

Addressing Challenges Facing Educational Institutions (Parastatals, Boards and Commissions) for Sustainable Educational Administration in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper discussed the challenges educational institutions (Parastatals, Boards and Commissions) in Nigeria are faced with. Primary and secondary data were used in the paper. The data were collected from published and unpublished papers, national dailies, articles and reference materials. The paper concluded that inadequate funding, ineffective capacity-building programmes, shortage of personnel, inadequate ICT facilities, insecurity, poor motivation, weak executive officers, shortage of current data, corruption and strike actions are challenges militating against the effectiveness of educational institutions (Parastatals, Boards and Commissions) in Nigeria. Based on these challenges, the paper advanced the following recommendations: adequate funding of the educational sector, effective capacity building programme, data collection, employment of more staffs, provision of adequate ICT facilities, adequate security, appointment of competent professional educationist as heads and deployment of effective monitoring and evaluation system to curb corruption in the ministries, commission, agencies and departments of education.

Introduction

The responsibility for administering the education sector in Nigeria is shared among the federal, state and local governments. Thus, in the country's constitution, education is on the concurrent list, but the Federal Government is empowered to regulate all its sectors, engage in policy formation and ensure quality control. Also, the provisions of the constitution allow each tier of government to focus its responsibilities mainly on a sector of education. The Federal Government is involved directly in tertiary education. The states take care of secondary education, while the local governments handle primary education. Despite this arrangement, the Federal Government is expected to support the state and local governments in counterpart funding to enhance the quality of education in the country. The administration of the education system is shared mainly among the education ministries at the federal and state levels, as well as statutory bodies referred to as commissions ((NEEDS, 2014).

The Federal Minister of Education (FME) is the government body that directs education in Nigeria. The Minister of the FME is appointed by the President. Functions of the Federal Minister of Education (FME) include formulating, coordinating, and implementing through its

agencies, formulation of the national policy on education, implementing policies that meet the global best practices; controlling and monitoring the quality of education throughout the country; harmonizing educational policies and procedures of all 36 states including the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), to collate useful data for planning and financing of education, to prescribe and maintain a uniform standard of education, to collaborate with other global educational bodies on a standard of education; to develop curricula and syllabuses at the National Level and to ensure that national education policies are implemented by the states and controlling the quality of education in the country through the supervisory role of its Inspectorate Services Department. The Federal Minister of Education (FME) harmonizes educational policies and procedures of all the states of the federation through the instrumentality of the National Council on Education. It also affects cooperation in educational matters on an international scale. There are commissions established for different subsectors of the education system and are charged with various responsibilities for the subsectors. The Federal Minister of Education (FME) coordinates the activities of several parastatals, commissions and agencies.

The state-level education ministries are responsible for the development and implementation of educational policies, management and supervision of educational institutions in their respective states. Specifically, the responsibilities for maintaining all public elementary and secondary schools are vested in the education ministry. Such responsibilities include: determining the salaries of teachers; recruitment, appointment, promotion and discipline of staff; and provision of guidelines on the establishment of new schools and training and re-training of teaching and non-teaching staff. The oversight functions of the Ministry of Education are carried out through several agencies. For instance, the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) is responsible for the management of basic education, while the Teaching Service Commission takes charge of senior secondary education at the state level (NEEDS, 2014).

Educational institutions are institutions established to coordinate educational programmes for effective implementation. For instance, the Federal ministry of education has the following agencies and commission under her supervision: National Board for Arabic and Islamic Studies (NBAIS), National Universities Commission (NUC), Nigerian Educational Research Development Council (NERDC), West African Examination Council (WAEC), Nigerian French Language Village (NFV), National Commission for Adult Education Mass Literacy and Non-Formal Education (NMEC), National Examination Council (NECO), Librarians' Registration Council of Nigerian (LRCN), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE), Computer Professionals Registration Council of Nigeria (CPN), Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TET FUND), Joint Administration and Matriculation Board (JAMB), National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB), National Institute for Educational Planning & Administration (NIEPA), National Teachers Institute (NTI), National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN), Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), National Library of Nigeria (NLN), Federal Scholarship Board (FSB), Nigerian Arabic Language Village (NALV) and Nigerian Mathematical Centre (NMC). The constitution of Nigeria permits the president to appoint the head of all these commissions, agencies and parastatals. The president is also to appoint the Board members and council members. State Governments also have educational parastatals. Major examples are Teaching Service Commissions, Science and Technical Education Boards, State Primary Education Boards (SPEBs), State Mass Education Commissions (SMECs), Governing Councils of tertiary institutions and Scholarship Boards.

