

Development of Education in Nigeria and the Ways Forward

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Abstract: This paper discussed the hydra-headed challenges faced by school administration and development at all levels of education in both private and public schools in Nigeria. Secondary data was used to support the points raised in the paper using an interpretive research paradigm by sourcing data from print and online resources. Many challenges are working against the smooth development and administration of schools in Nigeria. Some of the problems include a lack of data, inadequate funding, political instability, brain drain, and an unstable academic calendar among others. The study identified students, parents, school administrators, and the government as the causative agents of these challenges. These problems are not peculiar to Nigeria alone, most developed and developing countries face similar challenges. The finding from this research is that these problems are jointly caused by all stakeholders contrary to the general belief that they are caused by bad governance only. To solve these problems, this article recommends: that the national policy on education should be effectively implemented, an increase in the education budget to 26%, provision of adequate infrastructure, an effective data bank policy for schools to aid planning, employment of only licensed teachers and provision of alternative programs for school dropouts

Key words: Administration, Challenges, Education, Government, School

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria got independence from the British colonial administration on the first of October 1960. After sixty-two years of self-administration (independence), the education sectors still face a bunch of challenges that have made Nigerian education less competitive globally. These problems are not peculiar to Nigeria alone but to other developing and developed countries. This paper discussed some of the challenges that are responsible for these setbacks and ways forward.

According to Agobue & Anyaeji (2021), education is a vital requirement for a man to undergo the process of social life. To compete globally, the education of the citizen starting from the primary school level to the tertiary level must be the priority of any government. Education is a major



criterion used to evaluate the growth and development of any nation because the easiest way to destroy a nation is to kill the education sector

The Education sector is experiencing challenges that emanate from the knowledge economy, rapid technological advancement, complex cultural issues, moral decadence, political development, disaster, globalization and internationalization

After sixty-two years of independence, the level, standard, and quality of education have experienced retardation and this trend had forced Nigerian students to seek quality education outside the country due to poor ranking and bad public image of the unmarketable education in Nigeria. This paper looked into these challenges, and their causes and made recommendations on the ways forward.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative multiple case study and literature review in the interpretive research paradigm. Qualitative research involves the why what or how questions that "stress how social experience is created and given meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Data was collected from secondary sources, arranged into themes, and analyzed for content. This research approach looks at issues historically and holistically by addressing specific issues. The study used existing secondary data or empirical evidence to present issues, especially in the literature review on specific issues on the challenges facing educational developments in Nigeria.

CONCEPT OF EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES

The challenges confronting the management, administration, and development of education in Nigeria are enormous and multiple-faceted. The government alone cannot be blamed for these misfortunes because of the numerous causative agents, barriers and factors. The challenges are intertwined, interwoven and integrated, and so also are the causative agents, which can be more than one or multiple. Figure 1 illustrates the hydra-headed causes of the challenges of education developments.

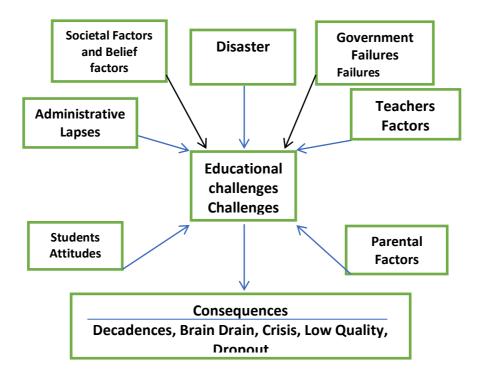


Figure 1: Conceptual Model of causes of Challenges Facing Schools Administration and Development.

Source: Ayoko et al. (2023)



CHALLENGES FACING EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN NIGERIA Inadequate Funding.

