

**RIVERS STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,
PORT HARCOURT**



**"POLICY SOMERSAULTS
IN EDUCATION:
A NATIONAL DILEMMA"**

AN INAUGURAL LECTURE

By

PROFESSOR NNAMDI SUNNY OKOROMA

B.Sc., M.Sc., (Buffalo, USA), PhD (Uniport, Nigeria)

Professor of Educational Management & Planning



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—● *Dedication* ●—

The following people committedly facilitated this event. So, I dedicate this piece to the cherished memory of:

PAASAH LEVINDA OKOROMA

(My father)

CHIEF WILSON OBULO OKOROMA

(My Uncle)

MR. CLEMENT IKWUADI MASI

(My Inlaw)

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The Vice Chancellor
Deputy Vice Chancellor
Registrar and other Principal Officers of the University
Members of Governing Council here present
Distinguished Professors and Members of Senate
Deans, Directors and Heads of Departments
Academic Colleagues and Staff
Revered Traditional Rulers and Chiefs
Members of the Bar and Bench
Friends and Family Members
Members of the Press
Great RSUST Students
Ladies and Gentlemen

1.0 PREAMBLE

To declare that I thank God will be an understatement. It is not possible for me to expressly state my volume of appreciation of the Almighty God. I fought a persistent battle against agents of darkness throughout my academic career up until I was announced a Professor on July 10, 2015. While the battle lasted, God stood firmly for me and I was not consumed. To that invisible God who knows the end from the beginning and who has brought me from obscurity and made me a Professor, I ascribe honour, glory and adoration for ever and ever, Amen.

The arrival of Prof. Blessing Chimezie Didia to RSUST as an Acting Vice Chancellor in 2015 and later a substantive and performing Vice Chancellor opened a new vista for me. Thank you, Sir, for the

opportunities including the privilege to present this inaugural lecture.

Vice Chancellor Sir, my academic voyage to this day actually started in 1971 when I technically gained admission to study at the Sancta Maria High School, Omoku. I say technically because there were only two admission chances left in that school to fill class one carrying capacity. We were three candidates that vied for two opportunities. In order to uphold fairness and equity a balloting exercise was arranged by the Principal. On two pieces of paper were written "I will stay" and on one was inscribed "I will go". My friend, Christian Ojas Ellah and my humble self picked the two wraps with the inscription "I will stay". So, we were admitted into Sancta Maria High School, Omoku. Perhaps, I would not be a Professor today if I had picked "I will go." The financial implications of training me and my brother, Engr. G. C. Okoroma, which had been adequately analyzed and found to be excruciating for my family would have thrown me out of the education arena if I had missed that admission opportunity. Vice Chancellor Sir, permit me to mention an important aspect of my academic trip so as to encourage younger people to maximize any good opportunity that comes their way. In 1978 I obtained a Federal Government Scholarship to study in the United States of America for a two year diploma programme in Materials Science Technology. On arrival in America over 300 of us involved in the programme started to navigate our ways. Many chose the option of not returning to Nigeria and have, indeed, remained in the U.S. up till this day (38 years after). But I rather not bother about what has happened to them and what they chose to do. It will interest this audience to know that I took an advantage of that trip to America to obtain a diploma in Materials Science Technology, a B.Sc. in Industrial Management and an M.Sc. in Student Personnel Administration (Education) all within four years. Frankly speaking, I did not find it

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comfortable to be in America (a very rare opportunity at the time) and a country with numerous educational opportunities only to return to Nigeria with a diploma certificate. So, I took an advantage of America's flexible educational system and attended three tertiary institutions at the same session (both summer and winter) and for four years (January – December) without a break. The outcome of this effort is the M. Sc. Degree which facilitated my admission for a doctoral programme in Educational Management and Planning of the University of Port Harcourt in 1985 and for which I received a Ph. D. degree in 1989.

The question I am here to answer is 'What contributions have I made to become a Professor of Educational Management and Planning? Please, now, come along with me.

1.1 Introduction

In 1973 I was in Class III (equivalence of SSS I) and was required to choose my subjects which would take me to a desired discipline. Just like many of my classmates I aimed at the most cherished disciplines, Medicine and Law. I worked hard to be a Science student and actually was up to a point. Then I was thrown off balance by Physics, Mathematics and Further Mathematics. They became increasingly very challenging; I scaled through them, nevertheless. On a careful observation of my results from class one I discovered that I excelled more in the arts and immediately refocused my academic desire and theoretically embraced law. In fact, I even had an opportunity to act as a judge in the play “The Incorruptible Judge” by Olu Olagoke. I acted my part so well that two girls from Omoku who watched the performance sent emissaries to me for co-operation. That is now history.