It has been observed that majorities of the parastatals under the federal and state ministries of education are faced with lots of challenges. These challenges militated against their effectiveness in terms of programme implementation and discharging of their mandates. Based on these submissions, it is imperative to examine the challenges educational institutions are faced in

Nigeria with the view to advancing suggestions to solve them.

Educational Administration

There are many definitions of educational administration. Ogunode, (2021) view educational administration as the systematic way of arranging educational resources to actualize the objectives of educational institutions. Gift (2018) sees educational Administration as concerned with integrating the appropriate human and material resources that are made available and made effective for achieving the purposes of a programme of an educational institution. Kalagbor (2017) also sees educational administration as the process of identifying, mobilizing and utilizing scarce human and material resources relevant to education to achieve specific educational goals efficiently and effectively.

Educational administration according to Nwankwoala (2016) is a broad umbrella encompassing several processes such as planning, coordinating, controlling and being involved in other management processes and contributing to the formulation of policies. To achieve these goals, the head of the educational organization plans carefully various programmes and activities. The educational organization may be a school, college or university. The head organizes these programmes and activities with cooperation from other teachers, parents and students, motivating them and coordinating the efforts of staff members as well as directing and exercising control over them. The head evaluates the performance and progress of staff in achieving the purpose of the educational programme, provides feedback to them and brings modifications to the plans and programmes of the institution when required. The totality of these processes which are directed towards realizing or achieving the purposes of the school is called educational administration.

According to Kalagbor (2017), the following activities and programmes come under the scope of educational administration at the institutional level: (a) Deciding the purposes of the institution or school, (b) Planning for academic or curricular and co-curricular activities, (c) Preparing the time table and the time schedules for various activities, (d) Assigning duties and responsibilities to the staff members, (e) Organizing curricular and co-curricular programmes, (f) Directing and motivating the staff of the institution, (g) Coordinating by efforts of people to achieve the purpose. h. Exercising control over the staff, (i) Conducting periodical reviews about the progress, achievements and failures of the institution, (j) Taking measures for staff development, (k) Maintaining order and discipline, (l) Management of materials, (m) Management of finance, (n) Maintaining records and registers up to date, (o) Maintaining human relationships, (p) Supervision of the work of teachers and other employees, (q) Giving feedback to the teachers performing well and taking remedial measures for teachers not performing well.

Educational Institutions (Parastatals, Boards and Commissions) in Nigeria and Challenges

There are many challenges that educational institutions in Nigeria are faced with. Some of these challenges include; inadequate funding, ineffective capacity-building programmes, shortage of personnel, inadequate ICT facilities, unstable power supply, insecurity, poor motivation, weak executive officers shortage of current data, corruption and strike actions.

Inadequate Funding

The major issue in the administration and management of educational institutions in Nigeria is the shortage of funds (Ogunode, Ahmed, Gregory & Abubakar, 2020). Inadequate funding is one of the most serious challenges militating against the development and growth of educational institutions (Atiga & Ogunode 2021). This shortage of funds affects job performance and the growth of educational institutions across the country. Educational institutions cannot perform optimally without adequate funds. The problem of shortage of funds in the educational institutions in Nigeria has been traced to the inability of the Nigerian government to objectively accept and implement the 26% funding formula for education recommended by UNESCO. This

