

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA

Papers in Honour of Professor John Iheukwumere Nwankwo

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CHAPTER 28



TASK AREAS IN EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR OYO STATE, NIGERIA: A SYNTHETIC ANALYSIS

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Introduction

In recent years, Oyo state educational sector has witnessed massive neglect by successive regimes. Although, it is one of the educationally advantaged state in Nigeria, her present position in terms of overall educational development falls below expectation in view of her historical antecedent. This neglect is not however restricted to the state alone, as it has become a national stigma. The level and condition of infrastructure in the State owned schools are deplorable. Many public Schools do not have adequately qualified teaching staff, while few available ones are mainly found in urban schools to the detriment of schools in rural areas. Recent public schools survey showed instances where some rural schools do not have more the three teachers. There were some public primary schools without buildings and pupils have to learn under trees. Moreover, many teachers have long retired from the system but government have hitherto failed to replace them on the excuse of limited finance. In some instances where teachers are available, they rarely undergo any development either by on-the-job training or other forms of training in the past five years. Many schools lack furniture for staff and students. In many of these public schools, there are neither roofs nor windows, thus both students and staff are exposed to snakes and other dangerous reptiles. All of these have grave consequence for the future of the education system in the state. Thus, a deliberate effort toward holistic educational development strategy is imperative if the state is to regain its due position as a pacesetter state.

This paper is therefore is an attempt to provide a synthetic analysis of specific areas of educational planning needs that could help to improve the quality and quantity of educational service delivery in the state.

Concept of Educational Planning

Educational Planning generally implies deliberate systematic analysis to the process of educational development, with the aim of making education more effective and efficient in responding to the needs of students and the society. Thus the focus of an effective educational

plan is to meet personal and societal goals as well as objectives. It is a process of preparing a set of decisions on education in such a way that the goals and objectives of education will be achieved in the future, using the available resources judiciously (Fabunmi, 2014). The ultimate aims of educational planning according to Nwankwo (1981) include the following:

Preparation of alternative decisions

This has to do with decisions that are primarily aimed at helping policy makers and executors (those in authorities) to make rational choices and take steps that could be effective for education:

Goals and objectives

This refers to the desire to achieve expected result or output from the educational process which ultimately is the most fundamental of the subject matter. It is the ultimate end of the educational planner to ensure the goals and objectives of the plan are realised

Programmes and services

The aim the educational planner include how the various programmes and activities are organised in order to improve educational services delivery

Human Resources

The concern here is centred on how effective planning will help to improve the quality of human effort (physical and mental) in their performance, interactions, specialization, behaviour, competence, growth and satisfaction towards an increase in the quantity and quality of educational service delivery. In the educational system, the teacher is the main factor responsible for the implementation of the school programmes. Thus, adequate planning towards teacher quality is a major objective of educational planning.

Physical Facilities

Physical resources are the hardware that aids the effective delivery of the school programmes and activities. Examples are block classrooms, laboratories, libraries, machineries and other didactic facilities. The availability and usage of these physical resources is of great importance to the effective functioning of the educational institutions. It is the aim of planning to ensure adequate supply, distribution and usage or usefulness of these resources for the overall improvement of the educational system.

Finance

Achieving successful financial plan is a major goal of educational planning. An efficient financial plan helps to reduce wastage especially in periods of financial austerity and competing social demands (Isuku, 2011; and Isuku, forthcoming). However, financial plan generally refer to how financial income and expenditure in the educational system can be estimated and made available for the successful implementation of the educational programmes. Adequate and efficient financial plan to a large extent helps to shape the nature of the physical and human components of the school system.

Government structure

This has to do with how to manage and control the supply of educational programmes and resources in line with available government structure and political conditions. It is expedient that educational plans are done within the resources available to the political authority. If resources are not planned within government confines, it will be difficult for government to subscribe to such educational programme.

The Social Context

This involves developing educational plans with an aim to achieve overall societal goals. Educational plans must be done in such a way that the output of the system responds to the needs of the society.