Vice Chancellor Sir, just like many people my dream choices of medicine and law did not go beyond the realities of life. A Federal Government Scholarship was available to me in a discipline that was completely out of my focus. Materials Science Technology was an unknown entity to me but I accepted to travel to the United States of America to study it. I want to intimate this great audience on how I came to embrace Educational Management and Planning despite my earlier romances with Medicine and Law. During my Master of Science degree programme in Students Personnel Administration (Education) I took some courses that exposed me to a number of Management theories. Some leadership theories were also explored in that programme. Among the theories are Scientific and Classical Management theories, Human Relations Theories, Social Science Theories, Systems Theory, Traits, Behavioural and Situational Theories of leadership. These theories fascinated me but were not treated in substantial details. My lecturers always said that the details of these theories and concepts would be better appreciated at the doctoral level. It appeared that all the lecturers always reserved some knowledge for the higher level regardless of their degrees of knowledge and benevolence.

Vice Chancellor Sir, my four years in America were rough and tight because I resolved to achieve maximally. So, I had declared to myself that after the M.Sc. Programme I would say goodbye to studentship. But the attitude of the lecturers which appeared to be hoarding and reserving some knowledge for the highest level made me rethink. Besides, most of my classmates were gearing up for one doctoral programme or the other. One point I was very certain about is

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that those my American classmates were not more intelligent. In fact, I had better grades than many of them who even copied my answers at examinations and tests. So, if they are going for Ph. D programmes I surely can do it and excel.

So, after my youth service in 1983 I navigated to return to the United States of America for a doctoral programme in Educational Administration of the University of Buffalo, New York. My efforts were unsuccessful owing to the stringent financial measures of the Government at the time led by General Mohammadu Buhari (Rtd.). I persisted in navigating for an opportunity and got one when the University of Port Harcourt advertised for the first intake of doctoral students in Educational Management and Planning in 1985. So, effectively, the journey that culminated in this day began.

1.2 Definition of Terms

In the context of this presentation the terms defined below, wherever they appear, should be associated with the meanings assigned to them.

Management/Administration: This is concerned with functions of planning, organizing, directing, controlling, coordinating, supervising, evaluation, etc.

Policy: A policy is a verbal, written or implied overall guide setting up boundaries that supply the general limits and direction in which managerial action will take place (Terry, 1977:189)

Educational Policy: An Educational Policy is an initiative mostly by Governments that determine the direction of the educational system of an area, Local, State or Federal.

Educational Administration: This has to do with the systematic arrangement of human and material resources and programmes that are available for education and carefully using them systematically within defined guidelines or policies to achieve educational goals (Nwankwo, 1987).

Educational Planning: This is a process of preparing a set of decisions consciously made now to achieve, later, educational goals and objectives by optional means (Fadipe, 1986).

Policy Somersault: This has to do with a complete reversal of a policy or decision that has earlier been taken especially at the stage of implementation.

3.0 TOPIC OF LECTURE AND REASON FOR THE CHOICE

Vice Chancellor Sir, the topic of my lecture is **POLICY SOMERSAULTS IN EDUCATION: A NATIONAL DILEMMA**. I have developed and sustained interest in Policy Formulation and Implementation in education which derived from my doctoral dissertation in 1988. I conducted a research on the Effectiveness of Programme Implementation in Education in Rivers State (1970 – 1985). My motivation for that choice of research was predicated on the fact that the National Policy on Education (6-3-3-4) instituted in Nigeria since 1977 was not making any appreciable impact and the objectives were not being achieved. Prior to 1982 Ghanians and other nationals within Africa were trooping to Nigeria to receive qualitative education because our standards were then adjudged high. Many Universities in Nigeria instituted strong directorates for International Students Affairs. They have ceased to be popular because international students have become very scarce as a result of falling standards.

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expressly taken me as their father in addition to their biological fathers. I am grateful to them and their husbands for the love and care they have shown my family. I apologize to all the persons whose names ought to appear in this acknowledgment list but who were omitted because of human imperfection. I appreciate you all.

Finally, I must thank this wonderful audience for providing me the enabling environment for this presentation. God bless you all.

