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Under-Funding Tertiary Education in Nigeria: Implication for Sustainable National Development

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of government underfunding of tertiary education for sustainable national development in Nigeria. Three research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The instrument for data collection was a secondary data from Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) entitled “Value of Educational Growth, Gross Domestic Product, Capital Government Expenditure and Recurrent Government Expenditure in Nigeria, 1990-2013”. The period under-review was chosen for the purpose of comparing funding of education in selected World Bank sampled countries. The researcher adopted Ex-post Facto research design to evaluate government budgetary allocation to education and value of educational growth between 1990 to 2013. Correlation Martric and Square Regression (r^2) and t-ratio statistics were used to analyze data collected. The findings showed that the value of educational growth, Gross Domestic Product, Current Government Expenditure and Regression Government Expenditure maintained increased trend and there was a positive relationship with a low productive value on education budget. This showed that expenditure on tertiary education is still below other countries under-review and below UNESCO recommended of 26% of total annual budgetary allocation. This has affected education development and programs of tertiary education in Nigeria. There is need for improved budgetary allocation to education in Nigeria to match other developing countries of Africa for greater attention to tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The study recommends that educational administrators and management of tertiary institutions in Nigeria should mount pressure on the political class to address the state of under-funding of education by government and implement UNESCO recommended 26% of annual budgetary allocation for suitable educational development.

Keywords: Budget Allocation, Current Government Expenditure, Capital Government Expenditure, Educational Growth, Tertiary Institution, Gross Domestic Product.

Introduction

There has been unpredictable and inconsistent funding of tertiary education in Nigeria since her independence. Tertiary education in Nigerian in this context is the education given after Post Basic Education in institutions such as Universities and Inter-University Centres, Innovation Enterprise Institutions (IELS), and Colleges of Education among others (FRN, 2013). Accordingly the goals of Tertiary Education as stated in Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN 2013) are to:

- (i) Contribute to national development through high level manpower training.*
- (ii) Provide accessible and affordable quality learning opportunities in formal and informal education in response to the needs and interest of all Nigerians*
- (iii) provide high quality career counseling and life-long learning programmes that prepare students with the knowledge and skills for self-reliance and world or work*
- (iv) Forge and cement national unity and*
- (iv) Promote national and international understanding and interaction p. 52.*

To achieve these laudable goals, fund is needed through adequate budgetary allocation that will embrace and accommodate research and development; provision of high standard quality of facilities, resource; staff welfare and development; access to training funds by Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETF); scholarship and students loan. Tertiary institutions may not explore these areas of the above goals if they are underfunded especially when allocation is static with increased enrollment of students and staff disposition. Underfunding has remained the cog in the Nigeria education system (Federal Ministry of Education (2004) and Nwite 2016).

The importance attached to education at tertiary level in any nation is reminiscent in its role on socio-economic, political growth and sustainable development of the nation. The Central Bank of Nigeria

(CBN, 2000) sees the role of education as a means of understanding, controlling and redesigning of human environment. Supporting Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN 2000), Kpolovic (2012) opined that education is the most powerful agent for social transformation, national stability, security, unity and prosperity. Put differently, education constitutes the core of human development, national development, most crucial institution for empowering youths with knowledge and skills, and in turn provides youths with access to productive employment (Nwite, 2016).

United Nation Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2000) reports that there are inequalities in education access and achievement, high level of absolute educational deprivation for both children and adults in Nigeria (<http://www.unesco.org/education/wef/econ/index.shtml>) Kpolovie (2012: 360) also lamented that "education which is the supreme instrument for national development and sustainability, social, economic, scientific and technological advancement has practically collapsed in Nigeria. Observations of UNESCO and Kpolovie (2012) points to poor fund allocation and policy on education sector in Nigeria, hence poor implementation of educational policy programmes especially at the tertiary level.