has impacted negatively on the performance and sustainability of higher education. For instance, the study by Blueprint (2021) indicated that in 2011, education got N393.8 billion or 9.3 per cent of the total budget; N468.3 billion or 9.86 per cent in 2012; N499.7 billion or 10.1 per cent in 2013; N494.7 billion or 10.5 per cent in 2014; N484.2 billion or 10.7 per cent in 2015; N369.6 billion or 7.9 per cent of the total budget in 2016; N550.5 billion in 2017 representing 7.4 per cent of the total budget; N605.8 billion in 2018 or 7.04 per cent; N620.5 billion or 7.05 per cent in 2019 and N671.07 billion or 6.7 per cent in 2020 and N742.5 billion or 5.68 per cent of the total budget in 2021 (Blueprint 2021). 2022 got the sum of 7% of the total budget while the security budget gulped about N10 trillion in ten years. From the above, it is clear that education funding in Nigeria is poor and it has affected the job performance of ministries, commissions, agencies and departments of education.

Ineffective Capacity Building Programme

The capacity-building programme is crucial for the development and sustainability of educational institutions. Capacity building programmes involve professional training designed for staffers within an institution to improve their professional capacity at carrying out assignments within the institutions. Capacity building programmes are professional programmes meant to make personnel more productive and effective at work. Capacity-building programmes for employees are an essential determinant of employee effectiveness and efficiency in the organization. It goes a long way to help organizations remain competitive and relevant in the dynamic and technological business world of today. Training is seen as a way through which an organization gauges the inefficient part of employee work behaviour in the organization. The importance of training employees in organizations of today is fast rising such that it is consistently required for employees to remain productive and motivated to perform optimally in the organization (Samuel and Chipunza, 2013). This means that continuous training and development of employees have gradually become the only means of survival in organizations due to the technological business era where most business operations have become digitalized. The reason for capacity building programmes is that the business environment is dynamically taking a new turn every day and technology is setting a new standard for job delivery and operational efficiency (Adejare, Olaore, Udofia, Emola 2020). Thus, an organization that wants to compete effectively and remain relevant in its industry must constantly seek to train and retrain its workforce to be abreast of technological advancement and its mode of getting work done in organizations (Adejare, et al 2020). Unfortunately, many staffers in different ministries,

Shortage of Personnel

Shortage of personnel is another major challenge most educational institutions (Parastatals, Boards and Commissions) are faced with. Most establishments under the Federal and state ministries of education lack the actual professionals needed to work in most of the commissions and agencies. The shortage of these professionals in different educational institutions has affected the job performance of many of these institutions. Some agencies due to a lack of experts have to contract some of their responsibilities to consultants in that professions. There is a shortage of staff in data mining in education, ICT in Education Management Information, gender professionals etc. Ogunode & Paul (2021) and Ogunode & Adamu (2021) concluded that inadequate funding, limited teacher education institutions, corruption, lack of manpower planning, brain drain and poor motivation were identified as the factors responsible for the shortage of professionals in Nigerian educational institutions.

Inadequate ICT Facilities and Unstable Power (energy) Supply

Many education institutions (Parastatals, Boards and Commissions) both federal and state are faced with the problems of inadequate ICT facilities. ICT refers to the art and applied sciences that deal with data and information. It encompasses all (equipment including computational

machinery - computers, hardware, software, firmware, tools, methods, practices, processes, procedures, concepts, principles and the sciences) that come into play in the conduct of the information activities: acquisition, representation, processing, presentation, security, interchange, transfer, management, organization, storage and retrieval of data and information (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2019). Information communication technologies are technological resources made up of hardware and software that deal with data and information management to improve effectiveness and efficiency in data distribution, collation and organization. Ogunode, Okwelogu, & Olatunde-Aiyedun, (2021) citing Patrick & Brenda (2018) information and Communication Technology (ICT) is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application encompassing radio, television, mobile phones, computer hardware and software, internet, satellite systems and so on as well as the various services and applications associated with them such as video conferencing and distance learning. It is the use of scientific devices in providing information faster and better. It involves the use of computer software and other communication services together with their associated documentation. ICT brought about the use of the internet. Another issue is poor ICT capacity among majorities of the staffers in these federal and state ministries, commissions, agencies and departments of education in Nigeria. According to Ogunode et al, (2021) unstable power supply, poor quality of internet services, high cost of internet service, shortage of ICT professionals and corruption have been identified as major obstacles to the effective usage of ICT facilities in public educational institutions in Nigeria Ogunode & Ayoko (2022) citing Energypedia (2017), energy is considered as electricity (Power), which is the most versatile form of energy. Without access to reliable electricity, education becomes very difficult and the quality of services delivered becomes poor. Equipment like information communication technologies and computers also require energy to be used in the respective offices. Constant energy supply is critical for the development of the educational institutions. Reliable energy keep moving the educational sector forward