Dismally, and to my chagrin, there was a reverse situation after the restoration of the well-being of Ghana by Ft Lt. Jerry Rawlings (Rtd.) and Ghanians who were refugees in Nigeria returned to their country. A few years later Nigerians started taking a great pride in sending their children and wards to the few Secondary Schools and Universities in Ghana and some obscure African Countries. Even the Universal Primary Education (UPE) launched by General Olusegun Obasanjo in 1976 was found to be stalled just one year after its official commencement (Taiwo, 1980). These unfortunate states of education in Nigeria provoked my choice of doctoral research interest and subsequent research efforts that culminated in my present status. Why should Nigeria that used to be a major rallying point for qualitative education in Africa have such a negative reverse gear where both Nigerians and the international community lacked faith in our country's educational outputs and had to turn to smaller countries for succor?

My doctoral research revealed very instructively that the UPE (1976) failed in objective achievement not necessarily because the policy was wrong but because planning and implementation were not adequately carried out. This revelation guided most of my subsequent research efforts as I examined over fifty (50) policy areas in education in Nigeria in the years that followed. In course of this lecture I will present some of those research efforts, their findings and educational implications.

But before I let the cat out of the bag, let me acquaint this great audience with the basic concepts of Educational Policy, Educational Planning and Educational Policy Implementation.

4.0 EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

Vice Chancellor Sir, I have spent over 28 years of my teaching and research efforts in ventilating issues on educational policies in Nigeria, their formulation, planning and implementation. Let me avail this great audience an opportunity of appreciating these concepts before delving into the outcomes of my interface with them in course of my field trips.

Educational policies are public policy decisions made by society for itself through its elected representatives which determine the direction of the educational system of a Local, State or Federal Government. Public policies provide ways of handling various problems that are generally considered to require collective rather than individual action. Three stages are of paramount importance in the consideration of public policies. These are the formulation, adoption and implementation stages (Nagel, 1977:17-20). In formulating policies the means of achieving the goals must usually be taken into consideration to facilitate implementation. This implies that it is possible to anticipate (predict) outcomes of policies with some measure of assurance (Holmes, 1977:127).

Since independence education has been a joint venture of both the Federal and State Governments; the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria places education under the Concurrent list implying that both the Federal and State Governments can make laws on education or formulate educational policies. However, State educational policies or laws must not be at variance with those of the Federal Government or challenge the authority of the latter.

Some of the policies on education as contained in the National Policy on Education (2008) are listed below:

Late Madam Agnes Amadike, my cousin, Late Mr Bathwel Osiagor and late Chief Evans Chinda Nnokam. In fact, late Chief Nnokam generously assisted me to purchase the Plot on which I built my house in Port Harcourt. He was like a father to me.

I pray this audience to kindly permit only me to observe 30 seconds silence in honour of my late wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Eno Okoroma, who passed on in 2012 after a brief illness. Lizzy: as I fondly called her, supported me throughout the years that I spent researching and publishing the papers that qualified me as a professor. She looked forward to the day I would be made a professor and if injustice was not part of our system, I would have become a professor long before her departure from this sinful world..May her soul rest in peace.

With four children to take care of after the ugly incident my world appeared shattered and I did not know where to start from. My faith in God has been well entrenched and at the nick of time the I am graciously provided me with a suitable helper. The moment my present wife came into my life happiness was restored in my home. Please, meet my wife, children and grandchildren. They are Mrs. Faith Dumbari Okoroma (a very kind-hearted young lady), Mrs. Justina Uche Orji (nee Okoroma). Justina is my first daughter and is here with her husband (Mr. Ifeanyi Orji) and my two grandchildren (Nwakaego and Uloma). Master Gift Okoroma is my first Son, Peace Okoroma is my second daughter while Samuel Chukwulaka Okoroma is my second Son. Favour Chioma Okoroma was delivered to us by God about a year ago with a load of blessings. Her arrival marked a turning point for my family. I am immensely grateful to my wife and children for the peace and happiness that prevail in our family.

Let me end this lengthy acknowledgment by appreciating two school daughters, Mrs. Victoria Sam-Kalagbor and Mrs. Faith Okai who have

Ajie and family, Barr. Emeka Ichoku, Mr. Messiah Onyige, Mr. Chukwudi Omoku, Mr. Sunny Nuue, Mr. Augustine Eyo, Elder Ojas Christian Ellah, Mr. Sheriff Nganale, Mr. Frank Irodi and family, Chief and Mrs. Glory Emeh, Mr. Lekara Dilliger, Barr. (Dr) & Mrs. Sam Kalagbor, Mr. Chukwuma Onyedibia, Justice and Mrs. Ben Ugbari, Dr. and Mrs. Chris Oboh, Mr. Cyprian Ojum, Mr. Ejikeme Oji, Sir Evans Orike and family, Sir Dim Ahiakwo and family and Mrs Margaret Kennedy and family, Mr and Mrs. Ejike Ake, Madam Nne Uboh, Mrs Rosemary Dappa, Mr Leonard I Elijah and pastor Moses N. Frank. I thank you all for touching my life in one way or another.

