

ECONOMIC CRISIS IMPACT ON EDUCATION AND TEACHERS: CASE STUDY OF SOUTH WEST NIGERIA

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Abstract

The quality of politics determines the quality of education policies, programmes, processes and eventually the products (or results, or outcomes). Government underfunding and commoditisation of education has been noted to be one of the major causes of crisis in education. The recent economic crisis confronted by the Nigerian governments has led to the non-payment of teachers salary for several months with a resultant effects of teachers demoralisation, incessant strikes, protests and school closures. The reduction in government budgets for education to take care of other sectors would continue to worsen educational developments in sub-Sahara region of Africa if education is not being given the required and needed attention.

Educational promotion can alleviate poverty and unemployment being confronted by many developing countries of the world and reduce deterioration of human capital at the long run. The reduction in governments' budgetary allocation on education has negative impacts not only on teachers but also on the students and families.

The collected survey data shows that the recent economic crisis had an observable negative impact on educational sector and on the central education budgets of various states.

In conclusion, development of education on pre-primary, primary and secondary education, tertiary education and vocational education would alleviate unemployment, some states need to adjust their budgetary allocations to favour educational sector in order to avoid crisis. Teachers must engage in self-development and trainings, strengthen their organisations, serve as models of prudent resource management, offer leadership by example.

Keywords: Crisis, Education, Government and Teachers.

1 INTRODUCTION

Education is the foundation of National, Socio-Economic and even political development and the quality of citizen's level of education would determine the level of national progress. Education is a strong weapon to fight poverty, suppress disease, support and promote sustainable development. In addition, education, promotes endurance, maturity, enhances change and stability. People are able to acquire the necessary skills and experience and the capability to take care of themselves and become solution providers to their communities and nation and not a liability. Currently, the Nigerian Population stands at about 183 Million with annual growth rate of about 3 %. But still a lot has to be done as far as educational sector development is concerned. The Nigerian education Sector is in dire straits and requires both public and private sector intervention, if the country is to fulfill its potential as not only a regional power house, but as a global player [1].

The recent economic crisis confronted by the Nigerian governments has led to the non-payment of teachers' salary for several months with resultant effects of teachers' demoralisation, incessant strikes, protests and school closures. The reduction in government budgets for education to take care of other sectors would continue to aggravate educational development in sub-Sahara region of Africa if education is not being given the required and needed attention [2]. Investments in educational programmes and initiatives, research in science and technology are long term investment whose excellent expected outcomes are undeniable if properly and adequately done [3]. Accessibility and affordability to quality education is a right of every citizen and deprivation of education is an injustice to an individual and the society at large. The world is still unlikely to fulfill one of the most modest commitments: to get every child in school by 2015. More than 57 million children continue to be denied the right to primary education and many of them will probably never enter a classroom [4]. In 2012, the UIS estimated that 61 million children of primary school age were out of school in 2010

Poverty is not the result of lack of money or how much dollar per person per day; rather it is deprivation of capabilities [5]. The present economic crises have been causing education deprivation

for those that cannot afford the price. Nigeria needs to examine its past and focus on development plans that will stand the test of future challenges.

Aid reduction for education has been declining. Most recently. While aid to education increased steadily after 2002, this trend is now reversing: total aid to education declined by 7 % between 2010 and 2011 [4]. This reduction is harming aid to basic education, which fell for the first time since 2002. The issue of educational budget cut is not limited to Nigeria alone, In Copenhagen, “Tens of thousands of students from more than 40 student organizations gathered in central Copenhagen and Aarhus, to protest against the US\$1.3 billion education cuts planned by the Løkke Rasmussen government over the next four years” Estimated numbers of students in the protest numbered about 22,000 [6]. EFA Global Monitoring Report indicated that poor progress towards primary school completion makes universal primary education by 2015 even more elusive. Also, progress towards universal primary education has been uneven, with enrolment growing but retention lagging.

1.1 Education funding Ideology in Nigeria

Previously, there had been educational funding ideology to determine whether education should be given free or the recipients should pay. The controversial issue here is that of deciding who benefits more from an individual's education. Is it an individual or the society at large? If it is the society, that benefit more, then the education of the citizen should be by public finance .Where is the fund to come from? If it is a matter of both the individual and the society benefiting equally, then how should the cost burden be shared between beneficiaries. This is a major problem for our rulers and the solution had often dependent on a balance between the political will of the electorates and level of priority placed on education by each succeeding government [7].

1.2 Causes of Nigeria Economic crisis and strategies of amelioration

The current reduction in crude oil prices has taken a significant negative toll on Nigerian economy couple with high inflation rate and unemployment that is high which the nation has been battling with before now. Strategies adopted by some state governments to ameliorate the situation includes: adjusting by diversifying the Nigerian mono economy from long overreliance on oil to Agriculture, solid minerals, pay more attention to custom and exercise, tighten the already loose revenue collection bolt on properties, drive accountability and transparency in all sectors, research the exploitation of other natural resources In order to be free from the cold hand of the ravaging liquidity crisis.