Insecurity

Insecurity in Nigeria has affected the activities and programmes of many educational institutions. Agencies saddled with data collection across the country are unable to collect data across the country due to insecurities challenges in some parts of the county. The forms of insecurity in Nigeria include; school attacks, kidnapping, farmers and herders crises, sit-at-home declarations etc. The insecurity in some North-west states has led to school closures that affected supervision and capacity-building programmes. In North-Eastern states, many primary, secondary and higher institutions are also affected by the insecurity challenges (Ogunode & Ukazor (2022); Ogunode & Chijindu (2022); Ogunode, Umeora, & Olatunde-Aiyedun, 2022). Many agencies and commissions in charge of the supervision of schools across the federation have been affected by insecurity problems facing the country. Some national assignments have been halted in states where there is a high level of insecurity. Ogunode (2021a) asserted that insecurity in educational institutions implies the human resources within the educational institutions are in a state of fear or threat and lack peace to carry out their respective function. It is a situation where school administrators, teachers, non-teaching staff and students are in a state of fear. The insecurity challenge is another major problem facing schools in Nigeria, especially in the Northern part of the country. Insecurity has prevented the effective administration of secondary school programmes in the country. Many school administrators, teachers, non-teaching staff and students have been killed. Some school administrators, teachers, non-teaching staff and students have been kidnapped and many infrastructural facilities destroyed by Boko Haram members. Secondary school programmes have been disrupted due to the closing down of schools in Northeast Nigeria.

Poor Motivation

Poor motivation is the major problem that has confronted staffers in the various commissions,

agencies and departments of education in Nigeria. Many personnel presently working in different ministries and agencies of education both at the federal and state levels are poorly motivated. Staffers in the federal and state ministries are the most affected. The salaries are poor and various allowances are not paid on time. Their promotion is also delayed. The poor motivation of staffers in the various agencies and departments of education across the education has affected the productivity of the institutions. Staffers in these ministries are not encouraged to put in their best like their counterparts in the ministry and agencies under health and information technology. The poor motivation in the various ministries and the department of education is responsible for the massive transfer and brain drain in the system. Mmadike (2006) found excess workload; low morale; inadequate remuneration; unattractive prospects for promotion and inadequate working conditions as sources of job dissatisfaction among staffers in Nigeria especially in educational institutions.

Weak Executive Officers

The realization of the educational objectives depends on the quality of leaders appointed to oversee the affairs of different agencies and parastatals of education in the Country. Educational leadership matters to effectively administer the affairs of educational institutions. Failure in the Nigerian educational system can be traced to the various leaders appointed to head the various educational institutions who are less qualified or do not have experience in educational management and administration. The government appoints whosoever they think to handle the ministry of education, unlike the health sector where the minister must be a medical practitioner. Therefore, the failure of the government to recognize education as a profession that must always be handled by an educational expert or administrator has been contributing to the problems facing educational institutions (Ogunode, & Josiah, 2021). Some individuals appointed as vice-chancellors of some universities are weak, not competent and lack administrative potential; such appointees must possess administrative qualities and must lead by example. The leader must have integrity, must be knowledgeable, and practice modern types of management leadership styles. He or she must be visionary and ready to adjust to situations in the system. The performance of the administrator should be sustained through the proper utilization of material and human resources in the achievement of institutional goals and objectives. Leaders in some of these educational institutions are weak, uncoordinated and lack administrative skills to move the organizations towards attaining the goals and programmes of the institutions. Some do not have administrative knowledge or skills and technical know-how to formulate sound educational policies and programmes. This can affect the system's performance in that, workers can result to a nonchalant attitude toward work and hence no sustainability or continuity of good track records of performance in the system.

