

RESTRUCTURING EDUCATIONAL GOALS FOR NATIONAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

RAUFF, Saliu Adejare
Department of Economics,
Federal College of Education (Special),
Oyo.
+2348035665359

Abstract

A successful development plan includes not only creating economic policies, putting money into physical capital, or bridging the capital gap, but also creating educational curricula that are relevant to the economy and can fill the gap in economic need. Nigeria and the majority of poor nations typically fall short in this area in terms of policy relevance. Due to the emphasis on compulsory education, the rise in enrollment at all grade levels, and the proliferation of universities across the nation, national productivity and economic development remain constrained. This is because educational policies do not appear to be correlated with economic needs. A strong connection between universities and industry is necessary to create knowledge-based educational curricula in key economic sectors for research, development, and entrepreneurship. In order to do this, opportunities for institutional collaboration must be created. Additionally, needs in the private sector and labor market must be identified, as well as needs for capacity building in higher education's quality assurance, research, and leadership development. This is supported by a policy front established by this paper in education for the achievement of economic objectives.

Keywords: Education, Curriculum, Manpower, National Productivity, Restructuring.

Introduction

It is unnecessary to overstate the importance of education for economic growth and an overall rise in national productivity. The industrialized as well as the under-developed countries all over the world seemed to concur on the huge and persuasive argument to make education the bedrock of national growth. Education lays the platform for development, the cornerstone upon which economic and social well-being is constructed. It is described by Ebong (1996) as a potent tool for the advancement of society and of man. It is essential for improving social coherence and economic efficiency. It aids in lifting the poor out of poverty by boosting the worth and effectiveness of their labor. It boosts the labor force's general productivity and intellectual adaptability and assures that a nation can compete in global marketplaces that are currently

characterized by evolving technologies and manufacturing techniques. As a result, without significant investment in human capital, no nation can achieve sustainable economic progress. It encourages entrepreneurship and technology advancements while increasing productivity and creativity among people. Additionally, it is essential for ensuring social and economic progress and enhancing income distribution.

Education also helps to raise the general level of living in a society, according to Ayara (2007). Therefore, the development of a quality citizenship is likely to be linked to beneficial social transformation. Since greater earnings and a bigger national income are attracted by more education, it would seem logical that as more people get educated, the wealth of the population will increase. Additionally, national income should rise even more than the total of all the gains if there are positive externalities associated with schooling. The delegation of manpower development to the schools is the result of the growing belief in education as a catalyst for change in many emerging nations, including Nigeria. The public's awareness of the financial benefits of pursuing such education has surely aided the drive for higher education and even school education in many developing countries. This generally aligns with the notion that raising educational standards fosters economic development.

However, the paradox with this belief is that, despite the significant investment in education, there is no strong evidence of growth-promoting externalities of education in Nigeria. Instead, the expansion of education deepens social inequality and instills harmful social changes like cultism, rent seeking, sexual harassment, sorting, result racketeering, industrial disputes, brain drain, among other social vices, in the Nigerian school system and the society (Ayara, 2007). With the rising trend of unemployment brought on by a poor and inept labor population, including so-called graduates, the issue is getting worse. The focus on obtaining a university degree has resulted in the production of underprepared and half-baked graduates who cannot meet work requirements even when they are presented with opportunities. Few people who enter the public sector stay there and reduce employment. This is a factor in the Nigerian public sector's subpar performance.

According to Ajibola (2007), the issue is a curriculum-related one. The difficulties of incoherence in policy formulation and implementation are revealed by analysis of the Nigerian education sector. The definitions include the choice and arrangement of curriculum material, its application and evaluation, the creation, use, and dissemination of instructional resources, as well

as the curriculum's applicability to societal demands. As a result, all educational levels require the requirement for curricular transformation. Sometimes it seems like solutions are approaching, and other times it feels like the educational system is slipping back into a rut. The pursuit of national production may remain elusive until the educational curriculum, particularly at the university level, is modified to match workforce needs. The curriculum could be redefined or reorganized, if not in all subjects, then at least in those that directly affect the labor market. The framework of this document is established by the policy framework that guides this measure. The review of the Nigerian educational system includes evaluations of the policy, analysis, goals, content, methodology, and implementation of curricula. The report offers suggestions for additional tactics that will aid in the restructuring of the current curriculum to accommodate economic needs. It comes to the conclusion that in order to increase national production, the educational curriculum must be structured around meeting labor market demands.

