

INSTRUCTIONAL MEDIA INCORPORATION INTO SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM AS AN ANTIDOTE TO MASS FAILURE OF STUDENTS' IN NORTH CENTRAL ZONE OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper examines the statistical analysis of May/June 2014 West African Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination as presented by the West African Examination Council. Based on this Statistics, the author generates the statistical analysis of the results of the States in the North Central Zone of Nigeria according to their performance in the May/June 2014 WASSCE. The analysis of the result according to each of the States shows poor performance of all the States in the North Central Zone. In fact, none of the States is able to have average performance of 50% candidates pass in English Language and Mathematics which is the benchmark pass in the Examination. The analysis shows that Kwara state led with 29.54%, Benue State with 26.86%, Kogi State with 24.93%, Plateau State with 19.46% Nasarawa State with 18.23% and Niger State with 17.46% pass. The paper discovers some causes of mass failure by the students which include parental, School, teachers, and students related causative factors. The paper concludes by explaining some steps to ameliorate mass failure in WASSCE examination. These steps include, the use of appropriate Instructional media, the use of Internet, the use of handset, the use of social networks and the use of educational broadcasting as teaching/learning resources.

Keywords: Instructional media, Incorporation, Secondary School curriculum, antidote, mass failure, students, North Central Zone and Nigeria.

Introduction

Mass failure of candidates in public examinations such as West African Secondary School Certificate Examination, (WASSCE). National Examination Commission (NECO) and Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) is not a new thing in Nigerian history. For several years back, the incident of mass failure has been an epidemic that has been trailing Nigerian Educational system.

This mass failure is mostly experienced yearly in English and Mathematics. According to Eguridu, (2014), as the head of National Office of West African

Examination Council (WAEC), Lagos, attested that one million, six hundred and thirty two thousand three hundred and seventy five (1,692,375) candidates sat for the May/June Examination this year” (2014). In which one million, one hundred and sixty three thousand and ten candidates (1,163,010) failed to obtain the basic entry requirement for University admission.

According to him, only 31.29% of the candidates this year had benchmarked for University admission. This is very low to 2012 result which was 38.81% and 2013 result which was 36.57%. The summary of result statistics for WASCE 2014, according to the Punch (2014), states that Anambra State topped other States in Nigeria with candidates passed with credits in five subjects including English Language and Mathematics 51.718 candidates. While Abia State occupies the second position with 32.947 candidates with five credits pass including English and Mathematics. The details of the results of the thirty six states and the Federal Capital Territory contained in the table 1.

The table revealed that Edo State came with 3rd position. Bayelsa State fourth, Rivers State fifth, Enugu State sixth, Lagos State seventh and Imo State with eight position, Delta State ninth position took tenth position while Yobe State took thirty seventh position.

Table 1: Statistical Analysis of May/June 2014 WASSCE

S/N	State name	TOTAL NO OF CANDS			5 Credits & above Including English & Maths			Percentage
		Male	Female	Total Sat	Male	Femal e	Total	
1	ANAMBR A	23,009	28,709	51,718	14,985	19,109	34,094	65.92
2	ABIA	26,689	29,610	56,299	16,347	17,600	32,947	58.52
3	EDO	33,079	31,330	64,409	18,479	18,763	37,242	57.82
4	BAYELSA	10,585	9,345	19,930	5,562	4,967	10,529	52.83
5	RIVERS	31,897	32,461	64,358	16,566	17,402	33,988	52.78
6	ENUGU	20,425	25,688	46,111	10,787	13,148	23,935	45.88
7	LAGOS	71,700	74,864	145,564	32,334	34,885	67,219	45.86
8	IMO	21,900	24,459	46,359	8,514	10,325	18,830	40.64
9	DELTA	25,449	25,311	50,760	10,064	10,301	20,365	40.12
10	KADUNA	58,149	42,213	100,362	20,484	18,030	36,514	36.38
11	EBONYI	12,761	12,677	25,438	4,652	4,518	9,170	36.05
12	EKITI	11,373	10,905	22,276	3,570	3,960	7,530	33.80
13	ONDO	20,323	18,474	38,797	6,439	6,133	12,572	32.40
14	AKWA-IBOM	29,143	29,997	59,140	8,729	9,743	18,472	31.23

