



SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH EDUCATION MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA: A STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

BY

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Abstract:

This study examined Sustainable National Development through Education Management in Nigeria: A Stakeholder Analysis. Education is said to be one of the several ways that man employs to bring change in to his all-round development. Education demands efforts and discipline. It is also a formidable tool for man's survival. On the other hand, sustainable national Development is a process of improving the range of opportunities that will enable individual humans and communities to achieve their aspirations and full potential over a sustained period of time while maintaining the resilience of economic, social and environmental systems. In all nations, Nigeria inclusive, education remains the instrument for effective national development. Development is championed through education, which is often assumed to have significant influence. Education entails the enlightenment of people in their ways of pursuit in life. Development is associated with a positive change in the condition of either individual groups, communities or even a country as a whole.

Keywords: Management, education, sustainable, national development

Introduction

Education at all levels and in all its forms constitutes a vital tool for addressing virtually all global problems. Education is not only an end in itself. It is a key instrument for bringing about changes in knowledge, values and behaviours and life styles required to achieve sustainability and stability within and among countries (Bajaj & Chiv, 2019). Education has been seen as the greatest force that can be used to bring about changes. Aminu (1995) observed that the greatest investment a nation can make for the development of its economic, sociological and human resources is that of education. Education according to him provides us



with people possessing the necessary knowledge and skills to win a nation's state and to even export brains. This also explains why the Federal Government of Nigeria geared a policy towards attaining national development. According to National Policy on Education (2022), education shall continue to be highly rated in the national development plans because education is the most important instrument for change: any fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society has to be preceded by an education revolution.

The above statement shows that education is an important instrument for change and national development. Against this background, this paper presents a discussion on the challenges confronting education as an agent of sustainable national development in Nigeria and the way forward.

Concept of Education

Education has been conceptualized in various ways by scholars. Education is seen as the light that drives away the darkness of ignorance and enables mankind to find its ways through the tortures and labyrinth of development and civilization (Ikechukwu, 2016). According to UNESCO (2010), "education refers to the total process of developing human ability and behaviours". It is an organized and sustained instruction designed to communicate a combination of knowledge, skills and understanding value for all activities of life. Education refers to what can be used by man to solve his problems, to improve his life and make it comfortable. It is one of the several ways that man employs to bring change in to his all-round development. Education demands efforts and discipline. It is also a formidable tool for man's survival. Ayu (1991) conceived education as "what brings about the moral development and spiritual uplifting of the human personality and of the community as a whole". He stressed further that education makes mankind more creative and enables him to live a more fulfilling life through interaction. Peter (1966) identified three central criteria that are explicit to the concept of education which are:

That education implies the transmission of what is worthwhile to those who become committed to it;

That education at least rules out some procedures of transmission on the ground that they lack willingness and voluntariness on the part of the learner;

That education must involve knowledge and understanding and some kind of cognitive perspectives which are not inert.

Fafunwa (1994) however, defined education as "the aggregate of all the processes by which a child or young adult develops abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviours which are of positive value to the society in which he lives". He



stressed further that education is a process of transmitting culture in terms of continuity and growth and for disseminating knowledge to ensure social control or guarantee rational direction of society. Education has been defined as a systematic procedure for the transfer and transformation of culture through formal and informal training of people in a society; it deals with mental, physical, psychological and social development of citizens in a given society (Ebong in Eghure, 2017). Holborn and Haralambos (2014) saw education as an institution that enables individual to think freely and rationally which makes social progress and innovation possible. Social progress and innovation are the key elements of development, when a society progresses, its members are free; they think rationally, innovate certain social changes which will invariably enhance development. From the foregoing, therefore, it can be perceived that education is an instrument or tool for achieving national development.

Concept of Sustainable Development

Previously, the attention was basically on the concept “Development”. However, the Bruntland Commission shifted the attention by reshaping and modifying the concept to “Sustainable Development.” The most interesting aspect of sustainable development is the fact that it puts in to consideration the present conditions of people as well as not compromising those that come later. Therefore, the concept of sustainable national Development remains the modern parameter of measuring development. The Bruntland Commission (1987) defined sustainable Development as “the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs.”

