

# Current Education Issues in Nigeria: Implication to the Economy

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**Abstract:** *The paper discussed current education issues in Nigeria: implication to the economy. Education in Nigeria is overseen by the ministry of Education Local authorities take responsibility for implementing policy for state controlled public education as state schools at a regional level. The education system is divided into kindergarten, primary education, secondary education, and tertiary education. Recently government began to will education budget yearly and increasing other sectors budget more than that of educational sector. The implication of this to the economy to any nation is dangerous. the paper disused education system of Nigeria, current educational budget in Nigeria , threat of insurgency to education system in Nigeria, knowledge economy, unemployment of graduates, and business education in Nigeria as a portal way to gain financial independence.*

**Key words:** *Current Education, Economy, Budget, Unemployment and Insurgency*

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## Introduction

Education is the bane of progress in all country of the world. It is the greatest thing that man has benefited. Before the era of education in Nigeria, the country was in the dark struggling to survive through many jobs that could not move the country forward. Education is the transition of knowledge from teacher to students or learners. It is the greatest gift that parents can bequeath a child. It is more valuable than any other thing in the world. In this 21<sup>st</sup> century, man has realised that natural resources as a source of survival of any nation is falling. The era of oil, gold, diamond and any natural resources and failing with the result that many countries are becoming impoverished which Nigeria has become a victim.

Nigeria used to thrive as an oil producer country thereby neglecting all other facets'. Today, American who are the greatest patrons of Nigeria oil discovered oil in their country through research and it is affecting Nigerian economy seriously.

The Nigerian education system has come a long way but a lot is still crying for attention. Previous government tried to improve the standard of education by making laws and introducing several education sets that they felt would enhance education. Education in Nigeria is overseen by the Ministry of Education. Local authorities take responsibilities by implementing policy for state controlled public education and state schools at a regional level. The Education system is divided into kindergarten, primary Education, secondary Education, and tertiary education. Recently, government began to cut education budgets yearly and increasing other sector budget more than that of the education sector. The implication of this to the economy is dangerous. The paper discussed educational system of Nigeria, current educational budget in Nigeria, threat of insurgency to education system in Nigeria, knowledge economy, unemployment of graduates, and business Education in Nigeria as a portal way to gain financial independents. The system of Education in Nigeria has come a long way but a lot still have to be done to awake the hidden

potentials. Balogun (2010) opened that education is the light, without the the hole world would be in darkness.

### **Knowledge Economy**

In this 21<sup>st</sup> century, it cannot be overemphasized that knowledge is the greatest aspect to possess. Knowledge is power as well as money the traditional sources of wealth like oil, Gold, Diamond, and others have ready given way to thoughts and ideals. Mr. Bill gate the richest man on earth today, was enriched by knowledge and ideals about information and communications technology and not by Oil, Gold or Diamond. An increasing numbers of countries such as Japan, Indian or Malaysia and making millions of US dollars by by exporting computer software rather than cassava, oil, gold or diamond. In this century of knowledge, no country can survive take less of thrive (Durosaro).

In contemporary society, country aims at achieving thieving economy through the education of its citizens. It is only literacy societies that can acheive economy emancipation. Education is seen as the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes, literates, abilities competence, and the cultural normal of society by people to transmit this life to the coming generations so as to enhance perpetual development of the society. Berden (1969) Lawal (2013) observed that distinguished economist's has confirmed long held by educators that poor countries would become rich only if they invested heavily in education. This is because education was believed to nature social, emotional, congritude, and physical development of a nation. Without education, young people were more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation and less able and fulfil the many roles they were to play to ensure their own and other survival.

### **Unemployment of graduates**

The high rate of graduate of unemployment in Nigeria is both alarming an worrisome. The main reason for this is lake of employable skills by this graduate. The non- availability and inadequacy of new technologies in schools and entrepreneurship skills result to high rate of graduate unemployment. Our graduates lack 21<sup>st</sup> century skill required for unemployment in the global words such as communication skills, and collaboration technology literacy skills, thinking skill, entrepreneurship skills, creativity and innovation skills, problem solving skills, and leadership skill. Many lecturers lack the abilities to use modern ICT tools in teaching and learning thereby producing incompetent graduates.

Education in Nigeria is faced by a lot of challenged such as inadequate provisions of funds, materials and employments, embezzlement, lack of maintenance culture, and lack of skills etc. The poor state of state of education in Nigeria with the national literacy rate of fifty-seven percent is a problem. About forty-nine percent of the teaching force was unqualified. Gradates of the educational system were often decided, and describing as lacking in quality, low in perception and unfits in skills. Employer's that school graduates were poorly prepared for work. In many cases, employers compensated for insufficient academic preparation by organizing.

