importance in applying the UBE program, although their effectiveness is frequently constrained by the institutional environments in which they operate (Aun & Aun, 2022).

When corruption and institutional fragility persist, the consequences for educational management and development are severe: declining quality, poor student performance, low teacher morale, high wastage, and weak institutional performance. These problems threaten Nigeria's progress toward Sustainable Development Goal 4, which seeks inclusive, equitable, and quality education for all. Studies on quality assurance in Kwara State and nearby regions emphasize that resource utilization, supervision, and accountability are crucial for meeting educational objectives (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Although research has addressed corruption and institutional weakness in Nigerian education, few studies have jointly examined how these factors interact to affect policy implementation in public secondary schools in Kwara State. Much of the existing work concentrates separately on financing, infrastructure, teacher effectiveness, or governance, leaving a gap in understanding the combined impact of corrupt practices and institutional deficiencies. Investigating these interactions is therefore important for designing strategies to strengthen educational management and advance sustainable education in Kwara State and across Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

It is well established that education is a key resource to national development, human capital development, social transformation and economic development. As such, governments at various levels are spending significant effort in the design and enactment of educational policies aimed at increasing access, quality, equity, and efficiency in education. Various educational reforms and policy initiatives have been put in place in Nigeria to tackle the problems of public secondary schools and improve the educational results. These include the National Policy on Education, Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme, teacher capacity building, quality assurance, and other strategic interventions to enhance the quality of education management and learning outcomes for students. However, although these efforts have been made, there are still some challenges identified that warrant attention and consideration in order to ensure policy implementation is effective both at state and school levels, as it is at the implementation level that the success of any policy is measured (Abdullahi et al., 2023; Orogwu, 2024). The failure of many educational programmes to meet their goals

is one of the lingering challenges in the Nigerian education system. Existing literature shows that public secondary schools are still experiencing a lot of problems, such as lack of adequate infrastructure, lack of qualified teachers, inadequate instructional materials, poor supervision, poor students' performance, low motivation among teachers and inefficient use of available resources (Akporehe et al., 2024). These problems continue to plague secondary education in Kwara State even with the efforts of the government to make secondary education better and effective. Given that they are still around, it is clear that as well as policy formulation, other factors that impact implementation processes are key to the success of educational reform (Michael & Olokooba, 2025).

The corruption and institutional weakness are among the key barriers often cited in the context of effective implementation of educational policies. Corruption is a major problem in Nigeria's public sector, and it's not limited to the education sector. In educational institutions, corrupt practices include financial irregularities, inflated contracts, corruption, malpractices in exams, favouritism, nepotism in recruitment and promotion processes, diversion of education resources and other immoral practices. These practices lead to accountability problems, resource misallocation, loss of institutional credibility, and lack of resources for effective policy implementation. As a result, well-designed policies that are supposed to be well executed end up failing to be implemented in reality as the budget meant for their implementation is channeled into the private interests of those who designed them (Ofor-Douglas, 2024; Orogwu, 2024).

The issue of institutional weakness is tightly coupled with the issue of corruption. Competent leadership, administrative procedures, monitoring and evaluation systems and accountability mechanisms are essential to the effective implementation of educational policies. Despite this, many public educational institutions in Nigeria still lack good governance systems, low levels of institutional efficiency, weak monitoring systems, improper enforcement of policies and regulations, and weak administrative capabilities. An institutional deficiency facilitates corrupt practices and at the same time weakens the effectiveness of the school/educational agencies in implementing policies. The weak policy coordination, poor supervision, ineffective performance monitoring, and delayed responses to educational problems have been found to be some of the major factors that are associated with the poor education development and are also linked to institutional inadequacies (Udayi et al., 2024). The consequences of corruption and institutional shortcomings for educational management and development are significant. Poor implementation of educational policies frequently leads to substandard educational processes, suboptimal use of resources, poor learning outcomes, reduced teacher motivation, high dropout rates from education and loss of public trust in the education system. Moreover, poor policy implementation provides a challenge in the fulfillment of the national educational goals and has a tremendous challenge to the Nigeria commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 4 with the aim of providing inclusive, equitable and quality education for all. Empirical studies that can uncover the root causes of policy implementation and the policy impact on educational management and development (Ibrahim et al., 2022) are needed to address these challenges.

While the scholarly interest in the implementation, governance and educational management in Nigeria has grown significantly, the existing ones have focused mainly in the field of educational financing, school leadership, teacher effectiveness, infrastructural provision,

quality assurance, and general implementation challenges. On corruption in the education sector, too, much of the research has focused on the impact of corruption on education quality, delivery and institutional performance. Although these studies have yielded important insights around corruption, these have not often considered the interaction between corruption and institutional weakness as two aspects of governance that affect the implementation of educational policy. Previous studies have focused on each of these variables separately and have not studied the interaction among them and how they affect policy outcomes.