In another definition by Munasinghe (2014), sustainable national Development is a process of improving the range of opportunities that will enable individual humans and communities to achieve their aspirations and full potential over a sustained period of time while maintaining the resilience of economic, social and environmental systems. Age (2015) identified some objectives which sustainable national development is expected to realize: increase capital income and employment, promoting human welfare satisfying basic needs; protecting the environment. Considering the path of future generation, achieving equity between rich and poor and participation on a broad basis in development and decision making is important. From the above definitions, there are common phenomena which they all shared; that is prioritizing the development of the present generation without compromising the future generation.

Education and Sustainable Development: The Relationship

Having stated above, the various definitions of education and sustainable national development, it is imperative to examine the relationship between the two



concepts. In all nations, Nigeria inclusive, education remains the instrument for effective national development. Development is championed through education, which is often assumed to have significant influence. Education entails the enlightenment of people in their ways of pursuit in life. Development is associated with a positive change in the condition of either individual groups, communities or even a country as a whole (Umoh, 2015). Education and sustainable national development are interwoven, intertwined, and interconnected. While on the one hand, development is geared towards producing or creating something new or more advanced for the society and its members. On the other hand, education is a tool which can enhance the desired sustainable development. Umoh (2015) therefore, refers education and sustainable development as two sides of the same coin.

The fact that education and sustainable development shows glaring connectivity probably explained why scholars emphasized the need for education for the purpose of achieving the desired sustainable development. Ebong (1996) opined that education as a systematic procedure for the transfer and transformation of culture through formal and informal training of people in the society. He stated that education deals with mental, physical, psychological and social development of the citizens in a given society. He further stated that “the goal of education in man power development is aimed at national growth and development” (Ebong 1996). For any country therefore, to attain sustainable national development, he concluded that “there is need for skilled man power and those skills required are basic ingredients for national development and can only be acquired through education” (Ebong 1996).

Education provides consciousness, awareness and enlightenment to individuals in order to properly pursue their aspirations and yearnings. It is also mentioned by Olubadewo (2016) that it is only educated population that can command skills necessary for sustainable economic growth and a better quality of life. Sustainable national development may therefore be seen as the target goal since it is meant for the society and its members; education however remains the instrument for achieving and attaining the target goal. From the above, education seems to directly determine whether sustainable national development is going to be achieved or not and therefore, the need for a well-structured educational system that will enhance the achievement of the aforementioned development.

Sustainable National Development through Education Management in Nigeria: A Stakeholder Analysis

From time immemorial, scholars have been very much concerned about the relationship between education and development. Indeed, political philosophers since Plato and Aristotle have affirmed the dictums enunciated in the phrases, “As is the state, so is the school”, “what you want in the state, you must put into the



school” (as quoted in Akinsanya, 2004). The truism that education is the surest way to sustainably develop any people or society needs no contention. Education, as I have already pointed out, is the process of imparting and acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and experiences in institutions of learning, while living, at work or play. The skills so acquired are subsequently applied to sustain present and future generation in their everyday life. It is the proper nurturing, transmission and application of such skills and knowledge that guarantees development and sustenance of the society (Abiodun, 2002). In December 2002, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 57/254 to put in place a United Nations Decade of Education for sustainable Development, spanning the years 2005 to 2014, with the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as the lead agency for the Decade (Ilechukwu, et al, 2014). The overall goal of the Decade for sustainable Development as reported by Ilechukwu et al (2014) is the integration of the principles, value and practice of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning – social, informal, non-formal and formal.