Restructuring Education in Nigeria in the 21st Century

The unemployment rate in the nation is rising. Our educational system was originally designed to prepare students for white-collar jobs. Our educational program does not strike a balance between theoretical instruction and the development of independent living skills. Teachers and those who create policies must make sure that the general course materials and curricula, in particular at all educational levels, are designed to fulfill our demands as a developing country. All educational levels should therefore equip students with practical knowledge and skills for a productive existence and for contributing to society progress in light of the present social and economic reforms (Ogakwu, 2011).

It is crucial to note that the stakeholders have made substantial contributions to the reform process. Nigeria has indicated that it will start the process of restructuring its educational system. The Federal Ministry of Education's report from the International Conference of Education (FME, 2008) in Geneva is particularly noteworthy since a member of the writing team described the reform process taking place in the educational system there. It is important to emphasize the need for a clear starting point when examining the reform process outlined in this report and comparing it to that of other developed and developing countries. It is important to emphasize the need for a clear starting point when analyzing the reform process described in this report and comparing it to that of other developed and developing countries. This starting point must take into account the fact that education reform can take many different directions and must

take into account the abilities of our graduating students at each curricula level—elementary, secondary, and tertiary—in order to be effective. We must also consider how these expectations compared to what the workforce of the twenty-first century needs. Do our content or discipline, curriculum design, and development reflect any abilities that encourage entrepreneurial qualities? How globally savvy are our federal, state, and local policymakers when choosing and allocating funds for training and curricular support? In response to the questions raised, one can argue that many changes can be made to the educational system in Nigeria, or any other school system for that matter. According to research, it may manifest as the addition of new curriculum, new assessment techniques, a change in leadership, changes to teacher preparation programs, language policies, co-curricular emphasis, or even administrative issues (Koh, 2004 in Ogakwu, 2011:21).

The Nigerian Educational Sector

Between the 1950s and 1990s, Nigerian society placed such a high value on education that in some circles, it was considered a goal in and of itself. This is due to the perception that education may be used to comprehend, regulate, transform, and restructure the human environment in order to improve and maintain quality of life (CBN, 2000:98). The significant initial investment and high ongoing costs associated with education are frequently explained as investments in the future. It was widely acknowledged that education holds the key to the socioeconomic and political revolution that the Nigerian population desired. It is the best tool for achieving universal freedom and a better quality of life (Taiwo, 1996:120). This suggests liberation from ailment, from deprivation, and from repression. Nigeria hopes for an informed voter and populace to help her achieve her goals of independence and wealth (Ayara, 2007).

The government has made significant efforts to advance education in the nation both before and after independence out of concern (at the federal, state and local level). Public takeover of grant-in-aid schools in states and the launch of the national scheme for Universal Primary Education (UPE) were two such monumental steps in the Nigerian education policy thrust, but they were not sustained due to frequent changes in the socioeconomic and political conditions in the country. The Peoples Democratic Party-led current civilian government has made an effort to resurrect the 1976 education policy's universal education principle under a new name: universal basic education (UBE). However, it is important to highlight that while UBE led

to higher enrolment, the government's commitment could not support the policy initiative as a result of the reintroduction of tuition.

According to the Federal Ministry of Education (2003), the years 1978 to 1999 were a bad time for Nigeria's educational system because of a recurrence of instability, management budgetary shortcomings, and the general economic downturn of the 1980s. As a result, the expansion of primary school education after 1986 was thwarted, and this was followed by the negative effects of frequently unpaid teacher salaries, the deterioration of educational facilities and infrastructure at all levels, and the consequent regular strikes that continue to this day across all levels of the Nigerian educational system. Poor financial investment is the primary cause of the issues in Nigeria's education industry. This was supported by the Central Bank of Nigeria's work from 2000, which asserted that insufficient funding had plagued the educational system to the point where budgetary allotments had been extremely low in comparison to others. In addition, the federal government's budget for the years 1992 to 1996 allocated between 0.6 and 9.0 percent for recurrent expenses and 1.0 to 2.8 percent for capital expenditures to education. In the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategies (NEEDS) Programme, the Nigerian government acknowledged that one of the major problems facing the nation's educational institutions was a lack of money, making the issue of educational expenditures fairly clear.

