

## CHAPTER NINE

## EDUCATION FUNDING FOR QUALITY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

By

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## INTRODUCTION

More than ever before, greater concern is being shown by both the government and the Nigerian people in the qualitative aspects of education. Until recently, most governments (Federal and State Governments) of Nigeria had been engrossed with the quantitative growth of education in order to ensure that a proportion of our citizens have access to educational services. Consequently, educational institutions, at virtually all levels, have increased in numbers and geographical spread as well as in overall student enrolment.

The same cannot be said about the quality of educational services provided in institutions of learning in Nigeria. Comments and criticisms by educators, politicians, senior government officials and private organisations and individual (*Yoloye, 1976; Nwagwu, 1990; Nwaogwugwu, 1990; and Aderounmu, 1988*) on the depreciating quality of education, leaves one in no doubt that all is not well with our economy. Although, quality is not synonymous with quantity, many educationists believe that quality, and quantity in education are not mutually exclusive. It takes proper planning and socio-economic discipline for a country to achieve both quantity and quality in its educational enterprise. An educational system is a function of quantity and quality of inputs. Quality inputs in terms of plant and equipment, personnel and programmes are provided at some monetary and other costs. It is in this connection that quality education cannot be conceived without due reference to the funding resources required for its provision. Other things being equal, an education system that is properly funded will yield better result to its beneficiaries and the society than one that is improperly or under-funded.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the concept of quality education and to analyse the funding problems inhibiting qualitative education in Nigeria. In conclusion, strategies that should be adopted in order to sustain the adequate funding of quality education in Nigeria are recommended.

## CONCEPT OF QUALITY EDUCATION

Quality education ( or qualitative education) generally refers to the education system which meets the goals and objectives of the society that set it up. Such education could be formal, informal or non-formal in orientation. However, in this paper, emphasis is given to formal education which not only occupies the central position of our education system but which has attracted the bulk of the funding resources of government, private organisation and individuals. Viewed from this perspective encompasses educational establishments (primary, secondary and tertiary) in which our citizens are educated and the ability of these institutions to achieve their objectives and goals. A quality school produces men and women, who in the words of *Alfred White head (1937)*, "possess both culture unseable knowledge and skills". Qualitative education

is, therefore, an advanced mode of knowledge, skills and values that are acquired from effective educational institutions and which are relevant to the beneficiaries and to the society. Effective institutions possess certain characteristic which are generally regarded as hall marks of success.

According to *Nwagwu (1984) and Fagbulo (1985)* the following constitute the indicators of quality schools;

(i) *Individualisation of Instruction*

Schooling are created to promote learning. Individualisation of instruction concerns what we do in schools to provide for the welfare of individual students. An institution that plans very carefully for the individual learning needs of its students, taking recognition of their performances and interests, is deemed to rate high on the scale of quality education.

(ii) *Interpersonal Regard within the School*

Interpersonal regard concerns the way teachers, students and administrators relate to one another in the school. In a well-managed school, teaching and learning go on in a friendly, cooperative and relaxed environment.

(iii) *Creativity among Teachers and Students*

There is a spirit of inquiry as teachers and students are encouraged to use their imagination and initiative to tackle various problems in the teaching-learning aspects of the environment. The ability of the school to take critical interest in new ideas is an indicator of quality, in that, activity revitalizes the whole school process.

(iv) Group Activity, Cooperation and Oneness of Purpose

School objectives are collectively set, accepted and vigorously pursued by all. Group decision-making, democratic action and group solution of problems and conflicts are encouraged. Peer-group teaching and learning, team-teaching methods and shared responsibilities can be utilised to foster social values and attitudes.

(v) *Variety of Learning Experiences*

A curriculum that provides for a variety of learning experiences which are appropriate to the needs and capabilities of the students is rated highly as a quality of such experiences.

(vi) *Productivity*

From the economists point of view, the relationship between input into the school system and the corresponding output is an important indicator of presence or lack of quality. For instance, if the quality of students admitted into a University is exceeded markedly by the quality of its graduates, then the University has a high quality. This is the return or cost-benefit approach to measuring quality in education.