Shortage of Current Data

Another problem facing the educational institutions in Nigeria is the problem of inability to access reliable and current educational data to plan the educational programme, design policies and take decisions for the development of the sector. Educational institutions under the ministry of education need current data to plan their programmes and to take a decision on the next actions. Data is very important in the realization of the educational programme. Data is the bedrock of education. The Nigerian educational system lacks accurate and reliable data to realize the objectives of education. Ogunode (2021a) opined that one of the major functions of education administration is the planning of educational programmes and projects. Planning is very vital to the realization of the objectives of educational institutions. The educational programme must be planned to be able to achieve its objectives and education must be planned too to be able to realize its goals. Data is what is needed to plan and take decisions. Data is very important for planning educational programmes. Without current educational data, planning is impossible. Ogunode, Adah, Audu, & Abubakar (2021) carried out a study and discovered that

inadequate funding, shortage of professional data collection officers, inadequate working materials, institutional corruption, poor capacity development programme of data collection officers, poor methods and approaches used for collecting data, poor supervision and inspection and political influence are the problems hindering effective data collection and distribution in educational institutions. The study also established that there is a significant relationship between challenges and the collection and distribution of educational data in schools. Also, British Council, (2014) observed that access to reliable and complete information on education in Nigeria has for a long time proved difficult. The development of a national database for education statistics has been slow and various data-generating agencies (including the Federal Ministry of Education, Universal Basic Education Commission, National Population Commission and National Bureau of Statistics) often used different sample designs, methods of data collection, analysis and reporting, different modes of disaggregation and definitions of indicators. The absence of rudimentary data at the school and local level in many areas is often viewed as a crisis, inhibiting the development of effective education planning, monitoring, programming and policy-making.

Corruption

Ogunode & Ajape, (2021) cited the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) that observed the high levels of corruption in public institutions in Nigeria for the past 5 years. Out of the five major public institutions surveyed, the police emerged as the most corrupt, with the power sector identified as the second most corrupt in the country today. Other public institutions identified as corrupt by 70 percent of Nigerians surveyed are the judiciary, education and health ministries. The survey reveals that the level of corruption has not changed in the last five years. Also, the report on Teaching and Learning: Achieving Quality for All shows that Nigeria is among the 37 countries that are losing money spent on education because children are not learning. UNESCO disclosed that the menace is already costing governments USD 129 billion a year. It stressed further that despite the money being spent, the rejuvenation of primary education is not soon because of poor-quality education that cannot ensure that children learn (NEEDS, 2014). Transparency International report revealed that 66 percent of the money Nigerian governments allocate to education is stolen by corrupt officials. According to the report, corruption is commonplace in education systems across the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). "This affects education access, quality, inclusion and learning outcomes with devastating consequences, not only for national economic growth but also for the life chances of children, their families and communities," the report said. The report highlighted "Resource misallocation, corrupt procurement, exchange of sex for grades, examination malpractices, fake qualifications, teacher absenteeism, and corrupt recruitment practices" as the various corruption risks and challenges facing education systems in all countries (Premium Times 2020). Godwin (2017); Ogunode, Josiah & Ajape (2021) and Ogunode (2020) posited that corruption has penetrated Nigerian educational institutions. Ogunode & Stephen (2021) noted that corrupt practice in Nigerian educational institutions is another major challenge preventing the implementation of school policies in Nigeria. The Nigerian government has formulated and designed many programmes to develop school education in Nigeria, but because of the huge corruption in the system, such monies and funds are diverted, mismanaged and misappropriated (Ogunode 2020; Ogunode & Johnson 2021). Lawal & Tobi, (2006) noted that corruption in education is a global problem which has been institutionalized in a way that it has become a measure which gives room for mismanagement of educational funds, decayed facilities, as well as favouritism in the appointment of staff. Corruption is unethical behaviour by a person entrusted with a position of authority which involves embezzlements, bribery, mis-management of financial resources, political favouritism, and poor infrastructural delivery among others. It is an immoral act practiced by people in positions of authority. Akinola & Ogunode (2022) concluded that reduction of funds for school administration, the inadequacy of professional



teachers, infrastructural facilities, ineffective school supervision, poor achievement of educational objectives, poor quality education, examination malpractices, ineffective educational planning and poor implementation of the educational programme are the effects of corruption on the educational administration in Nigeria.