Abba (2013:8) accused government of poor funding policy when he stated that "Government pay lip services to education sector, the country has never met the 26% annual budgetary allocation as recommended by UNESCO". According to Abba, the highest government has allocated to education sector is 13%. Lending credence to the above short comings of government funding policy, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) observed that poor financial investment on education has been the bane of Nigeria education system. The bane is manifested in World Banks (2012) analysis of annual budgetary allocation of twenty (20) World Bank sampled countries to education as presented below:

Table 1: A Budgetary Allocation of 20 World Bank sampled Countries

S/N	Country	% Allocation to Education	Position
1.	Ghana	31.0	1 st
2.	Cote d'vore	30.0	2 nd
3.	Uganda	27.0	3 rd
4.	Morocco	26.4	4 th
5.	South Africa	25.8	5 th
6.	Swaziland	24.6	6 th
7.	Mexico	24.3	7 th
8.	Kenya	23.0	8 th
9.	United Arab Emirate	22.5	9 th
10.	Botswana	19.0	10 th
11.	Iran	17.7	11 th
12.	USA	17.1	12 th
13.	Tunisia	17.0	13 th
14.	Lesotho	17.0	14 th
15.	Burkina Faso	16.8	15 th
16.	Norway	16.2	16 th
17.	Columbia	15.6	17 th
18.	Nicaragua	15.0	18 th
19.	India	12.7	19 th
20.	Nigeria	8.4	20 ^{th**}

Source: World Bank (2012)

Table showcased African and developed countries budgetary allocation complied and analyzed by World Bank in 2012 for the past 25years. Nigeria is the last, occupying 20th position. Expectation of Nigeria occupying 1st position is dashed due to poor funding policy and budgetary allocation. World Bank x-rayed Nigerian's poor funding policy when it stated in its report that Universities in Nigeria did not make the list of topmost best 2000 nor the best 6000 Universities in the world (World Bank, 2012). Fagge (2013) also added that Nigeria tertiary institutions performed below average when compared to other institutions in Africa such as Ghana and South Africa who have done well for the past 25years. The researcher is of the opinion that Nigerian Universities' poor performance may be attributed to underfunding, complex bureaucracy and flawed policies in the management and financing tertiary institutions for sustainable development. The 8.4% education budgetary allocation level suggests lack of capacity by Federal Ministry of Education to deliver results.

Education in Nigeria appears to have been in funding crisis for years and has culminated in shortage of material and human resources, poor education planning and supervision and poor learning environment. It is not an overstatement to state that poor quality primary education produce poor candidates for poor quality secondary education which in turn produce very poor candidates for tertiary institutions for learning that deliver unfinished professionals to the labour market.

For Ezeuwa (2012:178) education is widely acclaimed as having the potentials for transmission of desirable values such as patriotism and honesty leading to national transformation". Oyekan (2002) and Okccha (2002) amplified education as instrument for developing capabilities of the nation while Anyavvu, Oyefusi, Onikhenam and Dimowo (2015) affirms that education is a right and responsibility to be guaranteed to all generation. In Nigeria education system, elements of uncertainty have clouded education sector in nominal or real terms to guarantee Education for All. Schools at all levels lacked teachers and basic infrastructure, among others, (Federal Republic Nigeria, FRN 2000).

Funding education sector in Nigeria has remained limited and underfunded. Schools suffer from over-crowding, poor sanitation and poor intra-sectorial allocation of fund (Abdu, 2003); Abandoned capital projects; inadequate funding; poor condition of service. Poor supervision practices and uncondusive environment are not left out of the limitations. These, most times have led to incessant strike actions and closure of schools. The attendant and composite effect from underfunding of education reflects poor quality standard of education coupled with poor quality products at each level of education especially the tertiary level.

Ayo-Sbowale (2005) and Ahunanya & Ubabudu (2006) observed that a visit to Nigerian tertiary institutions would reveal a pitiable and abject situation showcasing classroom without desk and seats for students, cubicle for lecturers offices, outdated and understocked library books. Continuing Ayo affirmed that the perception of falling standards of education coupled with escalating incidence of examination malpractices, low rate of student's completion of programmes at the required time and date due to incessant strike actions and in actions cast heavy doubts on the credibility of outputs of Nigeria's higher education graduates. Obioya (2002) blamed the ugly scenario to underfunding. Underfunding has not only affected the provision of adequate facilities but has also affected the personnel who are not paid on time and consequently unwilling to put their best to their job.

According to him, underfunding of the education system applies to what he described as partial release of capital votes to the system creates room for inadequate provision of facilities and delay in paying salaries promptly.