(vii) *Functionality*

Quality in education may be ascertained in terms of relevance to the needs of the society concerned. Functionality in this context refers to fitness, relevance and appropriateness to the needs of daily life, hopes and expectations of the future.

### *(viii) Well-Qualified Teachers*

The importance of highly-qualified teachers has been stressed by many educators. *Branton (1970)* observed that one of the indicators of quality in any given educational venture are the qualifications and experiences of its teachers. Similarly, *Awoniyi (1979)* opined that neither school syllabus, method nor apparatus will make a good school without the quality of the teacher at the heart of it. New demands of the present technological age as well as knowledge explosion make the training and continual development of teachers imperative for the preservation of quality education.

## REVIEW OF EDUCATION FUNDING

A brief review of the history of education funding shows that right from the colonial days, education finance had at different periods and at varying degrees been the responsibilities of several parties - government, voluntary agencies, missionaries, parents and others. Primary and Secondary Schools, especially those established between 1843 and 1870 were exclusively financed by the Christian missionaries and emigrant businesses. Most of the funds that accrued to the missionaries came from contributions from overseas countries, charity donations and from Christian Sunday School collection. According to *Fafunwa (1974)* the colonial government did not consider education a priority public service to be given to the natives, hence it failed to finance it.

It was not until 1977 that the idea of grants-in-aid to voluntary agencies dawned on government authorities. Then, the missionary schools such as those of Roman Catholic Mission and Anglican Church Missionary Society received only two hundred pounds (£200) each as government grants per annum. It was not until 1882 when the first education ordinance was enacted for the total finance and maintenance of schools, that school received more government funds.

The 1944 Ten-year Education Development Plan marked a major shift in the financing of education, for it provided for increased subventions to both missionary schools and other voluntary agency schools from the colonial government. Government continued with the provision of subventions to mission schools and voluntary agency schools until the early 1970s when it took over the ownership and control of schools hitherto owned by missionaries and voluntary agencies. Since then, education has been one of the largest consumers of public funds both at Federal and State levels.

The State budgetary allocations to education usually take a large chunk of the recurrent budgets due to increased student population. For instance in 1971, it ranged between 25% for Lagos State and 46% each for Kwara and Western States. Between 1979 and 1990 State allocations to education sector ranged between 30% in Cross River State to 40% in Lagos and Bendel (now Edo Delta) States. The Federal Government has continued to take full responsibility for funding of Federally-owned schools and Federal Colleges and Universities. Only minimal fees are charged by Federally-owned schools e.g. Federal Universities and Polytechnics. But relatively higher fees are charged in most State-owned educational institutions which in fact constitute over 70% of the secondary schools and over 50% of the tertiary institutions. Although, the Decree No. 3 of January 1, 1991 vested primary education finance and management in Local Government Councils

(FRN, 1991), the Federal Government and most State Governments have continued to play leading roles in the provision of funds and infrastructures for primary education execution. Despite the fact that government, parents, private individuals and some voluntary agencies have jointly funded educational services, educators and other school authorities have often complained of inadequate finance and the resultant depreciating quality of education institutional products. Undoubtedly, inadequate funding do contribute in one way or the other to poor quality of educational services provided in schools. In the ensuing section, we shall examine and analyse the funding problems which inhibit education in Nigeria.

### FUNDING PROBLEMS INHIBITING QUALITY EDUCATION

The following constitute the funding problems which inhibit the attainment of qualitative education in Nigeria:

#### (a) *Competition Among Ministries*

More than at any other time, the other sub-sectors of the economy such as health, transport defence and agriculture compete keenly with education sub-sector for the national cake. The priority hitherto granted to education is now being shared by the aforementioned sub-sector. Their claim that they too contribute to social and economic growth cannot be ignored. Before 1965, education received the highest budgetary allocation from the federal Government and other sub-sectors followed. But since the last two decades, defence has usurped the prime position which education enjoyed and its financial allocation towers above that of the single sub-sector. A look at Table One below reveals that between 1987 and 1991, defence had the largest share of the Federally collected revenue devoted to the social sector. Education and Health only trailed behind defence.