Remedial training censuses for new employers. Some countries have been subjecting graduates of our schools to fresh training and examination in an attempt to ensure fitness into their system. These problems lead to Nigerians dwindling economy and their increasing in social vices by the youths. An idiel mind is a devils workshop. Other problems that leads to graduates unemployment include but not limited to strikes and back outs, brain drain in the teaching

profession, in adequacy of study materials, in constituent national education policies, quota system policy or government on admission and appointments, corruption in the schools, crisis management in schools, role of parents, funding and emergence of private schools.

## **Business Education in Nigeria as a Portal way to Gain Financial Independence**

Education is a means of cultural transmission. It was determined as the means of develop the knowledge, skills, or character of a students. Webster dictionary deters education as the process of educating or teaching. Education is also a formal process by society to deli

### **NIGERIA EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

The Nigerian policy on education has gone through many stages. Aladekomo (5) lamented that the lack of policy coherence was a matter of great concern. In 1981, Nigeria launched the National Policy on Education (6). Its main focus was on self-realization, individual, and national efficiency, national unity with the objective of achieving social, culture, economic, political, scientific, and technological development. It was structured into three stages as follows:

- Stages one was 6 years of primary school education
- Stages two was 5 to 7 years of post primary school education for secondary, teacher training College and sixth form
- Stages three was 4 to 6 yrs of tertiary education in college of education or polytechnic or university. Fafunwa (7) described the policy as elitist and irresponsible to the need and aspiration of the Nigerian society.

In response to the various criticisms, the objectives of policy were broadened in 1985, to include free primary education among others (1). The 6-3-3-4 system which broken the period of education into four stages emerged. It comprised; the first 6 years of primary school education for children of ages 6 to 11 years, the second stage of 3 years of junior secondary school, the third stages of 3 years of senior secondary school education and the fourth stage of a minimum of 4 years of tertiary education. Uwaifo and Uddin (1) described it as a system of education which was job-oriented as it placed premium on manual activities, technical proficiency, and respect for dignity of labour and economic efficiency.

In 2004, Nigerian education policy was redefined to adopt education as an instrument par excellence for effecting national development. Education goals were then defined in terms of its relevance to the need of the individual as well as in terms of the kind of society desired in relation to the environment, realities of the modern world and rapid social changes (8). Emphasis was on skill acquisition. The policy on education proposed a priority of place for religion and moral instruction for the moral and spiritual well being of individual but directed that no child should be forced to accept any religious instruction which was contrary to the wishes of the parent.

The Nigeria's education reform of 2006 shifted focus to entrepreneurship and skill training and realignment of curricula to meet emerging need of a global economy and knowledge society (9). The reform introduced the 9-3-4 system of education which was referred to as the Universal Basic Education (UBE). The four stages were compressed to three, with the first two stages of the former policy merged to one during which education was made compulsory. The

first 9 years was referred to as basic and compulsory education (primary and junior secondary), the next 3 years was for the senior secondary school, and the last was the four years in the tertiary institutions. Its curricula were drawn up to address Education for all (EFA) programmes of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The scheme targeted total eradication of illiteracy by the year 2010 and increase in adult literacy rate from 57% to 70% by 2003 (10).

There had been the debate on educational standards in Nigeria. Fafunwa (11) argued that the standards in education have not declined. Whereas Ukeje (12) on his part held the view that the standard had indeed declined significantly. Deterioration in the standard of education and lack of specific training in the areas of relevance to the development of the economy was identified as some of the factors responsible for urban violence. It was also argued that, deterioration in the standard of education had caused the breakdown of social values in the traditional structures which had in the past kept Nigerians together. Afolabi (13) argued that, the quality of education determines the quality of the product of its education system and by extension the quality and quantity, pace and level of its development.

### **Historical Development of Teacher Education in Nigeria**

The idea of teacher training took its root from the need to train people to lead the missionary crusade of propagating the gospel during the early Christian missionary era (Ajayi and Ayodele 2002). The first teacher training college was founded by the Christian Missionary Society in Abeokuta in 1859. It was known as the "Training Institution." There were some hostilities in Abeokuta in 1867 that led to the expulsion of the missionaries from the town and that made the training institution to be moved to Lagos to become an arm of a Grammar School. However, the establishment of St. Andrew's College. Oyo in 1896 signalled a very landmark in the training of teachers in the country.

The pioneering efforts of the C.M.S were strengthened later by other missionary societies. For example, the Baptist Mission founded the Baptist Training College at Ogbomosho in 1897. The Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society opened an institution to train catechists and teachers in Ibadan in 1905 with four pupils (Ajayi and Ayodele 2002). Obviously, the business of teacher education started mainly as an exclusive missionary business.