Another issue that has worked against 21st-century educational programs is inadequate finance for education. Education should account for around 26% of the nation's annual budget, according to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). This is due to the fact that all advancement revolves around knowledge. In 2008, when 8 percent of the national budget was allocated to education, it reached its greatest level. To pay employees, furnish and maintain equipment or facilities, you need money. The brightest minds the nation has produced are consistently lost to more developed nations where education is properly sponsored (Ogakwu, 2011).

Beyond the issue of insufficient money, which has always existed and may continue to do so, there is another area of worry that, despite being frequently overlooked, is a key factor in determining the return on investment in education. The curriculum is as follows.

The curriculum, simply said, is a succinct written summary of one's past history, including education and many other endeavors. The development of curricula and programs,

novel methods of teaching and learning, frequently coupled with the introduction of new educational technologies, and quality assurance are among the innovations mentioned under this category. As a result, innovations fall under the relevance category. As previously mentioned, curriculum innovations now frequently take the form of new programs. Every national setting has a different method for creating the curriculum. It is a complex result of the viewpoints and recommendations made by significant stakeholders for the demands and needs of society. There are no "successful" global role models to imitate. Many curriculum innovations include a focus on a certain subject and the usage of the core knowledge curriculum, wherein basic factual information is taught before any abstract concepts, focusing students' attention on the mastery of the fundamentals (Ajibola, 2008).

Soon after Nigeria's independence from colonial authority in 1960, the issues with curricula became apparent. In particular, the curriculum being taught in the schools was being reexamined by educators and educational planners by the middle of the 1960s. The issue is whether Nigeria's educational system has been able to stimulate the nation's socioeconomic needs left behind by the colonial overlords. The fundamental problem with the educational system, particularly with regard to the curriculum framework, has been the non-directional policy issue. We have already experienced the emergence of more than three distinct systems as a result of constant policy changes. Abandoning policy in the middle of it has become customary. It is impossible to overstate the impact of this policy somersault.

With societal changes, there have been a lot of innovations in the Nigerian educational philosophy and policies to meet changing needs. The provision for a core curriculum (or core subjects) and optional curriculum (or elective subjects) is also a significant change. The aims of these changes are to guarantee an all-round education for learners, and to bring some degree of diversity into curriculum development. In this, the tertiary institutions seem to share.

The Nigerian Educational Sector and Manpower Need: Theoretical Perspective

The Science Teachers' Association of Nigeria (STAN) has worked hard to translate national and educational objectives into curricula and teaching objectives by creating curricula that will assist people in developing cognition, process skills, and scientific attitudes that will allow them to think critically, manage and use resources, effectively adapt to their environment, assume responsibility, and fulfill domestic. In order to find flaws and come up with novel solutions, STAN has continued to critique the scientific education curriculum. To this end,

STAN has focused its efforts on the innovation and renovation of science curricula, especially at the primary and secondary education levels (Ajibola, 2008). Systematic investment in human capital was not seen as particularly vital in any nation before the nineteenth century. The amount spent on education, on-the-job training, and other such investments was quite low. With the application of science to the creation of new objectives and more effective manufacturing techniques, initially in Great Britain and then progressively in other nations, this started to change drastically during this century.