I am also grateful to my Christian brothers and sisters from St. Peter's Anglican Church, Rumuepirikom Deanery and St. Thomas Anglican Church, Diobu for the support I have received from them. Members of the Elite Conservative Forum of Omoku as well as Rivbond Club of Rivers and Bayelsa States have shown me much love over the years. God bless you all. I want to thank my Rector and Vicar, Ven. Israel Omosioni and his team of Clergies for the love they have individually and collectively shown my family since I joined St. Peter's Anglican Church two years ago. My appreciation also goes to Gold Osiagor, Emmanuel Oti and family, and members of the Elibrada Patriotic Front for making me their Patron and supporting my various activities. All my travelling inconveniences to and from the U.S.A. were borne by a caring brother and friend, Engr. Cyril Ogbo Obuah, and his family in the 70s and 80s as they lived in Lagos. I thank him specially for his kind and brotherly heart.

My postgraduate students have supported my literary works over the years and many of them are here. I thank you so very much. Although the following people are no more, I am certain that their departed souls are jubilating and celebrating this occasion because their dreams for me hinged on my total success. They are my aunt,

1. Basic Education
2. Post Basic Education(Secondary Education)
3. Tertiary Education
4. Technical Education
5. Adult and Non-formal Education
6. Special Needs Education
7. Open and Distance Education
8. Educational Support Services
9. Planning and Administration of Education, and
10. Financing Education

Vice Chancellor Sir, the National Policy on Education which was developed and launched in 1977 has gone through three phases of improvement in 1981, 2004 and 2008. It is a great document that has articulated relevant educational policies capable of placing Nigeria's educational standard and achievements at par with the developed nations. But despite these lofty policies everything about education in our country appears irritating and our fellow folks prefer to send their children and wards to countries that ordinarily should copy everything from Nigeria.

The problem of poor education output is within the purview of Educational Management and Planning and is the primary concern of educational managers. This is the issue that I have concerned myself within the last 28 years. I have conducted researches into almost all aspects of Nigeria's education policies to find out the performance levels and establish the factors for poor performance. In a short while, I will acquaint this distinguished audience with some of my contributions.

5.0 EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

After policy formulation the next stage is to translate the educational policy into a plan of action. Scarcity of resources compels us to plan. There is need to plan before we take action in every sphere of life. It is even more important to plan education because of the increasing high demand and diminishing resource availability. Remember that in the distant past people were persuaded to send their wards to school because they did not adequately appreciate the value of education. There is now a reversed trend. Parents and guardians are pleading with Governments to provide educational opportunities for their wards. Population has continued to increase resulting in increased school enrolments.

Vice Chancellor Sir, we cannot really overemphasize the importance of planning education. This is because Adesina (1977) and Ukeje (1986). have identified important factors that must be considered for a policy to be successfully implemented. They include the social environment, the political environment, financial constraints and statistical problems. I will not bore you with the details of these. Suffice it to state that Okeke et al (1985) and Fadipe (1986) declared that "failure to plan is planning to fail."

Aghenta (1984) showed a notable concern about planning education thus:

For education to achieve all ends, it has to be carefully planned. The plan must take into consideration ...the needs of the society; the political, socio-cultural, economic, military, scientific, and technological realities of the environment are very important to its (plan's) survival.

Vice Chancellor Sir, throughout my various research efforts and interfaces I discovered that although education plans did not strictly conform to the prescriptions made by Aghenta (1984) as cited above

Echeson Nsirim declined to accept his rents amounting to N500,000.00 and rather asked me to put the money in my house project. Even after leaving his house he sends Christmas presents to my family every year. I do not think there is another landlord like him elsewhere. Certainly, I cannot thank him enough. Our Registrar, Mrs. Dabo Constance Odimabo, must take credit for this presentation. Perhaps, this event would have been happening elsewhere. During my years in Egypt when my promotion was hanging for over six years I became highly disillusioned and made efforts to transfer my services to universities that were willing to promote me to the rank of a professor after looking at my research out-puts. Due to my closeness to the Registrar I could not embark on such a venture without her knowledge. Each time I mentioned my intention to her, she would in her motherly and caring voice urge me not to leave this university. She would counsel and assure me that all would be well with time. I do not know where she was getting her confidence from but she did not fail to assure me that all would be well. I hearkened to her advice and patiently stayed on and I can declare today that God is faithful. Registrar, I wish to say to you that I thank God I listened to your wise counsel. Today, it is well and I am happy.

