

THE CHALLENGES OF POOR FUNDING OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN NIGERIA AND ITS EFFECT ON TEACHER EDUCATION

By

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Abstract

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization. (UNESCO) recommended that developing nations should give up to 15-20 percent of their annual budget to public education. This paper examined Nigeria's education budget from 2010 to 2022 as one of the developing nations, the teacher education system in Nigeria and the effects of poor funding of education on the system. The highest percentage allocation to education was 9.94% in 2014 and it started decreasing to 5.4% in 2022. The current percentage allocation is not even up to half of the UNESCO recommendation. Special budgetary allocation by the government through appropriate agencies via the ministry of education should be provided for implementation of effective teacher education programme. Financial assistance and material donations from international organizations, affluent members of the society and community are other means of funding the teacher education programme which should be explored to improve on the infrastructural development and other needs of teacher education institutions.

Introduction

Educationists are agreed that educational financing is of prime importance in the management of education, [Adequhi (2003), Oyekanmi (2000)]. The Federal Republic of Nigeria, National Policy on Education (2012) recognizes the fact that the success of any system of education is hinged on proper planning, efficient administration and adequate financing. The policy states that

- a) Education is an expensive social service and requires adequate financial provision from all tiers of government for successful implementation of the education programmes
- b) Government's ultimate goal is to make education free at all levels. The financing of education is a joint responsibility of the federal, state and local government and the private sector. In this connection, government welcomes and encourages the participation of local communities, individuals and other organizations
- c) Relevant sectoral bodies such as the Education Tax Fund have been established to respond to the funding needs of education. In addition, other funds from which the burden of financing education can be eased are
 - i. Industrial Training Fund
 - ii. National Science and Technology Fund (NPE, 2012)

The next section will examine Nigeria's education budgets from 2010 to 2022

Nigeria's Education Budgets 2010-2022

The table below shows Nigeria's education budget from 2010 to 2022 in four columns. The first column is the year, the second is total budget for the year in ₦Trillion, the third column is total allocation to education in #Billion and the fourth column is the percentage of the education budget to the total budget

Year	Budget (₦Trillion)	Educational Allocation (₦Billion)	Percentage of Budget (%)
2010	5.160	249.09	4.83
2011	4.972	306.30	6.16
2012	4.877	400.15	8.20
2013	4.987	426.53	8.55
2014	4.962	493.00	9.94
2015	5.068	392.20	7.74
2016	6.061	369.60	6.10
2017	7.444	550.00	7.38
2018	8.612	605.80	7.03
2019	8.830	620.50	7.03
2020	10.33	691.07	6.7
2021	13.26	742.52	5.6
2022	17.13	923.79	5.4

Dataphyte.com

Source: Budget office

From the table, we observe that the budget for the year 2010 was the lowest, with N249.09 billion representing 4.83% of total budget. There was increase from 2011 to 2014 which has 9.94% (highest percentage in the chart). From 2016 there was a decline in the percentage allocation with 5.4% in 2022 being the lowest. Even though the figure for 2022 increased to N923.79 billion, the budget is 5.4 percent of the total budget which is the smallest percentage allocation since 2015

As stated earlier, the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommended that developing nations should give up to 15-20 percent of their annual budget to public education. Nigeria's allocation to the education sector has not been meeting up with the UNESCO standard. We shall discuss the challenges of this poor funding on the education system generally and teacher education in particular

Teacher Education System In Nigeria

The National policy on Education (2012) stated that

- a) Since no education system may rise above the quality of its teachers, teacher education shall continue to be given major emphasis in all educational planning and development
- b) The minimum qualification for entry into the teaching profession shall be the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE)

It also stated that the goals of Teacher Education are to

- a) produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system
- b) encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers
- c) help the teachers to fit into social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals
- d) provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignments and make them adaptable to changing situations
- e) enhance teachers' commitment to the teaching profession.

It also stated that all teachers in educational institutions shall be professionally trained and Teacher education programmes shall be structured to equip teachers for the effective performance of their duties.

The following institutions among others shall give the required professional training provided they continuously meet the required minimum standards

- a) Colleges of Education
- b) Faculties of Education
- c) Institutes of Education
- d) National Teachers Institute
- e) Schools of Education in the Polytechnics
- f) National Institute for Nigerian Language (NINLAN)
- g) National Mathematical Center (NMC)

Roles/Tasks of the Teacher.