Inadequate funding is a major problem that has affected education development in Nigeria. Inadequate funding is manifested in almost all the forms of the Nigerian educational system. For instance, Agogbua, Amob & Anyueji (2021); Ogunode, Ahmed & Ayoko (2023) observed that inadequate funding is a major challenge facing the administration of Basic school education in Nigeria. In secondary school education, Ogunode (2021), and Peter (2016) submitted that inadequate funding is one of the major problems facing the administration of secondary school education in Nigeria. The budgetary allocation for the administration and management of secondary school education in Nigeria is inadequate. In tertiary education, Akubuilo, & Okorie, (2013); Okoli, Ogbondah, & Ewor, (2016) opined that one of the major challenges facing the management of this sector of education in Nigeria is inadequate funding. The budgetary allocation devoted to education has been considered grossly inadequate considering the phenomenon of an increase in student enrolment and increasing cost, which has been aggravated by inflation. Scarcity of funds is a serious problem confronting Nigerian public university education. They have therefore subjected government financial policies on education to constant review intending to allocate more resources to university education. Generally, the educational sector in Nigeria is underfunded and this has implications for the development of the sector (Ayoko, 2022). Reasons for the shortage of funds in educational institutions were outlined by Ogunode, Richard, & Musa (2021); Ogunode & Madu (2021) to include corruption, insecurity challenges, fall in national revenue, subsidy payment and poor implementation of funding policies on education.

Corruption

Corruption in the administration and management of education in Nigeria has hindered development in the educational sector. Corruption has penetrated the Nigerian educational system. In the Basic school education, Edho (2009); Ogunode & Stephen, (2021) submitted that corruption has limited funds in the administration of basic school education while in secondary schools education, Ogunode & Johnson, (2021) acknowledged that corruption is another problem facing the administration of secondary schools in the country. Funds released by the government for the administration of the schools sometimes ended up in private hands. Funds meant for the capital and recurrent services in the secondary schools are been diverted by the officials of the ministries. Funds budgeted for different programmes in the ministries are been diverted into private banks. Many public funds meant for the development of education in Nigeria are diverted and mismanaged. The limited funds provided for planning purposes in the various ministries, departments and agencies of education are been diverted and this is affecting the planning of education at the various universities. Ogunode, & Ohunene, Olatunde-Aiyedun, (2022); Ogunode & Isaiah (2021); Ahmodu, & Sofoluwe, (2018) concluded that Nigerian universities have now become an ivory tower in the throes of corruption scandals where things are no longer at ease, corruption allegations mounted on top officials of the Nigerian Universities are fingered in financial offensiveness and maladministration. Generally, Osunyikanmi (2018); Nwaokugba & Ezeugwu (2017) and Ololube (2016) acknowledged that corruption in the educational sector has impacted equality, merit, and competence which affected the development of education. They further observed that corruption in the educational sector drains the system of quality education, and impacts the moral advancement in society while impeding the sustainable development of the country. Ahmodu & Sofoluwe (2018) observed that the negative consequences of the prevalent corruption have continued to hamper educational growth and development in Nigeria and have resulted in the suspension and removal of some Nigerian university's vice-chancellors and bursars while some others are under investigation.

Infrastructural Facilities Problem



Educational infrastructure is an important factor in determining the quality of learning, teaching, and educational output however, most schools lack basic infrastructures, such as a laboratory, library, internet facilities, electricity, students hostel, and quality learning environment. Ogunode (2020b) Ebehikhalu & Dawam (2016) and Ehichoya, Ogunode (2020) defined infrastructural facilities as those facilities aiding the delivery of academic and non-academic services in educational institutions. Infrastructural facilities include; libraries, laboratories, halls, offices, administrative blocks, hostels, road facilities, water, electricity, internet etc. The availability of infrastructural facilities in adequate quantities will support the effective administration of educational institutions and the inadequacies will prevent the effective administration of educational institutions. Blessing (2014); Chingos, & Martin (2010); Ogunode & Nasir (2021) and Ogunode & Abashi (2020) observed that there are inadequate infrastructural facilities in majorities of the universal basic schools across the country and at the secondary schools level, Mercy & Anselm (2018); Ike (2017); Owoeye & Yara (2011) and Ogunode, & Agwor (2021) opined that inadequate infrastructure facilities are also challenges to effective secondary school administration in Nigeria. Many secondary schools in the country do not have adequate infrastructural facilities to deliver effective teaching and learning programmes in their schools. Also, in the universities, Babalola, (2007); Mgbekem (2004); Babalola, Jaiyeoba & Okediran, (2007) and Ogunode (2020) stated that many public universities in Nigeria do not have adequate infrastructural facilities. Factors responsible for inadequate infrastructure facilities according to Ishaya & Ogunode, (2021) and Ogunode & Jegede (2021) include underfunding, increased student population, corruption, poor infrastructural facilities planning, poor supervision and inflation.