Research findings show that education at the tertiary level in Nigeria is underfunded. World Bank (2001) reports that at the bottom line, primary education is underfunded even with 60% of

the age group in school. Education at this level is not only compulsory, but free under Universal Basic Education Act (UBE, 2004), yet parents still buy school uniform, buy textbooks, pay unauthorized levies imposed by the school authorities. National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE,2006) maintains that Colleges of Education in Nigeria are underfunded arising from low government subventions and poor revenue generation base, Enyi (2012) affirms that apparent collapse of tertiary education in Nigeria revolve around inadequate funding. Fafunwa's study on funding education in Nigeria (1984) cited in Ezeuwa (2012) and Longe Commission (1990) and Ogbonnaya (2012) indicated poor funding of tertiary education. The implication of these studies calls for improved allocation of fund to education in line with the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended and UNESCO recommendation of 26% for effective implementation and sustainability of education programmes in Nigeria.

This study therefore, ascertains whether the financial allocations to education sector has been increasing or decreasing with regard to government expenditure of national income and the nature, level of vertical and horizontal imbalances as there affect the education sector in Nigeria between 1990 to 2013. The paper also draws a comparative level and patterns of educational expenditure or allocation in Nigeria with other countries of Africa such as Ghana, Cote d'vore, Uganda, Morocco, South Africa among others, see table above.

Statement of the Problem

Public outcry complain of underfunding education (primary, secondary and tertiary) underscored government for never met the 26% annual budget allocations recommended by UNESCO, Frequent industrial actions by associations such as Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) are laid on the doorstep of inadequate funding of education. Beyond funding, persistent policy somersault in the education sector is another source of worry to the researcher. The challenges of Nigeria education sector and its underfunding is traced to policy and strategy instability, inconsistency, ineffective management of resources and over dependence on proceeds from oil, wastage and leakages and the overriding macroeconomic condition that have determined the fate of education sector. The economy appear not growing at a reasonable height and sustainable rate, hence lack of resource to fund a large social service sector (education) in Nigeria with high population enrolment rate in education. Lacklustre growth rate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) implies severe mismatch to funding of education. Fluctuation in oil revenue is a danger signal to funding education in Nigeria. This implies that without careful planning and rationalization of expenditure of the revenue, the implementation of education programme and projects would be subjected to disruption and distortion. These have prompted the researcher to examine implication of under-funding of tertiary education and funding policy on education growth in Nigeria from 1990 to 2013.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the effect of government under-funding education and funding policy on educational growth in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine government expenditure in Nigeria
2. Identify effects to educational growth in Nigeria
3. Examine education growth believe 1990-2013.

Research Questions

1. What are the trends of government expenditure on education in Nigeria?
2. What are the effects of government funding policy to educational growth in Nigeria?
3. What are the educational policies that encourage growth in the educational sector of Nigeria?

Hypotheses

H0₁: Government expenditure has no significant relationship on educational growth in Nigeria.

H0₂: Government expenditure has no significant relationship on economic growth in Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted documental analysis and causal comparative ex-post facto research design from Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN 2013). Ex-post Facto design assumes the form of an experimental design where an existing case is observed for some time in order to evaluate it (Nnamdi, 2002). Three research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. Correlation Matric and Square Regression (R²) statistics were used to analyze the secondary data collected from Central Bank of Nigeria from 1990 to 2013. Other econometric and statistics such as t-ratio, coefficient of determination (R²), adjusted co-efficient determination (R²) were also employed to analyze the secondary data.

Results

Table2: Value of Educational Growth, Gross Domestic Product, Capital Government Expenditure and Recurrent Government Expenditure in Nigeria 1990-2013

