

**ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT, ISSUES  
AND THE POSSIBLE WAY FORWARD: IMPLICATION  
ON EDUCATIONAL PLANNING**

**By**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study centered on the assessment of educational policy development, issues and the possible way forward: Implication on educational planning. The study considered the need for quality policy as a well-planned educational policy is expected to inculcate every student's needs in school, thereby ensuring that all students have access to quality education to enable them to attain their fullest potential. The educational policy allows for effectiveness in the identification of the required policies needed in the educational field by creating a plan of action for providing quality education to students. It involves setting goals and objectives for the educational system, as well as determining how to achieve those goals best. The study points to the fact that a good educational policy should involve making decisions about what resources are needed to provide the best possible education for all students.

Keywords: Assessment, Educational Policy Development, Issues and Educational Planning

**INTRODUCTION**

In the current global era where all human endeavor has been digitalized. Policies ought to be properly planned to meet this global era. This means that educational policy needs to be well-planned and implemented to ensure quality. When policies are wrongly planned, there is bound to be a total failure in their implementation practices. This underscores the need for quality

policy planning and implementation. A policy is seen as an area in which decisions are to be made, but it does not make the decision. It usually provides a general guide that facilitates decision-making. Educational policies provide the direction for educational activities (Ukeje, 2015). Within the context of Nigeria, our educational system has encountered numerous changes within the few decades. It is assumed that the educational policy is directed towards increasing the quality of life of the people. The federal government came up with these policies that are aimed at transforming the economic standing of citizens and would want to use education to actualize these objectives. For these goals to be actualized there is a need for proper planning, staffing, funding and management of policies. The following concept is defined as used in the study

**Policy:** This is the course or method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions. A high-level overall plan embraces the general goals and acceptable procedures, especially of a governmental body.

**Implementation:** Deals with the execution or practice of a plan, a method, or any design, idea, model, specification, standard, or policy for doing something. As such, implementation is the action that must follow any preliminary thinking for something to happen. The education system is the economic and social factors that typically make up public schools at the federal, state, or community levels. Such factors include public funding, facilities, staffing, compensation, employee benefits, teaching resources and more.

A policy serves the purpose of ensuring that every official action of an organization must have a basis or backing. Terry (2016) considers that “a policy is an overall guide that gives the general limits and direction in which administrative action will take place”. According to him, “A



policy defines the area in which decisions are to be made but it does not give the decision. A policy brings about a meaningful relationship between business objectives and organizational functions as it discourages deviations from planned courses of action. A policy ensures consistency of action because an organization is governed by approved principles. A policy does not have to be rigid, as there should be room for adjustment if necessary after its formulation.

On the other hand educational policies are initiatives mostly by governments that determine the direction of an educational system (Okoroma 2000:190). According to Osokoya (2012:2), education is a distinctive way in which society inducts its young ones into full membership. So every modern society needs some educational policies to guide it in the process of such initiation. In the view of Awokoya (2002), educational policy is directed towards increasing the quality of life of people. He believes that the objective of any policy is to satisfy individual needs, community pressures and the degree of complexity and sophistication to which socialized personnel must be educated and trained to meet these demands. The following considerations, according to Awokoya (1999), are necessary to guide the formulation of adequate educational policy.

- i. It should be formulated and adopted through a political process that acknowledges the reality and legitimacy of conflicting interests and desires among its participants.
- ii. It should portray some elements of guidance for properly directed and coordinated action toward the attainment of the desired goals.
- iii. It should contain information on the broad objectives that should be reached.
- iv. It should be a binding guide on the actions of those implementing it.
- v. It should be enforceable and enforced by the society which formulates it.



According to Okorona [2006], efforts have been made to develop education in Nigeria since 1960. Various policies have been formulated but not well implemented or given enough time to evaluate the result. Kerr (2014) believes that, for a policy to qualify as an educational policy, it must be distinct from other policies. In his view, educational policies are distinguishable from other policies by the fact that policies on education are part and parcel of educational institutions. However, it is important to note that not all policies formulated in educational institutions can qualify as educational policies. Generally, policies must be rational and purposeful to enable them to stand the test of time.