The Education Development Plan (EDP) therefore sets out to provide a strategic vision for effective education service delivery. The necessity of the plan is based on the need to enable the country achieve educational wellbeing in the nearest future. Usually, the EDP should be developed from the detailed analysis of available data from the inputs of stakeholders such as parents, teachers, ministry staff, students and the general public. However, due to the difficulty of accessing these data, this paper limited its data source to student's educational data on access and students' performance in Oyo state as it is a major determinant of the level of educational success. The paper nevertheless provides relevant areas of focus that could lead to overall educational development for the state if effectively implemented.

The main emphasis of this plan include; raising standard in all the publicly owned educational institutions, and improving academic performance of students at all levels. Other cardinal areas of emphasis include; **financial efficiency** of the education system in the state, **improving access** to all levels of education, **training and staff development** as well as motivation, supervision and inspection of school programme/projects as well as effective school **management**. The essence of the EDP is to ensure that state fits into the overall objectives and goals of sustainable social-economic development in the short and long term.

General Assessment of the Current Education Sector in Oyo State

The knowledge of the present status of the education system enables us to determine where we should be. Personal observation of the level of educational progress in the state in recent time leads to the conclusion presented in this paper.

Issues

- i. Present Students Population
- ii. Standard and Academic performance (student quality)
- iii. Funding and Financing Efficiency
- iv. Access to all levels of Education in the state
- v. Management of the sector
- vi. Staff Training/Development
- vii. Quantity and quality of school physical facilities
- viii. Student Teacher Ratio and average-class-size
- ix. Quantity and quality of teachers

Current Situation

Unsatisfactory
 *Very Poor
 Very poor
 unsatisfactory
 Inefficient
 Extremely poor
 extremely poor
 **lopsided
 very poor

* The State had one of the poorest results in WAEC for 2011, 2012 and 2014 in the country

** Some schools have very high STR and ACS while some are extremely very low particularly in rural areas.

Expected Mission Statement of EDP for the State

In an attempt to access quality and functional education for the state at all levels, there is the need to focus development plans on certain achievable mission statement which this paper

broadly expressed in line with the national and global realities. The overall mission statement of an EDP in the state should be directed towards the following:

- i. Relentlessly improve standard of learning for students to be highly successful in knowledge and skill acquisition.
- ii. Ensure that students acquire the needed values, behaviour and attitude to become useful to themselves and the society
- iii. Ensure students adequately fits into the mainstream of the dynamic global system and the market
- iv. Ensure effective and efficient financial system for the education system
- v. Raise staff welfare through adequate training and motivation
- vi. Ensure effective school management and control
- vii. Improve teaching and learning environment through the provision of quality and quantity of infrastructure
- viii. Effective partnership, for instance, involving missions by way of returning mission schools to missionary owners. This will help tap into additional financial resources which could be ploughed back to improve the system.
- ix. Ensure the production of employable and self employed graduates through effective technical training. Expand opportunity for tertiary education in response to the need of the labour market and promote self employment.

Cardinal Areas of EDP for the State

The major areas of EDP for Oyo State should include: Access, Quality, Financing and Management. It is assumed that the several areas of needs or current problems faced by the system can be addressed by proper and detailed attention to these cardinal areas.

The four cardinal areas are represented diagrammatically below:



1. **Access** to quality education at all levels to all eligible Oyo State children
Access to education is universally noted as one of most important indicators of educational development. In Oyo State today, thousands of eligible school-age children are out of school. Many are either engaged in street begging, hawking or other forms of menial work. The table below shows the recent distribution of population of school-age children in Oyo state among her peers in South-West geographical zone.