15*	ABUJA	8,433	9,720	18,153	2,612	2,956	6,568	30.67
16	KWARA	18,302	15,543	33,845	5,068	4,941	9,999	29.54
17	KANO	42,089	23,990	66,079	10,892	7,611	18,503	28.00
18	OGUN	35,156	35,318	70,474	9,313	9,561	18,974	26.92
19	BENUE	29,339	21,794	51,133	7,894	5,851	13,736	26.85
20	KOGI	24,230	18,785	43,015	5,978	4,746	10,724	24.93
21	CROSS- RIVER	24,781	21,805	48,586	5,561	4,918	10,479	22.49
22	OSUN	34,421	23,251	47,672	4,665	4,651	9,316	19.54
23	PLATEAU	28,805	23,647	52,452	5,850	4,359	10,209	19.46
24	OYO	39,340	38,332	77,872	7,491	7,263	14,754	19.00
25	NASARA WA	27,991	19,307	47,298	4,891	3,730	8,621	18.23
26	NIGER	31,025	20,790	51,815	4,982	4,229	9,211	17.78
27	TARABA	15,481	9,107	24,588	2,329	1,433	3,762	15.30
28	BORNO	19,350	12,633	31,983	2,845	2,021	4,968	15.21
29	KATSINA	30,298	13,245	43,543	2,868	1,581	4,649	10.45
30	ADAMAW A	17,700	12,535	30,235	1,510	1,136	2,646	8.75
31	JIGAWA	13,546	4,247	17,793	944	386	1,330	7.47
32	SOKOTO	18,321	7,070	25,391	1,193	616	1,809	7.12
33	ZAMFAR A	21,976	7,391	29,366	1,337	617	1,954	6.65
34	KEBBI	19,074	7,541	25,616	1,356	320	1,676	6.30
35	GOMBE	12,356	7,146	19,502	593	514	1,107	5.68
36	BAUCHI	19,501	9,831	29,332	896	852	1,548	5.28
37	YOBE	11,049	4,261	15,310	487	256	743	4.85
	Total	929,04	763,33	1,693,3	268,04	261,43	529,479	31.29
		5	0	75	7	2		

Source: West African Examination Council – 2014

*Not of state status

Composition of North Central Zone

North Central Zone of Nigeria comprises of six States. The States are Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau. These States are located around the centre of Nigeria. That is why the Zone is called North Central Zone. The Federal capital Territory (Abuja) though has not state status but notwithstanding; it is also part of the north Central Zone of Nigeria. The States in the zone are blessed with a reasonable number of private, state and federal Institutions such as colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Universities, For instance, there is Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi, and

Benue State University, Makurdi in Benue State, Kwara State is blessed with the University of Ilorin, and Kwara State University, Molete. Kogi State is blessed with the Federal University, Lokoja and Kogi State University Ayungba. There is also the Federal University of Technology, Minna and Ibrahim Babangida University, Lapai in Niger State. Nasarawa State University and Federal University, Lafia while Plateau State has University of Jos, Jos and Plateau State University, Bokkos. Abuja has University of Abuja and several other private Universities.

The numerous tertiary institutions in this zone is an advantage for the people to be well educated in millions. But the pathetic story is that, the people have to cross the gate of WAEC and other public examinations by passing with as least five credits including English Language and Mathematics before they can take advantage of the several higher institutions available in this zone. A critique of the 2014 WASSCE May/June ordinary level result will x-ray whether the people in this zone are really qualified in several thousands to occupy the universities and other tertiary institutions in the zone. A brief look and focus on the states in North Central Zone from shows Kwara State in the 16th position, Benue State in the 18th position Kogi State in the 19th position , Plateau State in the 23rd position, Nasarawa State in the 25th position and Niger State in the 26th position. It should be note that their position on the WASSCE 2014 result statistics will determine the number of candidates that are qualified for the University admission.

Analysis of candidates results statistics of May/June 2014 West African School Certificate Examination

Table 2: Summary Statistics of 2014 WASSCE Results according to the States Performance in North Central Zone of Nigeria.