Poor Implementation of Education Policy

One of the most serious problems threatening the sustainability and development of Nigerian educational systems is inconsistency in the various educational policies at every level of government. This inconsistency in the educational system affects the implementation of educational plans and programmes. Nigerian education cannot perform optimally without stable educational policies. Educational policy is designed to direct activities and actions that would lead to the attainment of educational objectives. Educational policy is designed to equip the educational system with all that is necessary to launch Nigeria into the future, (politically, socially, morally and technologically). Policy instability is a constant change in educational policies as a result of changes in government. Ogunode, Jegede & Ajape (2021); Ogunode & Jegede (2021); and Ogbonnaya (2010) acknowledged the problem of poor implementation of educational policies in Nigeria. DiaLoke, Ukeh & Meduagwuna (2017); Ogunode, & Samuel (2020) and Ogunode, Akinyode & Ayoko (2023) concluded that the causes of educational policy instability in the Nigerian educational sector include; capital-intensive policy implementation, poor consultation, political instability, poor coordination and cooperation of policy formulation, the appointment of Non-professionals as heads of educational institutions, dynamics in the educational system and practices and poor formulation of educational policies. Ogunode, Akinyode & Ayoko (2023) also identified wastage in educational resources, low space of development in education and increase in administrative and management expenditure as effects of educational policy instability in the Nigerian educational system.

Inadequate Professional Teachers

Inadequate professional teachers in Nigerian educational institutions have also affected education development in Nigeria. Ogunode (2020) concluded that the shortage of professional teachers is also a problem facing the administration of basic education in Nigeria. Many primary schools in Nigeria do not have adequate professional teachers. A report by independent Newspapers (2019) stated that there was a deficit of 135,319 teachers at the Early Childhood Care Development Education, 139,772 deficit in primary schools and 2,446 shortages in Junior Secondary Schools



across the nation. Several challenging clogs in the realization of good access, equity and quality of education in Nigeria have been identified. One of these is the critical issue of teacher shortage at all levels of education. There is a shortage of early child education teachers needed to attain the proposed 1:20 teacher-to-pupil ratio. This ratio is far from being met, as the current ratio is 1:47. According to Ogunode (2021); Ige (2013); Olorunsola & Bello (2018); and Otegbulu (2016), another problem facing the administration of secondary school education in Nigeria is inadequate professional teachers. There is a shortage of professional teachers in majorities of secondary schools across the country and this has affected the administration of the schools. NEEDS, (2014); Ajape, Ogunode & Jegede (2020) and Ogunode & Ndayebom (2022) observed that inadequate academic staff is a problem that prevented the effective administration of university education in Nigeria. The shortage of lecturers in many departments and faculties is responsible for the high teacher-student ratio in Nigerian universities (Ogunode, & Okwelogu, 2022). Generally, Ogunode & Atiga (2021) submitted that the shortage of qualified teachers is a major challenge to the Nigerian educational system. Ogunode & Paul, (2021) and Ogunode & Adamu (2021) identified; inadequate funding, lack of strategic manpower planning, brain drain, poor motivation, un-conducive working environment and corruption as the reasons for the shortage of academic staff in Nigerian higher institutions. They also identified low productivity, poor quality of teaching, and poor quality of education as the effects of a shortage of teachers in Nigerian public educational institutions.