Table 1: Distribution of Population (Age 6 years and above) by schooling status in South-West states

| State | Never attended school | Attended in the past but not now | Attending primary schools | Attending JSS | Attending SSS | Attending tertiary |
|-------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Oyo | 1,059,256 | 1,414,547 | 798,392 | 363,244 | 484,462 | 553,277 |
| Ondo | 504,484 | 895,918 | 509,843 | 264,054 | 352,088 | 359,370 |
| Ogun | 655,276 | 1,121,337 | 541,485 | 214,933 | 253,953 | 320,214 |
| Osun | 472,427 | 845,132 | 491,883 | 275,971 | 366,678 | 450,524 |
| Ekiti | 247,982 | 567,026 | 333,840 | 218,628 | 301,173 | 396,719 |
| Lagos | 796,848 | 3,755,133 | 1,079,390 | 486,263 | 708,987 | 913,609 |

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) Social Statistics in Nigeria 2009

Table 1 clearly shows the wide gap in illiteracy between Oyo State and other South-Western States in Nigeria. Oyo state is the oldest apart from Lagos among the states in the region and also served as the administrative headquarters of the region before and after independence. Despite this position, it is clear from table 1, that the state stands far behind other states in the region. The state has the highest number of children without any form of education during the period which stood at 1,059,256, while those who attended school in the past but stopped attending stood at 1,414,547. This reflects the poor level of educational development in the state.

Access to quality schooling can be improved not necessarily by increasing the number of schools but by providing the enabling framework to increase access (see Isuku, 2007), Some of the methods that could be applied among others include:

- i. Exploring Economics of School Size
This emphasizes optimal size decision that will result in appropriate strategy for increasing enrolment at all levels in the face of limited resources. The strategy helps to reduce unit cost per student. This will help in removing inefficiency of public Schools.
- ii. Consolidation or merger of Proliferated Inefficient public schools
Merging inefficient schools will help to reduce unnecessary financial burden and create savings for the school system. These savings can then be ploughed back to improve quantity and quality of school services in the state. Mega schools can be provided to replace small schools that lack the necessary resources (physical and human) for achieving success. By this government will be able to save money that could be used to provide relevant books and materials, training and staff development as well as improve the overall condition of the individual schools.
- iii. Encourage private providers to provide quality and affordable education to Oyo State
Government could encourage private providers who are willing to invest in the provision of quality education in the state. This can be achieved through granting of moratorium to genuine investors in the industry. This will go a long way to reduce the unwarranted

financial burden of education on the government arising from the quantification of inefficient schools spread across all nooks and crannies of the state. One of the ways is to return schools to their original owners such as the missionaries and religious bodies.

- iv Provision of scholarship for brilliant students to encourage competition in public schools. This could serve as an incentive to boost enrolment from poor families who are most times reluctant to send their children to schools due to chronic lack.
- v Formulate enabling law to keep school-age children out of the street during school hours.

The State Legislative Assembly should enact relevant laws that will ensure parents make their wards available in schools particularly at the basic level of education. This will help to eliminate incidence of all forms of child abuse and increase access to education at that level.

2. Financing the Sector

The problem of financing education in the face of other compelling demands is challenging. Government should in an attempt to raise sizeable funds for the education sector diversify its sources of revenue generation by linking up with private organisations to support government in funding education. Without adequate financing of the sector, it will be absolutely difficult to improve the quality of schools in the State. It should be noted that the present physical conditions of the state schools is intolerable mainly due to inadequate financial support. There are roofless classrooms, inadequate furniture for students and staff and other numerous problems in almost every public school in the State. Personal observation showed that most public primary and secondary schools in the state do not have protective doors and windows. Thus school children learn under very harsh and adverse conditions which have the capacity to negatively affect the social and psychological conditions of the students. Adequate financial input would certainly help to address these anomalies. This could be achieved through:

- a. raising government budget to a reasonable level for the education sector
- b. alumni support for the development of the individual schools
- c. requests from philanthropists and other donors support
- d. private organisations support
- e. charging reasonable and affordable fees to improve school quality

The provision of teaching and learning facilities cannot be guaranteed in the absence of adequate finance. Furniture, blocks of classrooms, teachers/lecturers' offices, laboratories, libraries, toiletries and other learning stimulants cannot be met without substantial financial input.

3 Improving Quality of Schools.

Quality generally means "fitness to purpose" or a state where "product" (i.e. graduates) conforms to standard, specification or requirement. Improving school quality is a major desire of all governments. In recent years, Oyo State performed very poorly in public examinations as WAEC and NECO. Recent statistics presented the state as occupying the third to the last (34th) position among the 36 States in the country in 2012. This describes the poor quality output of the state schools at the secondary levels. Table 2 shows the performance of Oyo State and other South- Western States secondary school graduates who sat for the most recent West African Senior School Certificate Examinations in May/June, 2014.