Consequent upon the acute competition to which education is subjected, funds provided either by way of budgetary allocation or special grants are usually insufficient to provided the desired quality education, at all levels.

#### (b) *Visible Sector Syndrome*

Ministry such as those of Works and Housing, Industry and Mines and Transport are often dubbed as "visible sectors" as contrasted with education sub-sector which is relatively less visible. The visible sectors tend to have more bargaining power than education because their needs are quite visible for all to see. Naturally, the visible sectors attract more sympathy and therefore funds from government. In fact, it is easier for government functionaries and the general public to appreciate the outcome of prudent expenditure of funds on such physical landmarks as roads, bridges and urban housing than will normally be the case for money spent on training and development of education personnel.

TABLE ONE

RECURRENT AND EXPENDITURE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (N MILLION) 1987 TO 1991

S.N.	Year	Items	Education		Health		Works & Housing		Agriculture		Defence	
			N	% of Total	N	% of Total	N	% of Total	N	% of Total	N	% of Total
1.	1987	Recurrent	354.	2.3	65	0.4	643.6	4.1	72.6	0.5	2,972.5	19.0
		Capital	94.6	1.5	59.2	0.9	1,551.8	24.3	442.7	7.0	181.9	2.9
2.	1988	Recurrent	248.2	1.8	259.9	1.9	432.9	3.2	54.3	0.4	830	6.1
		Capital	281.8	2.6	183.2	1.7	239.8	2.2	284.4	2.7	440	4.1
3.	1989	Recurrent	1,067.2	5.1	326.6	1.6	449.6	2.2	88.1	0.4	957	4.6
		Capital	22.9	2.4	126.	1.4	228.3	2.5	620.1	6.7	310.	3.3
4.	1990	Recurrent	1,126.6	4.1	401.	1.5	684.2	2.5	121	0.4	1,410.4	5.2
		Capital	331.7	2.5	180	1.3	530.3	3.9	117	0.9	334.2	2.5
5.	1991	Recurrent	492.2	1.7	619.3	2.4	835.1	3.3	121	0.5	1,834.1	7.2
		Capital	623.1	2.7	256.4	1.1	919.6	4.0	1,117	4.9	1,947.9	8.6

Compiled by P. O. Yalokuwa from: 1. Central Bank of Nigeria: Annual Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st December, 1987.

2. Alhaji A. Alhaji, "Statement on the 1989 Budget, *Business Times*, January 9, 1989, pp. 8-9.

3. C. S. P. Okongwu: Federal Budget 1991, Sectoral Breakdown in *Business Times*, January 7, 1991, pp. 16-17.

*(c) Education as a Public Good*

Education is traditionally a public good. This justification for government intervention in the procurement of this public good has been the presence of externalities. Benefits from education do not all accrue individually or separately to the individual but rather indivisibly to society as a whole.

*(d) Budget Disbursement Gap*

It is now open secret that most of the Federal and State Governments in Nigeria tend to budget much more money than they are able to disburse at the time of budget implementation. In some cases, the actual amounts finally released to the benefiting sectors fall below 75% of the documented budget estimates. Education seems to be one of the sub-sectors that have suffered terribly due to weakness in budget implementation. Besides, there are often delays in the release of funds that are made available. At times, some government officials deliberately divert, for some weeks or even months, the funds meant for education, the quick interest yielding ventures purely to satisfy their selfish ends at the expense of the populace. When these unexpected gaps are created, the result is that the execution of planned programmes are unnecessarily delayed and if implemented eventually, they are hurriedly and shoddily done. Such does not foster quality education, which like good soup is provide using the right ingredients in line with laid down specifications at some cost.