Durosaro (2006) posited that before independence, there were few secondary schools in the country with the bulk of their teacher expatriates and missionaries, most of whom had no teacher education. However, shortly after independence, there was a sporadic increase in enrolment in teacher training college owing to greater competitions in schools establishment of more schools then, made the demand for teacher increase drastically. By and large, the teacher education curriculum then was geared toward the primary school teacher education only. A major event in development of teacher education in Nigeria was the publication and implementation of the Ashby Commission report.

The Ashby commission reported that there was an inadequate supply of training teachers in the nation's secondary schools even while there was an increase in the demand for more secondary schools. The Ashby commission, among other things, recommended the training of more teachers for the nation's secondary schools, the establishment of more universities, and establishment of the institution of Bachelor's Degree in Education, where qualified teachers could be produced.

B.A., B.Sc. (Education) degrees with fifty students were first introduced by the University of Nigeria Nsukka, in 1961. University of Ibadan followed suit in 1963; Ahmadu

Bello University, Zaria 1964; University of Lagos in 1965 and Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife in 1967. Today almost all the University in the country have faculties of Education where qualified teachers are produced.

There is no doubt that teacher education is a veritable tool towards educational development. This fact was given credence to by the National Policy on Education when it stated that the teacher educational planning, because no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers, The policy emphasized that all teachers in the nation's educational institutions from pre-primary to University, would be professionally trained. The policy also stated that the purpose of teacher education should be:

- a. To produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our education system.
- b. To encourage further, the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers;
- c. to help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and society at large and to enhance their commitment to national objectives;
- d. to provide teachers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation, not only in the life of their country, but in the wider world; and
- e. To enhance teachers commitment to the teaching profession (FRN, 2004).

### **Present Position of Teacher Education in Nigeria**

Durosaro (2006) remarked that the teacher education in Nigeria today, is much improved than it was before 1970. The author claimed that the type of teacher education needed in Nigeria have become clearly defined in the national Policy on Education implementation committee blueprint. It was prescribed that types and qualification of teachers required should be as follows:

- a) Pre-primary education: Grade II teacher with NCE teachers as head.
- b) Primary education: NCE teachers with graduate as heads
- c) Junior Secondary Schools: NCE and University graduates.
- d) Senior Secondary School: NCE and University graduates with professional qualifications.
- e) Technical Colleges, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education: University graduates with post-graduates qualification in their disciplines together with professional qualifications, practical industrial exposure and experience.
- f) University: University graduates with post-graduate qualifications together with professional qualifications and experience.

According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2005), the statistics of teaches in Nigeria by qualification within (1999-2003) reflects that an average of 45.1% of primary school teachers were qualified. The bulk of the teachers within the period NCE and Teacher Grade Two Certificate holders. Besides, an average of 58.7% of secondary school teachers within the period was also qualified. A considerable large number of graduate teachers were without teaching qualifications (average 38.9) at the secondary school level. The situation was, however, considerably redressed in 2003 with 77.9% qualified teachers.

The government had taken some steps to ensure the implementation of the prescription which stipulates NCE as the minimum qualification for teaching in primary schools in the country. The steps are that; all existing Grade II Teachers' Colleges are being phased out and serving Grade ii Teachers are being retrained to obtain NCE before the deadline to disengage them. In furtherance of this, the national Teachers' institute (NTI) was established with the mandate of mounting in-service training programmes through Distance Learning System for serving teachers.

### **Business education in Nigeria as a portal way to gain financial independence**

Okwuanaso and Nwazor (2000) opined that business education as a fundamental part of education costs across every other course as a process of instructing a person what happens during a business transaction in offices, banks, markets, and anywhere money changes hands. Business education is a type of education that helps someone to learn the facts, acquire the skills, develop abilities, solve problems and be able to have business-like attitudes useful for success in business situations.

One thing that is peculiar about business education is that it is for everybody, literates and illiterates. It is a kind of education that makes it's recipients to be job creators instead of job seekers. It is only through business education, because of its nature that Nigeria can achieve financial independence. Business education is an aspect of vocational education which involves skill acquisition. The rate of unemployment in Nigeria is very high, moreover, no government can employ all its employable citizens, therefore business education is highly needed because it helps youths to be self-employed, self-independent and self reliant.

Acquisition of skills helps to reduce dependency on government as well as promoting economic growth. For Nigeria to use business education to achieve economic independence, government has great role to play and it is centred on provision of adequate funds to update and upgrade business education. For business education to thrive there must be proper planning, efficient administration and adequate financing.

Akinyemi (2001) identified poor teacher quality ICT, inadequate facilities and infrastructures, lack of motivation and incentives to business education teachers as a result of under-funding as factors that hinder the progress education.