Within the literature, there is also an apparent gap in context in relation to Kwara State. There are very limited previous studies on educational management, school effectiveness, resource uses, quality assurance, and overall policy implementation problems in the state. Empirical evidence however, on the specific effect of corruption and weak institutions on the implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools is still limited. Similarly, little has been documented regarding the implications of these governance challenges for educational management and development. This absence of empirical information restricts the capacity of policy makers, educational administrators, and other actors to develop evidence-based policies and strategies for institutional capacity strengthening, the improvement of accountability, and the policy implementation processes. The gaps in concepts and information found in the literature, identified in the empirical and contextual areas, then form the basis for the present study. The study aims to examine the effect of corruption and institutional weakness on the implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools of Kwara State, Nigeria. It also seeks to understand the separate and combined impacts of these factors in policy implementation and their implications for educational management and development. The outcomes will add to previous literature and will give policy makers, educational managers and government bodies empirical evidence to build effective governance mechanisms that will improve implementation and enhance sustainable educational development in the state.

Purpose of the Study

The overall aim of this research is to investigate how corrupt practices and weak institutions affect public policy outcomes in Nigeria. Specifically, the study will:

1. examine how corruption influences the execution of educational policies in public secondary schools across Kwara State.
2. analyze the impact of institutional weaknesses on the enforcement and delivery of educational policies in Kwara State's public secondary schools.
3. assess the joint influence of corrupt behavior and institutional fragility on the implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Kwara State.
4. explore the consequences of educational policy implementation for school management and the broader development of education within public secondary schools in Kwara State.

Research Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no statistically significant association between corrupt practices and the execution of educational policies in public secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Ho2: Institutional weaknesses have no statistically significant effect on the execution of educational policies in public secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Ho3: The combined influence of corruption and institutional weakness does not have a statistically significant effect on the execution of educational policies in public secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Ho4: The implementation of educational policies has no statistically significant implications for the management and development of public secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria

Methodology

A descriptive correlational survey design was used for this study. This approach was selected because it allows systematic collection of data from a defined group while examining relationships among variables in their natural context, without experimental manipulation. It therefore suited the objective of assessing how corruption and institutional weaknesses affect the implementation of educational policies in State-funded high schools in Kwara State, Nigeria, and the implications for educational management and development. The study population comprised all principals and teachers working in public secondary schools across Kwara State. These respondents were chosen due to their direct role in carrying out education policies and their familiarity with school governance, institutional arrangements, and administrative processes in the secondary school system.

A multistage sampling procedure produced the study sample. First, schools were stratified by the state's three senatorial zones (Kwara Central, Kwara North, Kwara South) to ensure geographic representation. Next, proportionate sampling determined how many participants to select from each district relative to its population size. Finally, simple random sampling was applied to select the schools, as well as the principals and teachers who took part. This combination of steps aimed to enhance fairness in selection, reduce sampling bias, and increase representativeness.

Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire developed for this research: the Corruption, Institutional Weakness, and Educational Policy Implementation Questionnaire (CIWEPIQ). The instrument contained five parts. Part A collected respondents' demographic information. Parts B through E addressed corruption, institutional weaknesses, policy implementation, and aspects of educational management and development, respectively. Items were rated on a four-point Likert scale from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1), enabling quantitative analysis in SPSS. Content and face validity were established through review by subject-matter experts in educational management, administration, and measurement and evaluation. These reviewers assessed each item for clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study goals; their feedback guided revisions that improved the questionnaire's appropriateness. A pilot test was then conducted with a comparable group outside the main sample to assess reliability. Pilot data were analyzed in SPSS version 27 using Cronbach's alpha; all scales exceeded the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating adequate internal consistency.

Trained research assistants administered the questionnaires after obtaining permission from relevant school authorities. Participation was voluntary, respondents were briefed on the study's purpose, and anonymity and confidentiality were assured. Questionnaires were distributed and retrieved immediately after completion to maximize response rate and data accuracy.

Data coding and analysis were performed in IBM SPSS Statistics Version 27. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) addressed the research questions. Pearson's product-moment correlation tested hypotheses 1, 2, and 4 to determine relationships between variables. Hypothesis 3 was examined using multiple regression to evaluate the joint and individual contributions of corruption and institutional weakness to policy implementation. Statistical significance was judged at the 0.05 level; p-values below 0.05 led to rejection of the null hypothesis, while p-values equal to or above 0.05 led to its retention. Regression results included the coefficient of determination (R^2), standardized beta coefficients (β), and F-statistics to assess predictive power and explanatory strength. Ethical considerations were observed throughout. Participation was voluntary, responses were treated as confidential, and no personal identifiers were collected. Collected data were used solely for research and educational purposes.