*(e) Abolition of School Fees*

Some State Governments have often abolished tuition fees and related levies in an attempt to fulfil political party campaign promises. Such governments usually do so, not because they have sufficient funds to finance quality education but simply because they want to win the confidence of the electorate, even if only for a season. For instance, between 1979 and 1983, the State Governments controlled by the Unity Party of Nigeria (U.P.N.) abolished all forms of fees and levies. This was done at the expense of quality. In the present dispensation, the State Governments manned by Social Democratic Party (SDP) have abolished tuition fees in institutions owned by them, right from primary school to the tertiary education level. without prejudice to the good intentions of such governments, the truth must be said and that is, that the quality of education provided in such free-tuition-institutions often fall below that of free-paying private schools in the States. The latter by virtue of their ownship and pattern of financing and control have better paid teachers more and better equipment, and consequently better processed school products. If our public schools do not want to sacrifice quality, some level of school fees have to be charged to supplement government annual budgets at the secondary and tertiary levels.

*(f) Failure to Generate Funds Internally*

Many educational establishments are blessed with some resources from which valuable funds can be generated. For instance, some schools have rich fertile soils for the cultivation of ground-nuts, yams, or cassava which can be sold for money. Others are blessed with luxuriant pasture for rearing of livestock. Some departments can generate funds through the sale of products designed by them, e.g. Fine Arts and Home Economic. Funds procured through the

sale of school products can be used to purchase chalk, duster, or first-aid kit, all of which enhance the quality of educational services. But where such revenue generating sources are neglected, the result is loss of opportunities for improving quality, at least to an extent.

(g) *Poor Leadership Ability*

Some school executives lack the skill and/or the will to spend available funds prudently. Some principles spend school money carelessly simply because it is public fund. Others misappropriate or embezzle school money in order to meet their own personal needs. Such financial malpractices tend to undermine the capital base and therefore the effectiveness of the concerned institutions.

(h) *Lack of Efficient Planning*

Much of the problems of our educational programmes (especially Teacher Training establishments) have been attributed to inefficient planning and prior determination of areas of emphasis and needs (Ezennia, 1991). If our educational system must respond to the needs of the economy and the labour market, there has to be a well-articulated and systematic approach to the current practices of teacher education with a view to improving its internal and external efficiency and therefore the overall quality of its products.

### STRATEGIES FOR FUNDING QUALITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The following strategies are recommended for adoption in our process of funding quality education in Nigeria:

1. *Internal Generation of Funds*

Educational institutions should look inwards to identify feasible revenue resources within their operating environment. Every school environment, whether in the Northern States or Southern States has one or more of the following that can be harnessed to generate funds for education (Yalokwu, 1992):

- (a) Secondary and tertiary institutions can embark on a wide range of business enterprises. Good examples are agricultural ventures, arts and Crafts, drama and cultural displays. Educational institutions as May Flower School, Ikenne in Ogun State and Ondo State College of Education, Ikere-Ekiti are known to generate thousand of naira annually through the sale of farm produce. It will definitely pay-off if other educational institutions take a cue from the two institutions.
- (b) Second, is the establishment of Alumni fund. Some old students associations do provide valuable supplementary funds for their alma mater. Alumni organisations should be introduced in all schools.
- (c) Third, is the issue of endowment Fund. This is a sort of fund to which donors contribute for purposes of reinvestment. A number of village have established schools after successful endowment fund launchings. Government should as a matter of policy.

motivate communities which have the will to provide funds through endowment launching.

- (d) Fourth is the sale of services. Prominent among the services which schools can sell to earn money is the rental of physical facilities to individuals and institutions which need them. Halls and classrooms could be hired for conferences, meetings, examinations, wedding ceremonies and so on.

## 2. Fees

School Fees constitute an important means by which some countries generate a sizeable part of their revenue for education. Currently, Nigerian governments are not in a financially buoyant position to adequately finance all the educational needs of the inhabitants. The payment of tuition fees is a valuable source of procuring funds.

## 3. Levies

Periodic levies such as those contributed by the Parent-Teachers Associations (PTAs) are necessary to cushion up the school funds. PTA levies have been profitably used to erect additional buildings, maintain old ones and provide other school facilities.

## 4. Increased Federal Government Funding

The present situation whereby the Ministry of Education is given a secondary position in the Scheme of funding social services leaves much to be desired. The Federal Government should restore the pre-eminent position of Education as the largest consumer of public funds as was the case in the early 1960's. The Federation account allocated to the Local Government Council should be stepped up to 22% in order to make such councils pay teachers salaries and carry out all other financial obligations.