Insecurity Challenges

Insecurity is a problem that has affected education development in Nigeria. Ogunode (2020); Ogunode, & Ahaotu (2021); Ogunode & Abubakar (2020) and Ogunode & Ukozor (2022) all agreed that insecurity is a major problem that has affected administration at each level of the schools. The issue of school attacks by the insurgent especially in the northern part of the country calls for a serious intervention because no meaningful development and progress can take place in the administration of schools under such conditions. According to The Cable (2019), UNESCO documented that Boko- haram has killed 2,300 teachers in the north-eastern part of Nigeria since the start of the insurgence in 2009. In addition, the 2018 global education monitoring report confirmed that 19,000 teachers have been displaced in the region, affecting access to quality education. According to Ogunode, ThankGod & Ayoko (2023), the Islamic sect called Boko haram meaning western education is forbidden is attacking educational institutions in the Northern part of Nigeria. Many public universities located in Northern Nigeria have been victims of continuous attacks. Many students, lecturers and administrators have been killed while others kidnapped. According to Ayoko (2022), the high frequency of risk factors caused by insecurity in northern Nigeria will continue to contribute to the rate of school dropout. The various attacks on the universities have resulted in school closures leading to an unstable academic programme. Generally, Ogunode, Ahaotu & Obi-(2021) and Ogunode, Chijindu & Jegede (2022) agreed that insecurity challenges have affected the development of education in Nigeria.

Poor Supervision

Supervision is the key to the realization of quality education. Supervision ensures the professional skills of teachers are upgraded and improved upon. In Nigeria, supervision of education has been described as ineffective by Moja (2000. In primary school education, Ogunode (2020) submitted that the problem of poor school supervision by the respective regulatory institutions has also contributed to the poor development of education. For instance, Ogunode, Ohibime, Nasir, & Gregory (2021); Umar, Hauwa & Nura (2017); Olowonefa & Ogunode (2021) and Ogunode & Adanna (2022) acknowledged poor supervision of basic school education, secondary school education and university education in Nigeria. Poor supervision is responsible for the poor quality of



education in the system. Generally, Ogunode, Johnson & Olatunde-Aiyedun (2022) concluded that the supervision of schools in Nigeria has been ineffective.

Appointment of Weak Leadership

The realization of the educational objectives depends on the quality of leaders appointed to oversee the affairs of different agencies of education in the Country. Educational leadership matters to effectively administer the affairs of educational institutions. Failure in the Nigerian educational system can be traced to the various leaders appointed to head the various educational institutions who are less qualified or do not have experience in educational management and administration. The government appoints whosoever they think best to handle the ministry of education, unlike the health sector that the minister must be a medical practitioner. Therefore, the failure of the government to recognize education as a profession that must always be handled by an educational expert or administrator is contributing to the problems facing educational institutions. At the tertiary institutions, Ajape, et al (2020) opined that many Nigerian University leaders emerged without due process. They are appointed by politicians and many of them are less qualified to handle academic institutions like universities. They lack the competence, leadership skills, and managerial skills to transform the Universities for sustainability. Appointments of school leaders (administrators) are no more on merit but on man-know-man to the detriment of the effective administration of the school because leadership appointment is done based on favouritism and this can breed conflict in the school system. This type of school leader does not have the leadership style and experience required for effective handling of school activities and this can lead to a break in communication line which may harm the school climate and relationships with all stakeholders. Poor leadership can be the downfall of an educational institution. At the secondary schools, Atiga & Udida, Bassey, Udofia, & Egbona, (2009) and Ogunode (2021) submitted that weak managers appointed by the government to manage various educational institutions, especially the public secondary schools are also a major problem preventing effective management of public secondary schools in the Country. Many of these school managers do not have the right leadership skills and leadership qualities to ensure the effective management of schools. Some of these school managers do not possess the human relationship and teamwork skills to allow them to manage the various teachers under them. The inability to effectively manage the teachers and coordinate them well definitely will lead to management failure and school failure. Generally, Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory & Abubakar (2020) opined that a major problem facing the administration of public schools in Nigeria is the weak administrators appointed by the various tiers of government to head the educational institutions. Many school administrators appointed to oversee the administration and management of some educational institutions are very weak in terms of administration and management. Some of them do not have the qualifications, experiences and knowledge required to successfully manage such institutions to a place of glory.