Implementation of educational policies has become a great concern to many Nigerians. Educational policies are initiated mostly by the government to determine the direction of an educational system. There is a gap that exists between policy formulation and implementation. Below are some of the policies formulated by the government to improve the education system. One of the most significant initiatives is the Universal Basic Education (UBE). This program aimed to provide free and compulsory education to every Nigerian child. The program has been successful in improving access to education and reducing the number of out-of-school children in the country (Dum, 2017).

To an extent, this policy has succeeded in reducing the number of out-of-school children to 13.3 percent as stated by one Commissioner of Education Abeokuta during an interaction with channels television. This percentage is not commendable because this policy stipulated free and compulsory education. Today, our education in Nigeria is not free and has not been made compulsory because we still have children that still roam the street, hawk and play around during school hours. Education cannot be free in our country because pupils/students still pay fees, and



buy books, lockers uniforms in our public schools. So, universal basic education is poorly implemented and has not succeeded in improving the quality of education in our country.

### **NEED FOR QUALITY IN EDUCATION POLICY MAKING**

Quality education focuses on the whole child, the social emotional, mentalphysical, and cognitive development of each student regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or geographical location. We can improve quality education by giving equal opportunity to all the deserving citizens of the country whether it is for job placement or for getting quality merit-based opportunities that should be made available for all Nigerians. Another way to improve education in Nigeria is to adopt new topics in the curriculum. According to the report of UNICEF of the entire population of the world of school children, 1 out of 5 of them are Nigerians. To provide quality education in Nigeria, several prominent educationists have taken initiatives to improve as well as retention at primary and secondary school levels and achieve quite a bit of success in this regard. The government should improve the quality of education by allocating more funds to it. More so, some parents are not helping matters, hence, they help their children in examination malpractice, inconsistency disrespect for their teachers and are not willing to pay their ward school fees. Education is the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another. This is meant to tell you that our future lies in our hands; however unless we plan something good and better, we shall never achieve something better.

### **ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

The gap that often exists between policy formulation and implementation provokes inquiry to identify factors that constrain the effective implementation of educational policies. The problem of policy implementation is traceable to the planning stage which comes immediately after policy formulation. Okeke et al. (2011) and Ukeje (1999) have stated clearly that good

planning will ensure effective implementation. Good planning that can facilitate effective implementation ought to consider such factors as the planning environment, social environment, political environment, and financial and statistical problems. It is in recognition of this observation that Aghenta (2000: 239) posits that for education to achieve all ends, it has to be carefully planned. The plan must take into consideration the needs of the society; the political, socio-cultural, economic, military, scientific and technological realities of the environment are very important to its survival.

Furthermore, the system is plagued by poor infrastructure. Many schools lack basic facilities like classrooms, laboratories libraries, and even basic furniture. This poor infrastructure affects the quality of education that students receive, making it difficult for the pupils to learn in a conducive environment. I want strongly agree with Guka [2007] that most of our public schools are in a state of collapsing. I want to sadly state that, tears will run down your eyes when you visit public schools during raining season, or at any given time. The roofs are seriously leaking, dilapidated buildings, children sitting on the floor to receive lessons and classrooms highly populated ranging from 80-100 learners. Whereas the policy as stated in national policy on Education (2004) says the student/teachers ratio should be 20 pupils to a teacher and a helper for pre-primary. In the primary and secondary setting, there shall not be more than 35-40 pupils respectively to a class. In technical and vocational colleges, there shall not be more than 20 pupils for practical work. In this situation, you will strongly agree with me that classroom management and effective teaching and learning will not take place because the environment is not conducive enough and qualitative education cannot be achieved.

Another significant factor that can hinder quality educational development is poor teacher training and welfare. Although teacher's welfare policy stipulated that motivational and

incentive packages should be offered to teachers which are geared towards encouraging maximum performance of the teachers. These include compensation and allowance overtime bonuses, leave bonuses, on-the-job training seminars, awards, recognition of commitment and long service. To an extent, public schools have the most qualified teachers, especially in the primary sector. This will be a tool for quality and educational development. Moreover, the Nigerian government should organize training to help improve the quality of teachers. This can be achieved by organizing workshops and seminars, and training programs for teachers across the country periodically or quarterly.

Irregular inspections, supervision, monitoring team and inadequate instructional materials. The policy states that the government should establish efficient inspectorate services at federal, state and local government levels to monitor and maintain the minimum standard at all levels of education below the tertiary level.