It is pertinent to observe that the goals of teacher education as listed on the policy document are very good. The relevance of the curriculum of a teacher education programme depends to a large extent on the resources of the teacher education system to deliver the program.

In the context of the present day school realities and aims and objectives of education, the role/tasks of the Nigerian teacher as in many other areas include

- i. Facilitator of learning
- ii. Classroom manager
- iii. Mobilizer and manager of resources
- iv. Researcher and innovator
- v. Mentor and counselor of pupils
- vi. Developer and appraiser of teaching learning materials
- vii. Planner and organizer of co-curriculum activities
- viii. Service provider for the community and parents, and
- ix. Designer and organizer of pupil evaluation (National Council for Teachers Education, 2003).

A teacher keen to perform the role of a facilitator of learning has to make conscious and planned effort to encourage self study and self learning among his students. He is expected to create such situations as shall enable them to learn on their own

To succeed in facilitating learning, a teacher ought to be an effective classroom manager. He should be in a position to create and sustain students' interest in learning. He is also called upon to mobilize the requisite resources for the transaction of curriculum

Like all other professional, a teacher is likely to face a variety of problems in various aspects of his job, which, besides facilitating learning also involves dealing with the pupils, parents, colleagues, community and mobilization and management of resources. He is expected to find solutions to his problems through his own effort, involving systematic investigation and analysis. In other words, a teacher is expected to be a researcher as well-as an innovator

Closely related to the teachers' role, as researcher and innovator is his responsibility to look after the social and emotional problems of his pupils in the school, thereby assuming the role of their mentor and counselor.

Professional training of teachers demands that they have the competence to prepare and appraise teaching learning materials and plan/organize co-curricular activities for the total development of their students

A teacher is also expected to develop competencies that will enable him interact with the community to elicit its support and provide extension services for the benefit of the

community including parents. The appraisal of pupils' performance is one of the major responsibilities of the teacher.

Funding of Teacher Education

The Federal Ministry of Education Action Plan (2002) on Repositioning Higher Education in Nigeria stipulates that government should fully fund students of Colleges of Education with the provision that all such students be bonded to teach in Nigeria for a minimum of three years post-graduation to encourage the production of sufficient number of qualified teachers for our primary and Junior Secondary Schools.

Federal and state governments are the major financiers of education in Nigeria. While the federal government funds her own higher institutions and unity schools, state governments take up the responsibility of state owned higher institutions and post primary schools. The revenue for federal universities, polytechnics and colleges of education are sourced from financial grants from federal government allocation through the federal ministry of education to the National University Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE)

Other sources of revenue for institutions include

- i. Grants in-aid mainly by the Federal Ministry of Education through its annual budget
- ii. Fees and charges for services rendered as approved by the governing council
- iii. Gifts of land, money or properties to be spent in strict accordance with the wishes of the person making the gift
- iv. Loans within Nigeria, investment of funds of the institution in securities (Ogbonnaya, 2000), (Ezema, et al, 2004), (Atakpa, 2000) and (Isyaku, 2000).

From the above discussion, it is obvious that since the allocation to the overall education sector is poor, the possibility of fully funding students of colleges of education and meeting the financial needs of teacher education is slim. As of now, some federal colleges like the Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu, Enugu State pay more than fifty thousand naira a year for academic activities.

Challenges of Poor Funding of Education

From the previous sections, it is obvious that the education sector has not been adequately funded, and it is yet to meet up with the UNESCO 20 percent recommendation for developing countries. Lack of infrastructure, poor welfare, inadequate staffing are part of the challenges the sector continues to face across primary, secondary and tertiary institutions

Insecurity across the different geo political zones force government and proprietors of schools to close down. Kidnapping of pupils from schools is contributing to low enrolment especially in regions prone to terrorist attack and thus increasing the number of children out of formal learning

Stakeholders such as the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union (COEASU), have embarked on several strike actions to show their grievances over the state of education in the country and demand action from the government. Between 2016 and 2022, there have been several strike actions by the members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union (COEASU). Academic Staff Union of University is currently on strike, which started on 14th February 2022, Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union were on strike from 10th June 2022 to 11th August 2022. COEASU suspended the present strike to give government time to resolve the lingering issues of the Union. These issues which are mainly due to poor financing of the teacher education system are