1.3 Educational challenges in Nigeria

Very few individuals would prefer sending their children to Government Primary and secondary schools because of lack of timely payment of teachers' salaries which has made them to engage in other business ventures to make ends meet while retaining government jobs [8]. This act has created distraction, lack of focus and inefficiencies on teacher's side as a result of inadequacy and irregular payment of teacher's salary by the government. Sending children to private primary and secondary school is for only those that can afford it because of high school fee and these factors may not be unconnected to child labor. Children's work harms children's ability to enter and survive in the school system, and makes it more difficult for children to derive educational benefit from schooling once in the system [9].

Poor facilities and infrastructure has contributed adversely to teaching and research, effective students' learning and safety has become a mirage [10]. Nigerian town and cities are expanding without the corresponding increments in number of schools and teachers which eventually made parents to enroll their children in Private primary and secondary schools. The Changes in government with different areas of priority has also affected education financing in Nigeria. Placing different premium on different sectors at the expense of educational sectors and lack of continuity of already formulated policies by successive government has brought a blow on educational sector development over time [11].

2 METHODOLOGY

This research surveyed 6 States in South Western part of Nigeria which include: Lagos, Ekiti, Oyo, Ogun, Ondo and Osun States). The study covered areas including school conditions: facilities and infrastructures, employment issues, salary and emoluments, Teachers training and retraining. Seventy secondary Schools were considered in the South Western States. Questionnaires were distributed to

School Principals and teachers. The data collected were analysed using frequency count and simple percentage. Also, four point Likert type was used to score the items of questionnaire. Ratings: strongly agree (SA=4), Agree (A=3), Disagree (DA=2), Strongly disagree (SD=1)

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of the analysis shows that, the irregular payment of teachers' salaries has dampened their morals which at the long run hindered their ability to effectively discharge their duties. The situation is better in Lagos state and Ogun States. In addition, higher percentage of respondent agreed that teachers' salaries have been diverted to cater for other sector of public needs. In addition, it was noted that due to budget cut, the recruitment of new teachers has taken a downward turn which eventually created more burden for the few available teachers to handle large classes. Renovation and building of new infrastructures slowed down in pace which made learning atmosphere to be non-contusive for effective learning, but still, Ogun and Lagos States are better. The budget allocation reduction has also culminated in inadequate supply of equipment for qualitative education. This result is in agreement with [12] [13] indicated that "The Nigerian education Sector is in dire straits and requires both public and private sector intervention, if the country is to fulfil its potential as not only a regional power house, but as a global player".

Variables	SA	A	D	SD
Economic crisis has culminated in government allocation reduction on education	49 70%	12 17.14%	5 7.14%	4 5.71%
Irregular payment of salaries as a result of budget cut has created reduction in teachers morals	55 78.6%	12 17.14%	3 4.3%	-
The budget cut affects the purchase of teaching aids and lab equipment for effective teaching	60 85.7%	5 7.14%	5 7.14%	-
allowance payment to teachers has been affected due to the economic crisis	50 71.4%	6 8.57%	8 11.4%	6 8.5%
staff training through workshops and conferences has reduced by budget cut	42 60%	15 21.4%	8 11.4%	5 7.14%
Grant to schools has been affected	51 72.8%	11 15.7%	8 11.4%	-
Construction of new buildings and renovation of dilapidated structures have been affected by budget cost	57 81.4%	10 14.3%	3 4.3%	-
The cut has affected the rate of employment	60 85.7%	6 8.57%	4 5.57%	-
Budget cut has affected the supply of qualified teachers and other personnel needed	35 70%	5 10%	3 6%	7 14%
Educational budget has been diverted to other	49 70%	10 14.3%	5 7.1%	6 8.57%
The drop has affected the provision of laboratory, equipment	45 64.3%	12 17.14%	7 10%	6 8.57%
Teachers are not motivated to be effective in their task	53 75.7%	14 20%	3 4.3%	-
Budgetary allocation to education is encouraging for education curriculum delivery	-	2 2.85%	10 14.28%	58 82.9%
teachers finds it difficult to cope with class size due to lack of enough manpower and classrooms	47 67.1%	14 20%	7 10%	8 11.4%
The drop makes students engage in menial work In order to cope with financial crisis	35 50%	17 20%	10 20%	8 -
The drop has affected the supply of adequate teaching equipment to schools	25 50%	15 21.43%	5 7.14%	5 7.14%

4 CONCLUSION

- 1 Education financing should be given a high priority in Government funding because of national development that hinges on educational development.
- 2 Policy consistency and continuity is very important and necessary for faster achievement of goals and objectives on educational development.
- 3 Teachers development, salaries and emolument prompt payment should be taken seriously in order to boost teachers morale, enhance focus and concentration on their jobs and as well enhance education quality both at the regional and national level.
- 4 Adequate infrastructural development is essential in order to enhance a conducive learning atmosphere for the students and foster encouragement for the teachers for a better performance.
- 5 More Public awareness must be created on the Importance of education to enlighten parents and would be parents to plan their family and not to multiply the number of illiterates and bite what they can chew since the current economic situation does not leave all the student's education and financing on the government alone.
- 6 Effective educational policy compliance and quality assurance monitoring system should be in place so as to harmonize educational development in view of both the privately owned schools and public schools.

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