Lack of Current Data

Another problem facing the educational system in Nigeria is the problem of accessing reliable and current educational data to plan education and design policy for quick decisions for the development of the sector. The Nigerian educational system lacks accurate and reliable data to realize the objectives of education (Ogunode, Adah, Audu & Musa, 2021). Ogunode (2020) submitted that planning is very vital to the realization of the objectives of national planning on education. Educational institutions must be planned to be able to achieve their objectives and education must be planned too to be able to realize its goals. Data is what is needed to plan and take decisions. Data is very important for planning educational programmes. Without current educational data, planning is impossible. Ogunode (2021) observed that it is very sad to realize that current data on various forms of education in Nigeria is not available especially in basic school education while



secondary school education, Ogunode (2021) and Atiga & Ogunode (2021) stated that inadequate data on secondary school education in Nigeria is a problem facing the planning of public secondary schools in Nigeria. At the tertiary institutions, Victoria & Owuama (2016) and Ogunode (2021) acknowledged the shortage of current data and poor access to data as a problem in planning tertiary education in Nigeria. According to (NEEDS, 2014) and the British council (2014), they concluded that it was challenging to obtain data with current statistics for assessment mainly because current data on the education sector was generally not available in the public domain. The assessment, therefore, relied on available data, some of which were more than three years old and had not been updated at the time of the study. The assessment was also limited by the reluctance of government officials to release data or respond to surveys and inquiries despite several follow-up visits, contacts and reminders. Access to reliable data and complete information on educational activities in Nigeria has for a long time proved difficult. Adamu (2016); Udeme (2017) outlined some challenges preventing data collection in Nigeria including funding challenges, poor capacity building, infrastructural development and inadequate collaboration at various levels.

Poor Capacity Building Programme

Poor capacity-building programme has affected education development in Nigeria. According to Osiesi, (2020) and OECD (2005), an effective professional development as defined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development is an ongoing process that comprises training, practice, feedback and offers sufficient time and follow-up support. Staff development programme simply involves training. Alao (2010) saw training as "a specialized process through which one learns to perform direct tasks of varying complexity and acquire expected job behaviours". Training can be used to improve workers' efficiency and allows them to acquire advanced skills and knowledge needed in executing job tasks in the organization. As an organized process, it modifies the attitude, skills and behaviour of workers by learning experience to effectively perform various duties of the organization (Osborne, 1996). Draghicescu, Petrescu, Stancescu & Gorghiu, (2018) also agreed that capacity building programme is key to the development of schools.

Osiesi (2020) and Ogunode, Adah, Audu & Pai (2021) submitted that presently, the capacity building programme for Basic school education is not effective, while Mallo, Ogunode & Jegede (2021) acknowledged poor training programme for secondary schools teachers and Ogunode, & Oluseun, (2020) also opined that there has been a problem with training and retraining programme in the Nigerian tertiary institutions. Ogunode, & Oluseun, (2020) concluded that inadequate funding, lack of Strategic Plan on Human Resources Development, institutional corruption, favouritism, strike actions, political influence and poor implementation of the staff development programme as the challenges facing the administration of professional development programme in the Nigerian higher institutions.

Half-Baked Graduate Problem

Half-baked` is an English expression for anything that seems as if it were created hastily or improperly. This is a serious problem, especially in Nigeria and it is due to the cumulative effects of all the problems of school administration because if the input and processing are at fault, the output (products) cannot be different. Some graduates with first-class or second-class upper-division certificates cannot put into practice what they learnt in school, this makes the society to wonder if they pass through the curriculum. The quality of the Nigerian educational system is falling. In primary school education, Ogunode (2020) lamented that the learning outcome of most primary school students is poor. The falling quality of education disturbs school administrators in Nigeria, especially at the level of basic schools. This problem is reaffirmed by the World Bank (2017) which observed that the quality of basic education, measured in terms of student learning outcomes, is low in Nigeria. According to international standards, we expected children who have completed grade 3