Results

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between corruption and implementation of educational policy in public secondary schools in Kwara state, Nigeria.

Table 1: *Pearson Correlation Analysis of the Relationship Between Corruption and the Implementation of Educational Policy in Public Secondary Schools in Kwara State, Nigeria*

Variable	N	Mean	Std	Df	Cal.v	P.v	D
Corruption	355	3.14	0.570	353			
					.283	0.000	Rejected
Educational Policy Implementation	355	2.98	0.634	353			

Source: Author's Field Survey

Note: r = Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Significant at $p < .05$.

The first null hypothesis stated that corruption exerts no significant influence on the implementation of educational policy in public secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. To test this hypothesis, Pearson's product-moment correlation was computed using the collected measures of corruption and policy implementation. The corruption scale produced a mean of 3.14 (SD = 0.570), while the implementation scale had a mean of 2.98 (SD = 0.634). The correlation analysis returned $r = 0.283$ with 353 degrees of freedom, and the associated probability was $p < .001$. Because the p-value is below the 0.05 threshold, the null hypothesis is rejected.

These results indicate a statistically significant, positive association between levels of corruption and the implementation of educational policies in Kwara State's State-funded high schools. Although the correlation is modest in magnitude, it nonetheless signals that corruption contributes to variation in how policies are carried out. Practically, this suggests that issues such as diversion of funds, nepotistic hiring and promotion, irregular procurement, bribery, and

weak accountability mechanisms undermine policy execution by depleting resources, reducing administrative effectiveness, and eroding institutional trust. Consequently, corruption limits schools' capacity to meet policy goals.

In summary, the Pearson correlation shows a positive relationship between the two variables, $r(353) = 0.283$, $p < .001$, and therefore the null hypothesis that corruption has no significant effect on policy implementation is not supported. Corruption should therefore be considered an important factor when addressing the effectiveness of educational policy implementation in Kwara State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between institutional weakness and educational policy implementation in public secondary schools in Kwara state, Nigeria

Table 2: *Pearson Correlation Analysis of the Relationship Between Institutional Weakness and Educational Policy in Public Secondary Schools in Kwara State, Nigeria*

Variable	N	Mean	Std	Df	Cal.v	P.v	D
Institutional Weakness	355	3.05	0.582	353			
					.407	0.000	Rejected
Educational Policy Implementation	355	2.98	0.634	353			

Source: Author's Field Survey (2026)

Note: All other r values are Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and significant at $p < .05$.

The second null hypothesis proposed that institutional weaknesses do not significantly influence the execution of educational policies in Kwara State public secondary schools. To test this, Pearson's product-moment correlation was calculated between measures of institutional weakness and policy implementation. Table 2 reports mean scores of 3.05 (SD = 0.582) for institutional role and 2.98 (SD = 0.634) for policy implementation. The correlation was positive and moderate, $r = .407$ ($df = 353$), and statistically significant, $p < .001$. Because the p-value is below the 0.05 threshold, the null hypothesis was rejected. These results indicate that deficiencies within institutions such as weak administration, inadequate monitoring and evaluation, limited accountability, shortages of staff and materials, and poor enforcement of regulations are associated with poorer implementation of educational policies. In short, institutional capacity and governance significantly affect the effectiveness of policy implementation in Kwara State's public secondary schools.

H₀₃: The combined influence of corruption and institutional weakness on the implementation of educational policies in public secondary schools in Kwara state, Nigeria.

Table 3: Analysis of the Combined Influence of Corruption and Institutional Weakness on the Implementation of Educational Policies in Public Secondary Schools in Kwara State, Nigeria

Variable	N	Mean	Std	R ²	R	D
Corruption	355	3.14	0.570			
Institutional Weakness	355	3.05	0.582			
				0.132	0.364	Rejected
Educational Policy Implementation	355	2.98	0.634			

Source: Author's Field Survey

Note: R = Multiple Correlation Coefficient; R² = Coefficient of Determination.