The inspectorate service is to operate as an autonomous body supervised by the ministry/minister of education as may be appropriate. The aim is to set and maintain and improve standards in all aspects to ensure uniform standards and quality control of instructional activities in secondary schools through regular inspection and continuous supervision. It obtains information on the problems and difficulties of teachers and institutions and offers practical solutions to them. The bodies are to encourage the dissemination of information on innovation and progressive educational principles and practices in the system through publications, workshops, meetings, seminars and conferences. You will strongly agree with me that supervision or inspections of schools are not regular and the purpose of this policy of supervision is defeated because brown envelopes speak more than reality.

Poor funding of the education sector is one of the major reasons why we cannot achieve quality education in Nigeria. Education is critical to any country's development but the Nigerian government has not allocated enough resources to education.

Corruption is another strong factor that has led to the problem of our educational system and it has affected the sector seriously. Corruption has led to the mismanagement of funds, which has resulted in inadequate funding for education which affects the provision of basic facilities and the quality of education (Hower, 2015).

Political interference: The implementation of educational policies has been politicized. Educational positions such as ministers, commissioners and executives of education should be experts or specialists in education and not based on Godfatherism or political affiliations.

Frequent Changes in Educational Policies and Programs. Nigeria has experienced several reviews, reforms, and innovations in educational policies and programs. And also a lot of inconsistency exists which has resulted in poor standards in the educational system. Frequent changes in policies and government policies tend to have negative impacts on the policies and programs of education giving credence to the above.

Obukoya(2015), observed that between 2006-2016 the nation passed through five different regimes notably from Babangida to Shonkan; four in 1993 to Abacha 1993-1998 Abubakar 1998-1999, Obasanjo 1999-2007 within these periods Nigeria had a litany of ministers commissioners, governors with different views on how to administer the affairs of the education sector. This gives rise to inconsistency, even to this date Nigeria is moving forward as regards educational policy and programs. This lack of continuity has hindered national development.

## **WAY FORWARD**



The private sector has a significant role to play in the development of the education sector. The Nigerian government should partner with the private sector to improve the quality of education in the country. The private sector can provide funding, resources and technical expertise to support the development of the educational sector.

The government should increase funding for educational development in Nigeria. This lack of funding has resulted in the inadequate provision of basic and adequate infrastructure and other facilities. The government should allocate more funds to the educational sector.

The provision of educational infrastructure is essential for the educational sector to grow. Schools in Nigeria are often in deplorable conditions, with inadequate classrooms, and a lack of libraries, laboratories and computers. The government needs to equip the school with all this basic infrastructure to enable the education sector to be up to the standard. They should make provisions for basic educational infrastructure

- i. Teachers should be properly trained and seminars/workshops should be organized for all teachers.
- ii. The government should partner with the private sector because they have significant roles to play in the development of the educational sectors of the country.
- iii. Other key positions in the educational system should be handled by core educationists according to the area of specialization.

## CONCLUSION

Nigeria's educational policy paved the way for socio-economic and political emancipation, moreover, effective and proper implementation brings about development in Nigeria. It is pertinent to note that there is nothing wrong with the current national policy on

education. The problem is the lack of proper implementation of the policy which is a result of financial inadequacies, and planning without current data (faulty statistics). Political instability, inadequate human and material resources, corruption and inconsistency and lack of due process make policies to be delayed or rushed. It concluded that although the implementation of educational policies may have its shortcomings at the implementation stage, proper and effective implementation of the educational policy could make Nigerians to be socially, economically and politically relevant. The policy gives room for economic independence and its proper implementation would foster self-reliance and economic freedom for individual citizens.

Furthermore, the study showed that a well-implemented educational policy would lead to political emancipation among the citizens as well as national development. Moreover, a well-implemented education policy would build a quality education system which will lead to the development of education in our country Nigeria.

### **IMPLICATION ON EDUCATIONAL PLANNING**

In education, planning is a way of enhancing performance and providing quality education for learning to be enhanced. When education is properly planned goals and objectives are met and also ensuring how these goals should be achieved. The process of educational planning also promotes decision-making about what resources are needed to provide the best possible education for all students. Flexibility is another crucial aspect of educational planning. By ensuring an effective plan, educational planners can allow for flexibility in the classroom. This means that teachers can make changes regarding the way and method they use in administering their teachers to ensure effective pedagogy most especially in the classroom setting.

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