Strike Actions

Strike actions in educational institutions across the country have affected the activities and programmes of parastatals, commissions, agencies and departments of education. Whenever any of the commissions or agencies under the ministry of education embarked on strike action, it led to a suspension of activities that slowed down works in the various agencies because all the ministries and agencies inter-depend on each other for effective educational deliveries. Also, strike actions in the schools disrupt their activities and implementation of the programme. The strike actions in the higher institutions have led to a suspension of all programmes and activities in the various higher institutions (Ogunode, Ugochukwu, & Jegede 2022). The suspension of teaching and research programme in these institutions has affected the programme and activities of supervisory commission like the National universities commission. Ogunode (2020) and Okoli, Ogbondah & Ewor (2016) observed that strike actions in Nigerian public universities are among the problems facing the administration of public universities in Nigeria. Nigerian public universities are known for continuous strike actions by different union groups in the public universities. The continuous strike actions by these different union groups are frustrating the administration of public universities in Nigeria. The reasons for the strike actions by different union groups include; underfunding of the public universities, inadequate infrastructural facilities, poor implementations of the agreement reached with union groups and poor working conditions. The implications of the continuous strike actions on the public universities include; disruption in the academic programme, poor quality of education, bad image for the universities, poor ranking internationally and poor patronage of public universities in Nigeria.

Way Forward

1. The government should increase the funding of federal and state ministries of education. This will enable commissions, agencies and departments under the ministries to have adequate funds to implement their programmes across the country.
2. The federal and state government should ensure effective capacity-building programmes for staffers in the ministries, commissions, agencies and department of education. This will help to improve their capacity at doing work.
3. The federal and state government should carry out ministries commissions, agencies and department needs assessment to ascertain the needed skills and numbers of staff to employ, given this, the government both federal and state should employ professionals needed and deploy them to the various commissions, agencies and departments across the country.
4. The government should provide adequate ICT facilities for all commissions, agencies and departments under the ministry of education
5. Alternative power (energy) supplies should be made available in all educational institution to bridge the gap in erratic power supplies for effective administration
6. The government should increase the welfare packages of staffers in the ministries, commissions, and agencies' departments of education. This will boost their morale to work.
7. The government at every level should ensure only professionals with qualifications in the field of education are appointed to head all educational institutions in Nigeria.

8. The government should ensure those in charge of data collection and management in the country are provided with adequate and necessary resources to carry out their functions.
9. The government should ensure regular auditing of commissions, agencies and ministries of education accounts to check financial corruption within the system. There is a need to overhaul our judicial system in such a way that there will be a quick dispensation of corruption cases and corrupt individuals should be made to face the law. There should be enactments and enforcements of anti-corruption laws.
10. The government should implement the agreement reached with different unions in educational institutions. This will help to stabilize the calendar which will aid the activities and programmes of some supervisory agencies in the country.

Conclusion

This paper x-rayed the various challenges educational institutions (Parastatals, Boards and Commissions) in Nigeria are faced with. The paper concluded that: inadequate funding, ineffective capacity-building programmes, shortage of personnel, shortage of ICT facilities, insecurity, poor motivation, weak executive officers, shortage of current data, corruption and strike actions are challenges militating against the effectiveness of educational institutions (Parastatals, Boards and Commissions) in Nigeria. To solve the challenges identified, the paper advance the following recommendations: adequate funding of the educational sector, effective capacity building programme, data collection, employment of more staff, provision of adequate ICT facilities, efficient security network, appointment of competent professional educationist as heads and deployment of effective monitoring and evaluation system to curb corruption in the ministries, commission, agencies and department of education.

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