to be fully literate. Yet in Nigeria, only 66 percent of public school students can read at least one of three words and 78 per cent can add single digits after completing grade 4 (NEDS, 2015). In secondary school education, Olowonefa & Ogunode (2021) and Ogunode (2021) observed that the academic performance of Nigerian secondary schools in recent times has not been encouraging. At the higher institutions, Saint, Hartmet & Strassner (2003) pointed out that the Nigerian university system is performing poorly in teaching and learning in terms of labour market absorption and employers' assessment of graduates. Mohammed & Gbenu (2007) and Obayan (1999) observed that the quality of education offered by higher education institutions in recent times has deteriorated substantially. Osunyikanmi, (2018) submitted that in its 2016 report on the perception of well-being, the United Nations Development Program stated that only 55 percent of Nigerians were satisfied with the country's education quality, 48 percent were satisfied with its healthcare quality, and 36 percent were satisfied with the standard of living. The perception of well-being is much better in countries that have a much higher quality education. For instance, 83 percent were satisfied with the education quality in Singapore, 88 percent were satisfied with healthcare quality and 84 per cent were satisfied with the standard of living. This report shows that quality education in Nigeria needs urgent attention to improve it.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The multiple problems facing educational administration and development in Nigeria have reduced the standard of education at all levels. Contrary to the general belief that the problems were caused by bad governance, they are jointly caused by the students, teachers, school administrators, the community and the government. These challenges if not quickly addressed will water down the acceptability of Nigerian graduates in the international domain because such graduates may not be able to compete globally. Mass orientation of the citizens on behavioural change is necessary because government alone cannot proffer solutions to these multi-faceted problems.

CONCLUSION

Effective administration is paramount to the realization of the aims and objectives of national policy on education. Unfortunately, the internal and external administration of schools at all levels is plagued with numerous challenges. The hydra-headed challenges facing the education sectors in Nigeria are artificial and can be solved through dialogue, re-orientation, policy formulations, implementation, reformations, collaborations, transformations, research, and discipline. Real changes in the quality and standard of education will be possible when a visionary, experienced, and selfless leader who appreciates the importance of quality education becomes the leader. As decision-makers, policymakers, and stakeholders, the ball is in our court. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following are recommended based on the varied challenges mitigating educational developments in Nigeria in sixty-two years of self-management and administration

(1) Effective monitoring and implementation of the national policy on education. All stakeholders of the educational system (The federal, state, and local governments) should be represented in the process of policy planning, formulation, and implementation.

(2)The budgetary allocations to education should be increased to 26% according to the UNESCO recommendation. Government should provide alternative avenues for effective funding of schools and all educational activities. Private schools should also be considered for support funds or grants from the government to promote the quality of education. Students should be considered for scholarships and bursaries, especially brilliant but indigent students.

(3) Only qualified and licensed teachers should be allowed to teach in the school system and the government should look into the welfare packages of school teachers and educational administrators to discourage issues like brain-drain and incessant strike actions. Government should



implement all agreements reached with all tertiary institutions' academic and non-academic unions to prevent strike action and disrupted academic calendar

(4) Adequate security of lives and properties should be provided by the government in the host communities in which schools are located to avert bad experiences of insecurity

(5) Tertiary institutions should always consider introducing students to the practical aspects of their studies and not only the theories. This will lead to the production of credible graduates that can compete globally and champion positive changes in society.

(6) Policymakers should make Nigerian education marketable to attract foreign revenue, brain gain, global competence, improved ranking, and collaborations by improving the standard of the Nigerian educational system in line with global best practices and expectations

(7) Our libraries should be up to date and upgraded to electronic and digital open versions for easy access to information. In addition, the government should encourage local writers and publishers by making available special funds or subsidies so that local content can be included and promoted and adequate ICT infrastructure (hardware, software, internet connectivity, and alternative power source) should be made available by management for effective utilization of web services by staff. This can be achieved through the Formulation and implementation of a good web Policy, Improving the Institution's Web Visibility, Increasing the Size of the web content, Uploading documents in rich Files Formats, and Improving Scholarly research.

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