Year	EDU ₦m	GDP ₦m	CGEXP ₦m	RGEXP ₦m
1990	562.37*	267549.99*	24048.6*	36129.6 *
1991	671.31	312139.74	28340.9	38243.5
1992	1728.66	532613.83	39763.3	53034
1993	2516.74	683869.79	54501.8	136727.1
1994	2915.59	899863.22	70918.3	89974.9
1995	3368.86*	1933211.55*	121138.3*	127629.8*
1996	3469.39	2702719.13	21926.3	124491.3
1997	3757.33	2801972.58	269651.7	158563.5
1998	6159.4	2708430.86	309015.6	178097.8
1999	7066.84	3194014.97	498027.6	449662.4
2000	13974.35*	4582127.29*	239450.9*	461600.0*
2001	17652.93	4725086.00	438696.5	579300
2002	18538.1	6912381.25	321378.1	696800
2003	20393.85	8487031.57	241688.3	984300
2004	22842.94	11411066.91	351300.00	1032700
2005	26042.52	14572239.12	519500.00	1223700
2006	29689.87*	18564594.73*	552385.8	129021.9*
2007	33356.6	20657317.7	759323.00	1589270
2008	39394.14	24296329.29	960900.00	1919300
2009	47095.7	24712669.88	115296.6	1964216
2010	56010.8	24922614	883870.00	2961850
2011	60343.7	2502789	9811236.00	3215638
2012	66031.62	25832446 26328934.10*	1201584.00	3923833
2013	72554.28*		1231782.00*	4412765*

Source: Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletin 2013.

Table 1 shows increasing value of educational growth throughout the period under review (1990-2013). In1990, Education (EDU) valued ₦562.37m and 1995 it increased to ₦ 3368.86m. In the year

2000, it increased to ₦13974.35m while in 2006 and 2013 it increased to ₦29689.87m and ₦72554.28m respectively.

In the same vein, the value of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) also increased during the period under review. In 1990, GDP valued ₦267549.99m and also increased to ₦193321152m in 1995. In 2000, 2006 and 2013 Nigeria's GDP geometrically increased from ₦4582127.29m, ₦18564594.73m to ₦26328934m respectively.

The value of Recurrent Government Expenditure (RGEXP) maintained similar trend as the RGEXP for 1990 valued ₦36219.6m and later increased to ₦14127629.8m in 1995. In 2000 it was ₦461600.0m while in 2006 and 2013 it rose from ₦129021.9m to ₦4412765m respectively.

Ho₁: Government Expenditure has no significant relationship on education growth in Nigeria.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix of Relationship between GDP and EDU Budget, CGEXP and RGEXP

VARIABLE	GDP	EDU BUDGET	CGEXP	RGEXP
GDP	1	0.955	0.467	0.915
EDU Budget	0.955	1	0.516	0.986
CGEXP	0.467	0.516	1	0.502
RGEXP	0.915	0.986	0.502	1

Table 3 shows that GDP has relationship with EDU budget (r = 0.955), CGEXP (r= 0.467) and RGEXP (r = 0.915); EDU budget relates to (r = 0.516) and RGEXP (r =0.986), and CGEXP relates to RGEXP (r = 0.502). The above data indicate that GDP is positively related to EDU budget and RGEXP and moderately related to CGEXP.

Ho₂: Government expenditure has no significant relationship on economic growth in Nigeria.

Table 4: Summary of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis of GDP and EDU Budget, CGEXP and RGEXP

Variable	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	B	t-value.	Sig.
EDU Budget	0.955	0.913	0.909	0.002	15.155*	0.000
CGEXP	0.467	0.218	0.183	0.089	2.479*	0.021
RGEXP	0.915	0.837	0.830	0.117	10.640*	0.000

**Significant at p<0.05*

Table 4 shows that the multiple regression (R) value for EDU budget is 0.955. While the t-value = 15.155 at p<0.05, indicating that there is a significant relationship between GDP and EDU budget. The value of regression weight B = 0,002 which is about 2% indicating a positive relationship and a very low predictive value of EDU budget. It could be observed that the R-value for CGEXP is 0.467 and RGEXP is 0.915, while their t-values are 2.479 and 10.640 at p<0.05 respectively. Therefore, there was a significant relationship between GDP and GCEXP on one hand, and RGEXP on the other. The value of regression weight B = 0.089 on GCEXP, which is about 8.9% indicates a positive relationship and a very low predictive value; and the value of regression weight B = 0.117 on RGEXP, which accounts for 11.7% of the variance indicates a positive relationship and a very low predictive value of RGEXP.