Education, skill development, and knowledge accumulation have emerged as key factors of an individual's and a country's production over the 20th century. In fact, the 20th century can be referred to as "the Human Capital" because the majority of a nation's population's health, education, and skill development and utilization success is what determines that nation's standard of living. In the Middle East, basic education access has increased dramatically over the past few decades. Many nations are currently poised to dramatically raise the quality of education provided at all levels and expand access to secondary and higher education. As more students complete their basic education, there is a corresponding rise in demand for higher education. Whether or not women are employed outside the home, investing in the education of girls and women is perhaps the most worthwhile endeavor a developing nation can undertake. It benefits families in a variety of ways, including better family nutrition and health, more space between births, decreased newborn and child mortality, and higher educational achievement for kids. Middle Eastern nations are becoming more and more integrated into global marketplaces for manufactured goods. The superior human capital they bring to the competition will determine their capacity to compete in these markets and in the globalizing service markets. New curricula, enhanced teacher preparation programs, and educational techniques that foster higher order cognitive skills will be required to ensure that all citizens are educated and numerate, that many have a wide range of problem solving skills beyond the basic level, and that some have world-class professional skills.

Without significant investments in human capital, no nation has ever experienced continuous economic growth. Basic education, research, training, learning-by-doing, and aptitude development have all been linked to significant returns in previous studies. It concerns how education is distributed. In most nations, having unequal educational opportunities leads to lower per capita income. Additionally, adjusting for the distribution of human capital and using

functional form specifications that are consistent with the asset allocation model affect how average education affects per capita income, while failing to do so results in negligible or even adverse effects of average education. If people cannot use their education in competitive and open marketplaces, investing in human capital will have minimal effect on growth. The opportunities for leveraging education and skills are greater as these markets grow and become more competitive.

Therefore, it is evident that a country's educational system plays a significant role in determining the composition and development of its output and exports. It also plays a crucial role in a system's ability to efficiently borrow foreign technology. For instance, health and nutrition, primary and secondary education, and vocational education all increase the productivity of workers, both in rural and urban areas; tertiary education supports the development of basic science, the appropriate selection of technology imports, as well as the domestic adaptation and development of technologies; secondary and tertiary education also represent critical elements in the development of the workforce. These links are further clarified by empirical evidence at both the micro and macro levels. Numerous studies show that, on a micro level, years of further education lead to gains in incomes, with the rate of return fluctuating with high level of education. The benefits of primary education typically outweigh those of secondary and university education.

Evidence from farmers who use modern technologies indicates that education has a favorable impact on productivity, whereas traditional farmers, as could be predicted, see less of a benefit. Farmers in Thailand who had four or more years of education were three times more likely to use fertilizer and other modern inputs than farmers who had fewer years of education (Birdsall, 1993: 75-79). Similar results were seen in Nepal, where having completed at least seven years of education enhanced productivity in both rice and wheat by 13% and over 25%, respectively (Jamison & Moock, 1994).

Technology capability and technical change in industry are both significantly influenced by education. For instance, statistical examination of Sri Lanka's engineering and apparel industries revealed a favorable relationship between worker and entrepreneur skill levels and the firm's pace of technical progress (Deraniyagala, 1995). Of course, education cannot completely change the economy. The other crucial factors affecting economic performance are the volume and quality of both local and foreign investment, as well as the general political climate.

However, these characteristics are also influenced by the state of human development. The education of managers and policymakers will undoubtedly have an impact on the effectiveness of investment decisions. In addition, a system's ability to attract both domestic and international investment is likely to increase when its human capital supply is abundant.

Even "unskilled" employees in a contemporary factory are said to typically require the literacy, numeracy, and discipline learned in primary and lower secondary school (Wood, 1994). There are a significant number of college and university graduates in Nigeria and the majority of emerging countries, many of whom have advanced degrees. Sadly, the intellectual abilities that are taught at local colleges and universities do not correspond well to the practical talents that the business sector requires. A growing number of underemployed, disgruntled adolescents are a result of the mismatch between skills taught and skills required by the private sector.

The transition economies where the majority of the Nigerian labor force is located show the greatest delays in reorganizing education institutions to keep up with economic structures. Growth can be hampered by undermining this, but timely change can benefit the economy by increasing both public and private sector productivity. Ajibola (2007) had earlier suggested that there is an urgent need for curriculum renovation that is child-centered, practical, and rapid in reviving and revitalizing hope and desire for acquisition of broad-based information that is worthy in a learner. The curriculum should incorporate techniques that will support learners' capacity for self-discovery and creative problem-solving. The two characteristics that curriculum development in Nigeria now requires are quality and relevance.