Level of Management of Primary Education

The management of primary education in Nigeria primarily falls under the responsibility of the state and local government authorities. Here is an overview of the primary education management structure in Nigeria:

1. State Ministry of Education: Each state in Nigeria has its Ministry of Education or Education Board, which is responsible for overseeing primary education within the state. The State Ministry of Education sets policies, guidelines, and standards for primary schools, allocates resources, and monitors their implementation.
2. Local Government Education Authority (LGEA): The Local Government Education Authority is responsible for managing primary education at the local government level. It oversees the establishment, maintenance, and supervision of primary schools within its jurisdiction. The LGEA is involved in teacher recruitment, curriculum implementation, infrastructure development, and the provision of basic amenities in primary schools.
3. Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC): The Universal Basic Education Commission is a federal agency responsible for coordinating and supporting basic education at the primary and junior secondary school levels across Nigeria. UBEC provides policy guidelines, funding, and technical support to states and local governments for the improvement of primary education.
4. School Head teachers and Administrators: At the primary school level, head teachers or principals are responsible for the day-to-day management of individual schools. They oversee curriculum implementation, student affairs, teacher supervision, and resource management within their schools.



Level of Management of Secondary Education

Secondary education management in Nigeria is primarily the responsibility of the state and local government authorities. Here is an overview of the secondary education management structure in Nigeria:

1. **Federal Ministry of Education:** The Federal Ministry of Education sets policies, standards, and guidelines for secondary education across Nigeria. It provides overall direction and regulatory oversight to ensure quality education at the secondary level.
2. **State Ministry of Education:** Each state in Nigeria has its Ministry of Education, which is responsible for managing and overseeing secondary education within the state. The State Ministry of Education implements federal policies, develops state-specific policies, allocates resources, and monitors the quality of secondary education.
3. **State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs):** SUBEBs in each state also have a role in secondary education management. They work in collaboration with the State Ministry of Education to coordinate the activities of secondary schools, ensure proper infrastructure, allocate resources, and oversee the implementation of secondary education policies.
4. **Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs):** LGEAs are responsible for managing secondary education at the local government level. They work in conjunction with SUBEBs and the State Ministry of Education to oversee the establishment, maintenance, and supervision of secondary schools within their respective local government areas.
5. **School Administrators:** Secondary schools in Nigeria are led by principals or head teachers who are responsible for the day-to-day management of the schools. They oversee curriculum implementation, student affairs, teacher supervision, and resource management at the school level.

Aims and Goals of Primary Education

1. Universal Access and Enrollment
2. Basic Literacy and Numeracy Skills.
3. Holistic Development
4. Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving
5. Values and Citizenship Education

Aims and Goals of Secondary Education

1. Broad-Based Education.
2. Academic Excellence.
3. Specialization and Career Pathways.
4. Character Development and Citizenship Education
5. Preparation for Higher Education



Aims and Goals of Tertiary Education

1. Advanced Knowledge and Specialization
2. Critical Thinking and Research Skills
3. Professional Preparation
4. Personal and Intellectual Development
5. Global Competence and Cultural Awareness

Level of Management of Tertiary Education

Tertiary education management in Nigeria is primarily overseen by the federal government through the Federal Ministry of Education, regulatory bodies, and various tertiary institutions. Here is an overview of the tertiary education management structure in Nigeria:

1. Federal Ministry of Education: The Federal Ministry of Education plays a crucial role in policy formulation, coordination, and regulation of tertiary education in Nigeria. It sets guidelines, standards, and policies for tertiary institutions across the country.
2. National Universities Commission (NUC): The NUC is the regulatory body responsible for overseeing the management and quality assurance of universities in Nigeria. It ensures compliance with standards, approves academic programs, and monitors the overall performance of universities.
3. National Board for Technical Education (NBTE): The NBTE is responsible for the regulation and accreditation of polytechnics, monotechnics, and other technical institutions in Nigeria. It ensures the quality and relevance of technical education programs.
4. National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE): The NCCE is responsible for the regulation and accreditation of colleges of education in Nigeria. It sets standards, monitors teacher education programs, and ensures the quality of education provided by colleges of education.
5. National Universities Commission (NUC): The NUC is responsible for overseeing the management and quality assurance of universities in Nigeria. It ensures compliance with standards, approves academic programs, and monitors the overall performance of universities.

Level of Management of Education for Sustainable Development in Nigeria

The level of management of education for sustainable development (ESD) in Nigeria can be described as a work in progress. While there have been some initiatives and efforts to integrate ESD into the education system, there are still significant challenges and gaps that need to be addressed. Here are some key aspects of the management of ESD in Nigeria:

1. Policy Framework: Nigeria has developed policy frameworks that recognize the importance of ESD. For instance, the National Policy on Education emphasizes the need to integrate environmental and sustainable



development concepts into the curriculum. The National Policy on Environment also highlights the importance of education in promoting sustainable development.