Table 2: Summary Result of Students in WASSCE among South-Western States in 2014

| State | Total sat | Total pass with Eng and Maths | % | National position |
|-------|-----------|-------------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| Edo | 64,456 | 37,242 | 67.82 | 3 rd * |
| Lagos | 148,584 | 67,219 | 45.86 | 7 th |
| Ekiti | 22,278 | 7,530 | 38.80 | 11 th |
| Ondo | 28,797 | 12,672 | 32.40 | 13 th |
| Ogun | 70,474 | 18,974 | 28.92 | 18 th |
| Osun | 47,672 | 9,314 | 19.54 | 22 th |
| Oyo | 77,672 | 14,674 | 19.00 | 24 th |

Source: <http://www.punching.com/education/south-east-states-top-performance-chart-for-2014-wassce> retrieved September, 2014

**Edo State however is not part of the South-West Region, but enjoyed the same historical and political antecedent with the South-West States*

This unpleasant scenario is common in all aspects of the educational system due to long time neglect. In an attempt to improve quality of education in the State emphasis need be directed at the following areas:

- raise government spending for public schools
- improving teacher's quality through adequate training and development
- provision of adequate pedagogical resources for effective teaching
- providing conducive learning environment that meets students' needs
- refurbishing dilapidated school buildings and classrooms
- providing adequate furniture for students and staff
- improve class size for effective teaching and learning
- Supply of equipment for science and laboratories
- School feeding programme for pupils to enrich their health and learning capabilities

4 School Management

School management involves coordinating the efforts of staff to accomplish goals and objectives of the educational system using the available resources effectively and efficiently. The functions of management are: planning, organising, staffing, directing, coordinating and controlling. It involves the deployment and manipulation of the required human, financial, material, technological and other resources to achieve the goals and objectives of the sector in the state. Among some of the expected specific school management activities are:

- monitoring standards of learning and teaching in the state schools
- ensuring attendance and punctuality of staff and students in order to make the schools functions effectively
- taking stock of the physical, human, material and other facilities of public schools and ensuring their supply.

- d. setting new targets for high performance of the school system in the state.
- e. preparing financial statements and reporting such to the appropriate authority
- f. ensuring judicious use of available resources to meet stakeholders' expectations of the school system in the state.

5 Other issues of educational concern

Other areas that are of very high importance in the course of providing sustainable and satisfactory education to the state covers:

- a. Provision and use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) facilities in government schools (secondary and tertiary) to enhance teaching and learning. Examples are interactive boards, projectors and computers. In today technology-driven world, the place of ICT in the provision of quality education cannot be over emphasised. Thus, investing in ICT to improve education service delivery should be strongly pursued by the government.
- b. Making technical institutions and polytechnics in the state more practically oriented through real skill acquisition. This could be achieved by linking graduates of these institutions to firms and individuals where they can acquire the relevant skills that will make them practice on their own.
- c. providing financial support to encourage graduates with technical/vocational skills to start their own business
- d. setting up a functional Educational Management Information System (EMIS) for the State. This is a technologically based computer managed data system that aids efficient information management for quality decision about the education enterprise
- e. regulating the operation of private schools in the state. This will ensure private schools operate in line within the Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard that guarantee quality educational service delivery
- f. introduction of adult literacy programme to promote life-long learning among the growing population.

Conclusion

Education is certainly one of the most important aspects of human capital development. Investment in education at all levels has the capacity to improve individual well-being and increase the income of the state. A well educated society will guarantee quality workforce and creative minds that will help to increase the output of that society and hence bring about an overall development. Oyo State cannot afford to play from behind among its peers in the education performance scale. There is need for adequate and concerted effort towards a formidable educational plan that will launch the state into becoming a strong force in over all educational development in this period of global competitiveness. A deliberate effort and careful consideration of the aforementioned areas of focus could go a long way to improve the current and unsatisfactory condition of state public schools.

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