1. Failure of Federal Government to constitute its own team and commence renegotiation of the FGN-COEASU 2010 agreement despite all entreaties of the union
2. Non-release of N15 billion approved out of the N456,599,691.18 billion revitalization funds for both federal and state Colleges of Education contrary to repeated promises of the FG
3. Non-implementation of 2014 needs assessment report
4. Non-payment of outstanding promotion arrears from 2016 to date
5. Non-payment of responsibility allowance to Librarian in Colleges of Education
6. Non-implementation of the consequential effect of the implementation of CONTISS 15 on lower Cadre (a.k.a. Migration)
7. Poor funding of Colleges of Education and poor conditions across state colleges of education especially in Ogun, Kwara, Abia, Kogi, Kaduna, Zamfara, Yobe, Oyo, Benue, Edo and Ebonyi States
8. Federal Government's recalcitrant insistence on IPPIS instead of UTAS that captures the peculiarity of tertiary institutions.
9. Refusal to mainstream demonstration schools staff in the payroll

It is, therefore, the resolve of the union that, effective Friday, 10th June 2022, the suspended strike action in December 2018 be resumed immediately for four weeks in the first instance (COEASU 2022)

Recommendations

Apart from the approved sources of fund for the education sector stated in the paper under the section on funding of teacher education, the following are some suggested sources of funds for proper funding and implementation of effective teacher education programme

1. Government Statutory Allocation: Federal government allocation to education should increase from the present 5.4% to at least 10% if it does not meet the UNESCO recommendation of 15-20%. State and Local Government should also increase their allocation to education. Special budgetary allocation for effective funding and implementation of teacher education programme should also be provided
2. Education Tax Fund (ETF): At least 10 percent of the contribution to education from this fund should be set aside for teacher education programme
3. Assistance from affluent members of the society: Affluent members of the society can be requested to donate money, equipment and buildings to assist the teacher education programme
4. International Organizations should be contacted for meaningful financial assistance for teacher education programme.
5. Old students Association/Alumni Association: Old students of the institution can give financial or material assistance to their alma-mater.
6. The Host Community: Host community can assist in providing adequate security and some necessary facility needed in institution located in their locality
7. Religious Organization: The church through its local and foreign agencies can assist in the funding of teacher education programme especially in the moral education of the teacher trainees.

Summary and Conclusion

This paper examined the poor funding of the education system in Nigeria by looking at the Nigeria's education budget from 2010 to 2022. The percentage allocation to education within the period was 4.83% in 2010 which was the lowest and 9.94% in 2014 which was the highest. From 2015 the percentage allocation started decreasing from 7.74% to 5.4% in 2022. It was noted that Nigeria's allocation to the education sector has not been meeting up with UNESCO standard of between 15% and 20%. The paper discussed the teacher education system in

Nigeria based on the realization of the fact that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. The roles of the teacher that demands proper funding for proper implementation were discussed. Since nobody can give what he does not have, it is highly recommended that teacher education should be given major emphasis as contained in the Federal Government of Nigeria National Policy in education. Some of the challenges facing the education system which has made stakeholders to call on the federal government to improve funding to the education sector were highlighted. Specific areas of need for proper implementation of teacher education programme include improvement in infrastructural development, staff welfare and acquisition of modern equipment to facilitate practical activities and research. Safeguarding Nigerian schools to provide adequate security for teachers and students requires a lot of money and adequate provision must be made for it.

Some stakeholders identified lack of political will and misplaced priority on the part of our leaders as the main reason why university students are at home for more than six months as a result of strike action by unions. The students of colleges of education were at home for sixty days and only suspended the strike to give government time to resolve the issue. For instance, the 1.1 billion Naira used to purchase security vehicles for Niger Republic can be used to solve part of the unions' problem. The Niger people claimed that they helped Nigeria to defeat Biafra and so deserve the gift, while the presidency of Nigeria claim that the boundary is artificial. (Phoenix 2022).

Reacting to the neglect of the education sector, the catholic Bishops of the Owerri Ecclesiastical province (2022) in their meeting observed that lack of required investment on the young people of Nigeria is adversely affecting the students who waste away in violence and are exposed to destructive social vices. They expressed their pains in seeing our youths leaving our country as a result of non functional educational activities and bad governance in the country knowing that they are going to suffer and possibly lose their lives. The paper recommended specific sources of fund for proper funding and implementation of the teacher education programme.

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