2. Curriculum Integration: Efforts have been made to integrate ESD into the national curriculum. Sustainable development themes are included in subjects such as Social Studies, Civic Education, and Environmental Education. However, the level of integration and implementation varies across schools and regions, and there is a need for further harmonization and standardization.
3. Teacher Training: Training programs and workshops have been conducted to enhance the capacity of teachers in delivering ESD. However, these initiatives are often limited in scope and reach, and there is a need for more comprehensive and sustained teacher training programs to ensure effective implementation of ESD principles in classrooms.
4. Stakeholder Collaboration: Various stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and international partners, are involved in promoting ESD in Nigeria. Collaboration and partnerships among these stakeholders are essential to coordinate efforts, share resources and best practices, and create a more coherent and effective approach to ESD management.
5. Awareness and Advocacy: Efforts are being made to raise awareness about the importance of ESD among policymakers, educators, students, and the general public. Advocacy campaigns and initiatives aim to mobilize support and create a broader understanding of the role of education in achieving sustainable development goals.
6. Challenges and Gaps: Despite these efforts, several challenges persist. These include limited funding for ESD programs, inadequate infrastructure and resources, outdated teaching methodologies, and a lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact of ESD initiatives. There is also a need for stronger coordination and collaboration among relevant government agencies and ministries to ensure a more integrated and holistic approach to ESD management.

Challenges of Education in Nigeria

The fact is education constitutes the major instrument for sustainable human development and fulcrum around which every other activity revolves (Tahir, 2016) Nations which have recorded tremendous feats in the world heavily relied on the instrumentality of education. However, in Nigeria there seems to be a daily decline of educational standards. Although according to the former president Olusegun Obasanjo in his Presidential Speech on April, 24, 2000 in Dakar Senegal, he attributed the educational falling standard to bad governance. In his speech; he



stated that:

‘Nigerian educational system as it stands is a living proof of the damages that bad governance can do to our society and social structure’.

Human beings are the architects and engineers of progressive change and development and they constitute the most important resource we can have internally. Tahir (2016) identified a number of daunting challenges which Nigerian education is confronted with. They are as follows:

- i. Gender equity in education;
- ii. Dearth of teachers;
- iii. Overcrowded classrooms;
- iv. Inadequate infrastructures;
- v. Inadequate funding of education.

Gender Equity in Education: Gender disparity is a well-known feature of Nigerian educational landscape. Educational policies and practices in Nigeria are to say the least gender insensitive and thus not fashioned to achieve gender balance in schools

- i. Shortage of Teachers: It is a well-known fact that no educational system in a nation can rise above the quality of its teachers. In other words, the success of the system rests on the availability of good and qualified teachers who are internally motivated. Wasagu, (2016) stated that “Teachers are the way to improvement since they are the final brokers when it comes to educational policy”. Former minister of Education, Professor Ruqayyatu Rufai (2010) stated that “lack of qualified teachers was responsible for the dismal performance of students especially in mathematics and English language”. That poor performance turned out to be a child’s play when NECO released its own SSCE results which showed that only 126,500 of the 1,260,765 candidates, just 10 percent of those who registered for the body’s exams passed five subjects including English and mathematics. The statistics also showed that only about 234,682 out of the 1,260,765 candidates who sat for the exams made five credits in five core subjects the minimum requirements for the university admission in Nigeria. That means only eighteen percent passed the exams with five credits including English and mathematics. Therefore where there are competent, capable and well-motivated personnel among other things, the educational system of a country can surely succeed.
- ii. Overcrowding: The introduction of UPE brought with a sudden population explosion in schools and its resultant effects on teacher-pupil or student ratio. Overcrowding in the classroom is now the order of the day from



Primary to university level. Because of the overcrowded classrooms, there are usually not enough places for the number of students in class/lecture rooms.