State	Male	Female	Total	Candidates with few credits and above including credit in English and mathematics			
Kwara	18.302 (54.08%)	15.543 (45.92%)	33.845	5058 Male	4,491 Female	9,999 total	29.54% percentage
Benue	29.339 (57.38%)	21.794 (42.62%)	51.133	7.884	5.851	13.736	26.86%
Kogi	24.230 (56.33%)	18.785 (43.67%)	43.014	6.078	4.746	10.724	24.93%
Plateau	28.805 (54.92%)	23.649 (45.18%)	52.452	5.850	4.359	10.209	19.46%
Nasarawa	27.991 (59.18%)	19.39 (40.82%)	47.298	4.891	3,730	8,621	18.23%
Niger	31.225 (59.88%)	20.790 (40.12%)	51,815	4,982	4,229	9,211	17.46%
Abuja *	8,433	97.29	19,153	2,612	2950	6,568	30.67%

Source: *West African Examination Council- 2014*

**Not of state status.*

Based on the information on the table 2 above, Kwara State has the highest percentage (29.54%) of candidates that passed with five credits and above with credit pass in English Language and Mathematics.

This is followed by Benue State with 26.86% of candidates with five credits and above and with credit pass in English Language and Mathematics. Kogi State is in the 3rd position with 24.93% while Plateau State is in the 4th position of 19.46%. Nasarawa is in the fifth position with 18.23% while Niger State is in the 6th position in the zone with 17.46% candidates with five credits and above pass including English language and Mathematics. Though Abuja is not of state status but, WASSCE is conducted separately there therefore, it is very necessary to treat it as analyzes the result. According to WAEC result statistics, Abuja has the best result in the zone than any of the states. It has 30.67% of her candidates having credits in English Language and Mathematics. This could be as a result of more enlightened people that are there as a federal capital of Nigeria.

This results as revealed in table 2 is disheartening, it is embarrassing to note that none of the States in the zone had average percentage pass of 50% in the 2014 WASSCE. This is not too good for educational development of the States in particular and North Central Zone in general.

Possible causes of mass failure in public examinations in Nigeria

The head of Nigeria WAEC National Office, Mr. Charles Eguridu believes that parents should be blamed for the mass failure. He said parents are too busy looking for money all sorts without minding what happen to their children education. Everyone seems to have forgotten that those who excel in life do what others are unable to do, going the extra mile, burning night candles to achieve success in their studies. He equally acknowledges the students, schools and government as part of causative factors for mass failure in WASSCE.

Fadare and Odebiyi (2014) identify three schools of thought on the cause of students' failure. The first to be blamed is the parents, who are carried away either by their career or lack of adequate attention for their children.

The second school of thought believes that the students should share the blame because they are no longer interested in their future. The third school of thought believes that government, school and the students are to be blamed for their mass failure.

Ajiboye (2014), asserted that the blame should be placed on everybody: the parents, the government and the students themselves. For instance, majority of the parents are not actually monitoring their children properly. Therefore, the children cannot decide everything by themselves, they need the assistance of the parents to decide most of the things they needed to decide at this stage of schooling. Ajiboye (2014), also stated that some of the students spend the whole of the day on the manipulation of their

handsets. That the time ought to have been judiciously used for their studies are wasted on handset.

The school is also part of the causative factors for the mass failure. For instance, many schools, teachers are no longer committed to their work. They pay more attention to their businesses than what they are employed and paid for. They give less assignment to the students and class work are not frequently marked. When they are marked at times, they are hurriedly marked with little or no feedback to the students. There is also the need for the teachers to constantly improve themselves academically. Salman, Mohammed, Ogundele and Ayinla (2012) finds out that 98% of teachers and 76% of students view laziness on the part of students as a major factor responsible for students mass failure in SSCE Mathematics examination while 97% of the teachers and 79% of the students viewed lacked of frequent practice by students as another factor responsible for mass failure of students in mathematics among others.

Ajayi (2011) opines that watching movies, unregulated internet and face book surfing and other past times are now taking better part of youth's time as they have placed less emphasis on reading.