## 5. Viable Teacher Education

There is need to emphasize the establishment and maintenance of viable teacher training establishments. Colleges of Education and Faculties of Education in the Universities and other agencies of teacher training should be well equipped and updated with highly qualified teachers functional curriculum and adequate infrastructures to promote teaching and learning. After all, according to Ukeje (1966), teacher education is the foundation of quality in any educational system, for it is the teacher who translates theories into practice and policies into action. Poor teaching and poor teaching results in poor quality school products. It is therefore important that teacher education establishments be properly equipped with the wherewithal to be able to turn out qualitative teacher. A good starting point is to ensure that only persons with the right professional qualifications and experience are selected as teachers in teacher-education institutions.

## 6. Proper Student Guidance and Counselling

None matter how much funds are pumped into educational institutions, student may not easily metamorphose into quality graduates unless they have had proper guidance and counselling in making decisions such as choice of subject offerings, areas of specialisation, future career and so on. At the moment, some educational institutions have no Guidance and Counselling units and no specialists and professionals to guide and counsel student (Bulus and Okpede,, 1990). Secondary school administrators and Chief Executives of other institutions should create functional Guidance and Counsellings units and equip them with qualified personnel and infrastructures to achieve their goals.

### 7. *Prudent Management of Funds*

Heads of educational institutions should not only focus attention on mere generation of funds but also on prudent systems of expending available financial resources. They should work in concert with other experienced staff (through committees, etc) to ensure that cost-effective systems of executing school programmes and activities are evolved and maintained. Old school buildings, machinery and equipment can be rehabilitated especially where the outright purchase of new ones appear more expensive in time and money.

### 8. *School Inspection and Supervision*

Inspections as laid down in the Education Law are obeyed by educational institutions. Schools can meet up the demands of quality only when they are inspected regularly by appropriate education authorities to ensure that education standard are constantly maintained. Unlike school inspection, supervision is a more clinical concept. It is a leadership role directed by school administrators, senior teachers, and other superiors on junior school staff. It helps to stimulate educational quality control through the continuous supervision of teaching-support activities of school personnel. The present conditions in our educational institutions call for well planned inspection and supervision programmes for schools so as to help the staff to know and correct their weakness and thereby improve the quality of programmes and products.

## CONCLUSION

In the foregoing sections of this paper, an attempt has been made to examine the concept of quality education, analyse the funding problems inhibiting quality education and recommend possible strategies towards the adequate funding of education. Education is a strategic and capital intensive industry whose proper funding calls for contributions by not only the Federal, State and Local Government but also by voluntary agencies, private individuals, parents and even the beneficiaries themselves. While governments should strive to allocate more funds for the education sub-sectors, education authorities and school administrators should explore the alternative sources highlighted in this paper to generate the much/needed revenue to carry out their financial obligations. If the level of education in our public schools are to match the relatively high quality education presently imparted by most fee-paying privately-owned enterprises, a cue must be taken from them by introducing tuition and other fees in our secondary and tertiary educational institutions as effective supplement to other revenue yielding sources.

In these days of rising cost of education and loss of confidence in public schools by the general

public, there is an increasing need for educational accountability especially from teachers and school administrators. Government, the major financier of public education in Nigeria should brace up to enforce accountability and determine how public funds are utilised by school authorities. It is only by so doing that school leaders and all concerned in the educative process will adopt cost-effective strategies, avoid duplication, wastage of efforts in planning and execution of targeted programmes in educational establishments.

Increased community and involvement in the funding and management of educational institutions is imperative and it will help to solve the problems which often stultify efforts at improving quality education in Nigeria. Prominent amongst them are poor conditions of service for staff, inadequate teaching facilities and unhealthy environment. When these obstacles are removed through efficient and effective funding, school heads and teachers will be more committed to their work, students more motivated to learn and the attainment of quality in Nigeria will be more realistic, and within reach in the 21st century.

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