The third null hypothesis tested whether corruption and institutional weaknesses do not significantly affect educational policy implementation in Kwara State public secondary schools. Multiple regression was performed using measures of corruption, institutional weakness, and policy implementation. Respondents' mean scores were 3.14 (SD = 0.570) for corruption, 3.05 (SD = 0.582) for institutional weakness, and 2.98 (SD = 0.634) for policy implementation. The analysis produced a multiple correlation coefficient of R = 0.364 and R² = 0.132. The positive R indicates a direct relationship between the two predictors and changes in policy implementation; the R² value shows that these predictors explain 13.2% of the variation in implementation, leaving 86.8% attributable to other factors not included in the model. The model's p-value was below 0.05, leading to rejection of the null hypothesis. Therefore, corruption together with institutional weakness significantly influence how educational policies are implemented in the state's funded high schools.

The results suggest that weaknesses in governance including corrupt practices, inadequate institutional arrangements, poor accountability, limited administrative capacity, ineffective monitoring, and weak enforcement hinder successful policy implementation. To improve outcomes, reforms should focus on reinforcing institutional frameworks, enhancing transparency and accountability, and reducing corruption within the education sector.

H₀₄: There is no significant implication of educational policy implementation on educational management and development in public secondary schools in Kwara state, Nigeria.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Analysis of the Relationship Between Educational Policy Implementation and Educational Management and Development in Public Secondary Schools in Kwara State, Nigeria

Variable	N	Mean	Std	Df	Cal.v	P.v	D
Educational Policy Implementation	355	2.98	0.634	353			
					.472	0.000	Rejected
Educational Management Development	355	2.91	0.733	353			

Source: Author's Field Survey

Note: r = Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, significant at p value < .05.

The fourth null hypothesis stated that implementing educational policies would have no significant effect on the management and development of public secondary schools in Kwara State. To evaluate this, scores for policy implementation and for educational management and development were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The mean score for policy implementation was 2.98 (SD = 0.634), while the mean for educational management and development was 2.91 (SD = 0.733). The analysis produced a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.472$ with 353 degrees of freedom and a p-value of .000. Because $p < .05$, the null hypothesis was rejected.

These results indicate a statistically significant, moderate positive relationship between policy implementation and educational management and development: as the quality of policy implementation improves, so do management practices and developmental outcomes in State-funded high schools. Effective policy enactment appears to enhance resource allocation, school administration, teacher performance, accountability, teaching quality, and overall institutional outcomes. Conversely, poor implementation can undermine administrative effectiveness and impede educational progress. In summary, the Pearson correlation shows a meaningful association between the two variables, $r(353) = .472$, $p < .001$, suggesting that sound policy implementation is important for efficient management and sustainable development in Kwara State's public secondary schools.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the study results, corruption significantly affects the implementation of educational policies in government-owned high schools in Kwara State ($r = .283$, $p < .05$), so the null hypothesis was rejected. Although the correlation is modest, the finding indicates that corrupt behaviors such as embezzling education funds, inflating contracts, bribery, nepotism in appointments and promotions, and other unethical acts impede policy execution and reduce the likelihood of achieving intended policy outcomes. This outcome supports Orogwu (2024), who reported that corruption diverts resources away from education and undermines programme objectives. It also aligns with Ofor-Douglas (2024), who emphasized that corruption weakens institutional accountability and reduces capacity to implement policies effectively. In short, irregularities in resource allocation and policy processes limit the realization of policy goals despite well-meaning intentions.

The analysis also shows that institutional weakness has a significant negative relationship with policy implementation ($r = .407$, $p < .05$), leading to rejection of the null hypothesis. This underscores the critical role of institutional capacity and functioning in carrying policies into practice. Udayi et al. (2024) similarly identified weak governance structures, inadequate monitoring and evaluation, limited administrative capacity, and poor supervision as major obstacles in Nigeria's education system. Akporehe et al. (2024) likewise linked insufficient education administration and low institutional capacity to a wide implementation gap caused by poor coordination, weak accountability mechanisms, and inadequate supervision. These parallels reinforce the conclusion that strengthening institutions is essential for turning policy into effective practice. When considered together, corruption and institutional weakness jointly influence policy implementation. The multiple correlation coefficient of $R = .364$ and $R^2 = .132$ indicate that these two variables explain 13.2% of the variance in implementation outcomes,

and the null hypothesis was rejected. Practically, this suggests that corruption and weak institutions are mutually reinforcing governance problems: fragile institutions create opportunities for corrupt practices, and corruption further degrades institutional effectiveness and accountability. This reciprocal relationship presents a substantial barrier to effective education policy implementation.