- iii. Inadequate infrastructure: This refers to the physical and spatial enablers of teaching/ learning. They include classrooms, libraries, laboratories, workshops, play fields, school farms and gardens as well as provision of water and sanitation. These have to be of the appropriate quantity, size and quality to meet the minimum standards for promoting any meaningful teaching and learning condition.
- iv. Inadequate funding of Education: The managers of primary secondary and higher institutions in Nigeria are in consensus that these institutions are grossly underfunded. This menace could be seen in the degree of dilapidation that characterizes the primary and secondary buildings in parts of the country. The non-payment of teachers' salaries and allowances which most times result in strikes. There is lack of necessary teaching and learning material at all levels of the educational system. Finally, the mismanagement and diverting of substantial resources from the educational system to other ends.

Solutions to the Problem facing Education in Nigeria

Education administration in Nigeria faces several challenges that hinder its effectiveness and efficiency. Here are some potential solutions to address these problems:

1. Adequate funding: Increase the budgetary allocation to education, ensuring that sufficient funds are allocated to improve infrastructure, provide necessary resources, and enhance the training and welfare of teachers and administrators.
2. Curriculum development: Update and align the curriculum with current needs and global standards, incorporating critical thinking, problem-solving, and practical skills to equip students for the modern workforce. Engage education experts, industry professionals, and stakeholders in the curriculum development process.
3. Teacher training and professional development: Invest in comprehensive and continuous professional development programs for teachers and administrators. This should include training on effective teaching methodologies, use of technology in education, classroom management, and continuous assessment techniques.
4. Recruitment and retention of qualified teachers: Establish robust recruitment processes that prioritize merit, competence, and subject expertise. Provide competitive salaries, incentives, and a conducive



working environment to attract and retain skilled teachers. Create platforms for ongoing teacher mentorship and support.

5. Infrastructure development: Improve the physical infrastructure of schools, including classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and other essential facilities. Provide access to electricity, clean water, and internet connectivity to enhance the learning environment.
6. Technology integration: Promote the use of technology in teaching and administration. Provide schools with necessary hardware, software, and internet access. Train teachers on integrating technology into their instruction and administrative tasks to enhance efficiency and access to quality educational resources.
7. Stakeholder engagement: Foster collaboration and partnerships between the government, schools, communities, and private sector organizations. Engage parents, community leaders, and NGOs in supporting education initiatives, volunteering, and providing resources to schools.
8. Monitoring and evaluation: Establish a robust system for monitoring and evaluating the performance of schools, teachers, and administrators. Use data-driven decision-making processes to identify areas for improvement, allocate resources effectively, and implement targeted interventions.
9. Special needs education: Develop inclusive policies and programs to cater to the needs of students with disabilities and special educational needs. Provide training for teachers and administrators on inclusive education practices and ensure schools have necessary facilities and support services.
10. Education policy reform: Review and update education policies to address current challenges and align with international best practices. Involve education experts, stakeholders, and representatives from various sectors in the policy-making process.

Implementing these solutions requires a multi-faceted approach involving government commitment, collaboration among stakeholders, adequate resources, and sustained efforts over the long term.

Conclusion

Education is the cornerstone of achieving a sustainable national development. There are no doubts achieving sustainable national development is the goal of all developing nations, Nigeria inclusive. As such there are the needs to invest, encourage and enlighten people on education. The roles of government at all levels are to facilitate the achievement of any development.

Government should continue the contribution towards achieving this sustainable development. However, the need for monitoring, supervising and ensuring that all the financial and other investment on education for the purpose of achieving sustainable development are not diverted for other purposes



Suggestions of this Study

- i. There are needs for allocation of enough funds to various educational institutions;
- ii. There are need for a committee managing and supervising projects to ensure implementation of project design for a particular developmental programme in schools;
- iii. For the purpose of achieving sustainable national development, there are needs for learning under a conducive environment. As such, the dilapidated infrastructural facilities in schools and colleges must be improved;
- iv. Teachers who are to disseminate knowledge must be properly motivated to give and put in their best. As such the need for salary increment and better working conditions;
- v. Government at all levels Federal, state and local must contribute their respective quota to the development of education. This will ensure a speedy achievement of sustainable national development.

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