The curriculum should incorporate techniques that will support learners' capacity for self-discovery and creative problem-solving. The two characteristics that curriculum development in Nigeria presently need are quality and relevance. The development of flexible curriculum models and educational policies that place an emphasis on interdisciplinary courses, open-ended systems, intergenerational and interprofessional relationships, multiculturalism, and sustainability are also necessary changes and innovations for the school system in our globalized environment. The primary goals of Nigerian education should be the need for a paradigm shift away from theoretical learning and paper certification toward the actual application of information needed for future employment and the development of skills for self-employment. The interdisciplinary approach to curriculum should be used by curriculum designers, particularly at the primary and junior secondary school levels. By relying on the comprehension

and use of new technologies, emphasis should be placed on the changing requirements of society. Finally, the teachers or instructors now hired by the government must undergo further training in order to teach the new body of knowledge at all levels of education. Additionally, in fields where there are currently no qualified Nigerians available, fresh experts must be trained domestically or overseas, and some must be hired from abroad. The report proposes a policy thrust below, focusing in particular on manpower, power need, and economic development.

Education for the attainment Economic Objective

If there is no correlation between the school curriculum, particularly at the tertiary level, and labor need, education, as the key to expanding human capital and economic efficiency, may not fulfill its goal. If a significant portion of school graduates lack the necessary skills to fill open positions, it will be challenging for a nation to increase production through education. The main purpose of education is to produce the workforce; this workforce must be capable of addressing the pressing problems that our nation is currently facing. As a result, courses and content in education must be current. Every academic discipline can use this. The requirement to add a one-year ATTACHMENT SCHEME to each university degree-awarding program is the basis of a policy framework created to accomplish this.

Most of our young people with college degrees are unemployed. Due to poor technical proficiency on the job, some people who were once employed are now underemployed. Many people do not have access to vertical or horizontal career mobility, live in economically impoverished urban and rural locations, and find that few degrees are useful in their chosen fields of employment. The necessity of acquiring practical skills in academic subjects before graduating to enter the workforce informs the policy. The four cardinal aims further reinforce the policy framework.

1. It will help the young graduate acquire specific training and to develop a healthy attitude towards honest labour, especially within the discipline of choice.
2. To understand, appreciate and promote organizational objective. The process is strategic to the extent that organizational goals are well defined goals and targets whose attainments are time-bound. It is dynamic, responsive and result oriented; continually evolving to address emerging challenges as well as proactive. It is further an effective monitoring system to that necessary improvements in the process. In it all, the objective of capacity building is achieved in the mind of the young school graduate to be.

3. From, the above objective, a sense of self reliance, competence and the ability to become self employed is developed. Instead of hang out for employment opportunities were there are none, within this skill developed, an individual can get on something and become self employed.

4. Finally, to help create an appropriate balance and critical mass of human resource base and providing an enabling environment for all individuals to be fully engaged and contribute, to national development efforts. It involves providing opportunities for all citizens to develop to their fullest potentials through education, training and motivation as well as creating the enabling environment for everyone to participate fully in rational development.

Recommendations

The following suggestions were presented in order to rebuild Nigeria's educational system for the 21st century so as to suit Nigeria's demands as a knowledge-based economy:

- Create and fund standardized, aligned professional development programs that will educate and keep students in school while strategically addressing the needs of teaching and learning in a knowledge-based economy.
- Establish technological infrastructure and resources for research centers of excellence that promote multidisciplinary study of the best practices.
- Encourage access to information management systems, including the hardware and software necessary to satisfy the generation of students' learning needs.
- Support regional research and development facilities with money and staff so they can integrate entrepreneurial education into all levels of the curriculum.
- The UNICEF's suggestion that 26% of the annual budget go toward education should be scrupulously followed.
- Resources are needed to buy the facilities that are required to promote mastery and competency in entrepreneurial abilities.
- The government and private citizens should share responsibilities for funding education.
- The National Universities Commission's (NUC) curriculum should incorporate entrepreneurship education to prevent universities from admitting more students than they can accommodate. To ensure a standard, the enrollment of pupils should outpace the available facilities.