A Director at Federal Ministry of Education in an interview with leadership Newspaper opines that poor training or total lack of training for teachers and poor funding of the school system were the major reasons for the mass failure in controlled examinations. He further said that, in most cases money provided for staff training are diverted to another projects, and sometimes, embezzled by senior ministry officials and at the end teachers are not well equipped to train the children.

How to Ameliorate Mass Failure in WASSCE in North Central Zone

The use of appropriate instructional media

The issue of poor performances of students from North Central Zone has been proved by the WAEC result statistics of 2014 May/June. The action is to advance possible solutions to ameliorate this problem. This paper proffers some solutions to improving this bad performance of the students. The use of instructional media for teaching among teachers in both public and private schools in Nigeria is not encouraging. There are no topic in the school syllabus that should be taught without appropriate instructional media. But what we have today in the classroom is the uncooperative attitudes of the teachers towards the use of instructional media.

It should be noted that every teacher should be able to design, produce and select appropriate instructional media for each of the topics they want to teach in the syllabus. They should also be able to identify the types and categories of instructional media that can be used for teaching different topics. For instance, some abstract topics in different subjects especially Mathematics and English Language that cannot be easily understood by the students without the use of relevant and appropriate instructional media. The teachers have to be aware of this and take appropriate steps towards changing their lukewarm attitudes towards the use of instructional media in the classroom.

b. The use of internet

The teachers should direct the students on the use of the internet for their academic purposes. For instance, there are several search engines on the internet such as google, facebook, skype, twitter etc, which the students can use to their advantage. They can search for more materials for their assignments and private readings through the use of these internet search engines. Apart from that, the internet provides very cheap and free electronic books on different subjects. This opportunity can also be used to the students advantage. The students can also visit the internet virtual libraries for more reading or study materials. When they utilize the numerous opportunities on the internet, it will definitely improve their performance in their examinations most especially WASSCE, NECO or UTME.

C. Use of Handset

In the same vein, most students of nowadays are found playing games with their handsets instead of seizing such opportunity to improve on their studies. For instance, some games that are of academic value could be played by the students instead of those they play for fun. Their handset could be used to take teacher's notes, do some simple calculations or send questions to the teachers or their colleagues on some topics they do not understand through sms. They can as well use handsets to time themselves on the number of hours to use for studying different subjects they have on the class time table. This will definitely improve their academic performances in the different subject areas.

d. Use of social networks

It has been observed that many of the secondary school students spend hours on the use of social networks such as facebook, skype, Twitter, Utube etc. They commonly use these social networks to search for girl friends, pornography, financial fraud and other related cyber frauds. The teachers could assist these students towards using this opportunity for their academics pursuit. The teachers can do this through appropriate counseling and campaign on positive use of social networks for academic achievements. This kind of assistance by the teachers will definitely improve the academic performances of the students especially in public examinations, such as WASSCE, NECO or UTME.

e. Use of educational broadcasting

There are a lot of educational broadcasting on the radio and television which the students can use to their advantage. There are several educational programmes on public and private radio and television stations, which are specifically aired to teach students in their specific school subjects.

The teachers should counsel their students on how they can take advantage of these programmes. This will definitely improve their academic performances greatly.

Conclusion

To improve the level of educational development in the North Central Zone of Nigeria, the government at all the States have to play a major role especially that of

making funds available for developing education. The government supervising role should be strengthened, adequate infrastructures have to be provided for schools, adequate instructional materials have to be provided for the schools, competent qualified and adequate teachers have to be recruited for schools there should be adequate monitoring of schools on regular basis by Inspectorate division of Ministry of Education. The teachers should be more dedicated and get themselves acquainted with the dynamic technological development in education. They should be more committed to their work by putting more efforts to improve the students' lower performances in WASSCE. The governments in all the States in North Central Zone have to declare state of emergency in educational sector so as to boost enrolment of more students for WASSCE registration. The government should ensure that remedial coaching programmes are organized for the students by the teachers in all the schools in North Central Zone. The teachers participating in this programme should be adequately remunerated. Finally, students should be more serious with their work. They should pay attention in the class, use their phones and internet facilities more profitably for their studies, rather than anti-social behavior that may have adverse effects on their academic performances especially in WASSCE and other public examinations.

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