Discussion

Table 2 sought to identify value of Education growth against Gross Domestic Product (GDP) = ₦267549.99m - ₦26328934.10m), Capital Government Expenditure (CGEXP) = ₦24048.6 - ₦1231782m) and Recurrent Government Expenditure (RGEXP) = ₦36219.6 - 4412765m). The finding indicates that the values of EDU growth, GDP, CGEXP and RGEXP maintained increased trend between 1990 to 2013. This implies that the vertical and horizontal imbalance of government expenditure affected education sector in Nigeria. The finding collaborate Hinchliffe (2002) who discovered that financial effect on education has decreased in terms of national income.

Table 3 shows that EDU budget (0.955), CGEXP ($r = 0.467$) and RGEXP ($r = 0.915$); EDU budget ($r = 0.516$) also relates to RGEXP ($r = 0.502$). This implies an indication that a unit change in RGEXP will lead to a change in EDU budget. The finding is in congruence with www.researchclue.com (2013), reported that there is a direct relationship between RGEXP and EDU growth in Nigeria.

Table 4 shows a multiple regression (R) value for education (EDU) budget is 0,955 with a t-value of 15.115. At 0.05 level of significance there is a relationship between GDP and EDU budget. The R value $B = 0.002$ indicates a positive relationship with a very low predicative value of EDU budget. There is a significant relationship between GDP and GCEXP and RGEXP. The Regression weight $B = 0.089$ on CGEXP (8.9%) indicates a positive relationship with a low predictive value while $B = 0.117$ on RGEXP account for 11.7%. this indicates positive relationship and a low predictive value of RGEXP. The finding is in agreement with Kpolovie and Obilor (2012) who posit that Nigeria annual budgetary allocation to education are significantly lower than UNESCO recommended 26% for developing countries, Nigeria inclusive.

Educational Implications

The findings of this study have some important educational implications. The result of the finding reveals that vertical and horizontal imbalance of government expenditure affected education sector with respect to tertiary level of education in Nigeria. The implication of this finding implies that educational administrators, State and Federal Ministry of Education will be handicapped to plan education programmes effectively. With imbalance in expenditure, education administrators will continue to plan and replan or making adjustment in the original plans, invariably, the adjustment will continue to affect school programmes and calendar. The situation will affect educational growth and development; employment opportunities of gradates of universities.

The study also reveals that annual budgetary allocation to education is significantly low than UNESCO recommendation of 26%. The implication of this finding shows that inability of Nigeria to implement UNESCO's recommendation of 26% may injure the pride, quality and standard of education in Nigeria. It suffices therefore to state that schools will suffer deficiency in the provision of instructional facilities, delay in the payment of staff salaries and implementation of education legal polices. This may result demonstration and strike actions by schools and staff.

Conclusion

The study examined the effect of government under-funding of tertiary education and educational growth in Nigeria economy. Education is considered as all efforts made by society and government to accomplish self-objectives that are desirable for individual and societal needs. Hence, there is need to improve budgetary allocation to education for greater attainment of suitable growth education at the tertiary levels of education, just like Ghana with 31%, Cote d'vore with 30% Uganda with 27%.

Based on the discussion and findings, of empirical analysis, the study concludes that financial expenditure on education is on the decrease, that there is a direct relationship between RGEXP and

education growth in Nigeria. Finally, the Recurrent Government Expenditure indicates a positive relationship with a low predictive value on educational growth in Nigeria economy.

Recommendation

Based on the discussions and conclusion the following recommendations are made:

1. Education Administrators, stakeholders, and administrators of tertiary institutions should mount pressure on the political class to address the state of underfunding of Nigeria education in order to redress lingering crisis in education in Nigeria.
2. Federal government of Nigeria should increase her funding capacity in the education sector especially in the capital component in line with UNESCO recommendation of 26% of annual budget allocation to education, like other developing countries of Africa such as Ghana, Cote d’vore, Uganda and Kenya.
3. Allocation and timely release of fund to education should not be compromised to avoid discrepancies of underfunding and stability in national development in Nigeria.
4. Education evaluators, administrators and planners, curriculum planners, civil society, and stakeholders in education sector should participate actively in the monitoring and implementation of funds meant for education programmes to ensure quality control for optimal quality education. This will check corruption and misappropriation of funds prevalent in the education sector.

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