Conclusion

The university must become a key tool for Africa's development in the twenty-first century, according to a lecture by the former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. Universities can support the growth of African expertise, improve the analysis of African issues, support national institutions, serve as a role model for the application of good governance, conflict resolution, and respect for human rights, and give African academics the opportunity to actively participate in the global community of scholars. This is accurate, and we can do it by ensuring that our educational system fosters the development of graduates who are well-educated, skilled, and resourceful.

Economic development cannot happen without high-quality education. Without a strong education, no economic development is conceivable. A well-rounded educational system fosters not only productivity but also economic growth and increases per-capita income. At the micro level of a single household, its influence is perceptible. Nigeria and other developing countries heavily rely on education to bring solutions to their problems, particularly their economic challenges, but in order to accomplish this goal, a robust educational framework with functional curriculum must be built.

High-quality education is a necessity for economic prosperity. Economic development is impossible without a robust education. A comprehensive educational system promotes economic growth, productivity, and per-capita income. Its impact can be felt at the micro level in a single family. Nigeria and other emerging nations rely largely on education to find solutions to their issues, especially their economic difficulties, but in order to achieve this goal, a strong educational framework with useful curricula must be developed.

The number of students enrolled in our educational institutions has significantly increased in the twenty-first century, but there hasn't been a comparable increase in facilities to accommodate the population growth. The majority of educational institutions admit many more students than they can accommodate. Pluto is exerting pressure on the available material and human resources. In light of this, the author believes that the educational system in Nigeria needs to be reorganized in order to meet the challenges of the new millennium.

References

- Ajibola, G.M. (2008). Manpower development strategies and education planning in the 1980s. In Folayo, O. Manpower strategies for the 1980s in economic community of West Africa States (ECOWAS). Development Planning and Strategies in ECOWAS. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Nigeria.
- Antai, A.S. & Bassey, A. (2009). Redefining educational objective for national productivity and economic development in Nigeria. A paper presented at the 2009 conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Knowledge (NAFAK) held at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka-Anambra State from 9th-13th March.
- Asogwa, D.U. (2009). Re-designing the programme of Nigeria Universities to foster entrepreneur and entrepreneurial process: A paper delivered at the faculty of education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka 13th – 16th May, 2009.
- Ayara, N. N. (2007). A dynamic analysis of education and economic growth in Nigeria. Journal of developing areas. The Fall.
- Birdsall, D. (1993). Educational development: priorities for the nineties *Finance and development*, 27 (1), March.
- Central Bank of Nigeria (2000). Annual report and statement of account, Abuja, CBN.
- Deraniyagala, E.F. (1995). Labour markets in an era of adjustment: The-run consequences of short-run stabilization policy, Issues Papers Vol. 1 EDI development studies, World Bank.
- Ebong, F. (1996). Higher-level manpower development: An assessment of the growth and academic performance of Nigerian Universities. Ph.D Thesis, University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos.
- Federal Ministry of Education (2003). Education sector status report, steering committee, May.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1987). Comments on the report of the study group on higher education curricula and development in Nigeria. Appendices to comments and recommendations, Vol 11.
- Jamison, F.Q. & Moock, D. (1994). Financing the development of in Nigeria: Locating supplemental Sources. *Education and development*, Vol. 2, No 2, July.
- Nwangwu, I.O. (2007). Higher education for self-reliance: Imperative for the Nigerian economy: in J.B. Babalola, G.O., Akpa-Ayeni and S.O. Adedeji (Eds) Access, equity and quality higher education. *NAEP Publication*: 1 – 8.

- Ogakwu, V.N. (2011). Refocusing education In Nigeria in the 21st century in P. Egbule, J.E. Tabotndip and D.A. Aboho (2011). Refocusing Education in Nigeria in the 21st century, Lagos: West and Solomon Publishing Coy Ltd. . 20-26.
- Taiwo, F.H. (1996). The strategy of human resource development in modernizing economies, Policy conference on economic growth and investment in education (Paris OECD, 1961) 9-33.
- Wood, B.A. (1994) Educational and investment in human capital. *Journal of Political Economy*, 70, (5): 106 – 123.