Business education is generally perceived to be one of those major occupational areas of technical and vocational education. Infoplease (2006) observed that business education is for general knowledge of business practices; it is also training in specific skills useful in business. Sutherland and Banick (2005) saw business education as the acquisition of and application of the unique set of knowledge and skills used in commercial and industrial organizations.

Business education is, therefore, education for and about business. It typically prepares students/recipients for an occupation in business or a business-related field, or a teaching career in academia. It involves teaching students the fundamentals, theories and processes of business. To this extent, it is more than business teacher education. As Olian (2004) observed, "business education is about proactive and in-depth analytical skills in the business disciplines." The Author (a Dean of a College of Business Administration), opines that the term 'administration' is less apt today, given the complexity of business practices and the competitiveness of business markets.

Essentially, business education is:

- a) an integral part of general education;

- b) a means of preparing for occupational fields and for effective participation in the world of work in business environments;
- c) an aspect of life-long learning and a preparation for responsible citizenship;
- d) an instrument for promoting environmentally sound sustainable development: and
- e) a programme for poverty reduction.

The mission of business education is to provide businesses, organizations and individuals with high quality programmes necessary for meeting the challenges and opportunities of today's business environment. To this extent, it prepares students to be productive workers and successful entrepreneurs. In pursuance of its objectives, subjects such as financial accounting, economics, ICT, auditing, taxation, operations management, finance, public sector economics, business communications, business statistics, management, business mathematics, keyboarding, shorthand, secretarial duties, labour economics, entrepreneurship, cost and management accounting and marketing are offered, taught and learnt. Those students pursuing a career in teaching also take 'education' courses including teaching practice.

### **Current Educational Budget in Nigeria**

Education in Nigeria has never been given the type of attention it requires. The level of education of a country determines the progress of that country. An educated nation is a progressive nation. No nation can survive without having a strong educational system. Agumuo and Etong (2013) opined that the school financing policies of any country are a reflection of its value, choices, and order of its priorities in the allocation of its resources and political philosophy.

Education in Nigeria is overseen by the ministry of education. Local authorities take responsibility for implementing policy for state controlled public education and state schools at a regional level. The educational system is divided into kindergarten, primary education, secondary education and tertiary education. Over the past few years, the educational sector in spite of its relevance has been grossly neglected and relegated to the background and even teachers were irregularly and poorly paid making the matter worse. Education is capital intensive. The four levels of education in Nigeria are in dire need of funds to be effective and efficient. The cut in educational budget is affecting the system adversely. To make matters worse, corruption and embezzlement of educational funds has added to the problem.

Many schools in Nigeria lack vital things that could help education to be progressive. These are lack of infrastructure equipment, materials lack of maintenance culture, inadequate supply of essential materials and power supply. Twigg (2014) stressed the importance and need for new infrastructure to serve the changing definition of teaching and learning.

Education is the key for development, growth and survival of any nation and must not be toyed with. The last twenty years has witnessed a tremendous twist in teaching and learning as a result of the increased used of information and communication technologies. Educational budget should be increased so that all these important gadgets could be acquired. The education system at different levels in Nigeria is inadequately funded and a higher percentage of the problem is from the government. Soludo (2004) states that the biggest challenge facing the government is inadequate public spending on education. In this era of globalization, Etonyedau (2009) stated that business education contributed greatly in the economic development of any nation and has become an indispensable tool for development. The vital aspect of business education now is to

respond and adapt to the 21<sup>st</sup> century model which demands a lot of financial and skill commitment.

### **Threat of Insurgency to Education in Nigeria**

Education in Nigeria is characterized by a lot of vices and insecurity which hampers the smooth running of educational activities. Such vice include but not limited to Boko Haram, poverty, insecurity, social unrest, school dropout, societal school indiscipline, destruction and vandalization of public and private properties. Economic wastage and acute reduction in the nation's gross domestic product (GDP), crimes, robbery, arson, murder, cultism, hostage taking, human and drug trafficking, kidnapping among others. Nigeria has been witnessing insecurity in all aspects of life by different insurgent groups/mililia arising from misappropriation of the central economy and negligence of the youth through unemployment and general widespread poverty in cities and villages.

Education is very important in the training and development of human resources in any country through the importation of appropriate skills, capabilities, values, knowledge and attitudes which is necessary for changing individuals, communities, nations, and the world at large. Business education can be used for wealth creation poverty, education, ensuring socio-economic empowerment, sustained self and national development. The planning, management and administration of education should refocus on deliberate process of using formal and informal education to make it relevant, life-long and functional by embracing business education to address the challenges of unemployment and under-employment with its challenges.

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