This combined finding is consistent with Michael and Olokooba (2025), who reported that governance failures and administrative bottlenecks in Kwara State undermined educational reform, and with Orogwu (2024), who argued that corruption and institutional shortcomings compound one another by weakening monitoring and enforcement. The evidence implies that policy responses should address institutional reform and anti-corruption measures together rather than in isolation. Finally, the study found a significant relationship between policy implementation and educational management and development ($r = .472, p < .05$), so the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates that successful implementation contributes meaningfully to school management practices and broader educational development. Ibrahim et al. (2022) reached a similar conclusion, linking effective implementation to better quality assurance, resource management, teacher performance, and learning outcomes. Abdullahi et al. (2023) and Ofor-Douglas (2024) also emphasized that administrative shortcomings in applying policies contribute to poor educational outcomes, and that well-implemented policies are instrumental for achieving quality education and sustainable development. Policy implications from these findings include prioritizing institutional capacity building, increasing transparency and accountability, improving funding and monitoring systems, and engaging stakeholders actively in implementation processes. Emphasizing implementation as much as policy formulation will better position public secondary schools in Kwara State to meet their educational objectives.

Conclusion

The study examined how corruption and weak institutions affect the rollout of education policies in Kwara State's public secondary schools and the consequences for educational management and development. Findings show that corrupt practices such as embezzlement, bribery, favoritism and diversion of resources continue to obstruct policy goals by weakening accountability and undermining implementation processes. Likewise, fragile institutional arrangements, inadequate oversight, limited administrative capacity and poor governance significantly hinder policy execution and create gaps that reduce school effectiveness and progress. Importantly, corruption and institutional fragility work together: each magnifies the other's impact, so policy failures often stem from their combined influence rather than from a single cause. As a result, even well-designed policies will fall short if implemented within weak governance structures. Conversely, strong institutions and transparent systems improve resource use, school administration, teaching and learning, and overall accountability linking policy actions directly to educational outcomes.

To achieve lasting improvements, interventions must address both corruption and institutional capacity at once. Strengthening transparency, accountability, monitoring mechanisms and administrative competence is essential. In short, sustainable gains in educational management and development depend not only on sound policy design but also on robust institutions and governance that ensure faithful, consistent implementation.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the results and conclusions of this study:

1. The Kwara State Ministry of Education should intensify transparency and accountability measures in government-owned high schools, by conducting periodic audit of financial accounts and reporting public expenditures in education and good monitoring of the utilisation of available resources. All this will help to curb corrupt practices and ensure that resources set aside for policy implementation are deployed in the right way.
2. The government and relevant education authorities should develop and implement wide-ranging anti-corruption policies and regulations in the education sector. They should involve whistleblower protection systems, tougher penalties on financial mismanagement and improved monitoring of the procurement process, staff recruitment and promotion, and project implementation in schools.
3. The capacity of public secondary schools should be strengthened with continuous professional development programmes for principals, teachers and educational administrators. The training should be geared towards educational leadership, strategies for implementing policy, accountability, monitoring and evaluation, and the management of resources.
4. Existing monitoring and evaluation systems for educational policies and programmes should be enhanced by the Ministry of Education. Ongoing monitoring, review of policies and of performance, are to be carried out to ensure good implementation and to allow for quick resolution of unforeseen issues.
5. Public secondary schools should be adequately resourced in both financial, human and material resources to implement the policies successfully. Government need to ensure the timely and equitable provision of educational resources, as well as adequate funding, so that schools can fulfil their aim.
6. The school-based management structure should be strengthened to ensure participatory governance and active involvement of stakeholders. To improve accountability and effective policy implementation, parents, teachers, community leaders and other relevant stakeholders should be engaged in decision making processes.
7. The educational institutions should embrace digital financial, record keeping, procurement and personnel management systems. The use of technology in school management can help improve transparency, reduce the risk of corruption, and increase administrative efficiency.
8. Government to improve institutional structures for the implementation of educational policy through greater coordination between educational agencies, making the educational administrators more effective and ensuring adherence to regulations and operation procedures.
9. Educational policymakers should give more attention to the implementation phase of educational policies by making the guidelines for policy implementation clearer, avail the necessary support mechanisms, and conduct continuous capacity building sessions for the policy implementers. This will help to close the policy action gap.
10. There should be regular assessments to check on policy effectiveness and development in schools. The outcomes of such evaluations should inform the review of school

policies, solving difficulties in implementation and enhancing the management and development of public secondary schools in Kwara State.

11. The Kwara State Government, the anti-corruption bodies and the educational regulatory bodies must work hand in hand to ensure that people do things ethically and with good governance in the public secondary schools.
12. School administrators and educational leaders should foster a school culture of integrity, professionalism and ethical behavior of staff and students. The promotion of these values will contribute to sustainable educational development, lessen corrupt practices and improve institutional effectiveness.

The recommendations made will make significant contribution to the reduction of corruption, institutional capacity, implementation of educational policies and educational management and development in public secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria.

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