Vice Chancellor Sir, there are very many people that I am indebted to and I have to move faster. Prof. W.A. Amaewhule has been my number one friend after Prof. A. M. Wokocha, left temporarily for some state and national assignments. Infact, Prof. Wokocha facilitated my employment in this university. He did so with the greatest commitment. Time will fail me to give details. I am grateful to both of them. Prof. T.A.T.Wahua has been my mentor for the past fifteen years and I have learnt a lot from him. My other benefactors are Prof. I. Ekweozor, Prof. J. I. Alamina, Prof. M. J. Ahiakwo, Prof. J.B. Vipene, Prof. Chioma Opara, Prof. A.O. Gabriel, Dr. N. H. A. Nwafor, Dr. Frank Amugo and family, Mr. G.E. Nkwo, Elder Israel Ugoji, Barr. C.O.

saw the similarities in our behavior and life-style and resolved that both of us must be encouraged to move on together in the pursuit of education. We supported each other as much as we could and the result is that both of us are accomplished in our chosen careers. I thank God for giving me a brother whose academic prowess challenged and spurred me to the point of self-accomplishment even as he is also an accomplished Civil Engineer. Chief (Mrs) Theresa Masi is my aunt who first loved me before her late husband, Mr. Clement Ikwuadi Masi, took over and hugely supported my education while I was in America. I will remain eternally grateful to her. Others from my family are Chief Anthony C. Okoroma and Freeborn Okoroma. My cousin, Mr. Felix Okechukwu Sam, apart from my wife and children, is the closest person to me in Port Harcourt. There is hardly any personal activity that I embark upon without his presence and support. I thank God specially for giving him to me.

I thank His Eminence, Sir (Dr) Nnam Chukwumela Obi II, the Oba of Ogba-Land for gracing this occasion through his representatives. My appreciation also goes to members of the Omoku Council of Traditional Rulers and Chiefs here present for coming to encourage me.

Chief Echeson Aleruchi Nsirim is my Ikwerre brother whom God used specially to bring about this day. He was my landlord for 22 years and provided the enabling environment for me to do my work of teaching and research. All the publications that qualified me as a professor were written while I lived in his house. He supported me in everything and the love between us grew from strength to strength. He encouraged me to build my houses at Omoku and in Port Harcourt. By the time I left his facility in 2013 for mine we had become intimate brothers rather than landlord and tenant. It is important for me to mention this exceptional gesture from him. In 2011 and 2012 when I was building my house in Port Harcourt, Chief

the problem of inadequate performance in the education sector was not mainly as a result of poor education plans. Rather, poor implementation of plans has been held responsible for our slow educational progress in Nigeria. Ukeje (1986), Waterson (1965) and Awokoya have acknowledged that the implementation of plans is very critical to educational progress and national development. These experts have noted that, "After planning there must be a programme of action and this is perhaps the most important aspect of planning" (Ukeje, 1986:23). In the view of Waterson (1965) "even when a plan is rational; comprehensive, coherent and consistent, its implementation may be partial, slow and inefficient. And the end result may even be inferior to what would have been expected in the absence of any plan. Awokoya (1952:565) succinctly refers to any plan that cannot be translated into action as "an exercise in verbiage".

These are mere tips of the iceberg with respect to educational planning and implementation inadequacies. Several Government reports have chronicled the failure of many well-articulated education plans on account of poor implementation. This lecture will examine my research efforts in those perspectives. But let me quickly highlight without boring you with details the factors that constrain or limit educational planning in developing countries. They include:

- (i) The Rising Cost of Education
- (ii) Youth population Explosion
- (iii) Political Instability
- (iv) Inadequate Planning Facilities
- (v) Inadequate information
- (vi) Administrative "Bottle Necks"
- (vii) The Human Factor

- (viii) The Joint Admissions & Matriculations Board (JAMB)
- (ix) The National Economic Council (NEC)
- (x) The National Manpower Board (NMB)
- (xi) The National Educational Research Council (NERC)
- (xii) The Joint Consultative Committee on Education (JCC)

The items listed above are important education planning bodies that have not played their roles effectively on a continuous basis to the development of education in Nigeria owing to many factors including political influences.

6.0 EDUCATIONAL POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Vice Chancellor Sir, here lies the cog in educational development in Nigeria. Nigerians have been acknowledged all over the world to be among the most intelligent. Both in Science and Technology they are counted among the best brains. So, formulating good education policies have never been a problem in our country. The National Policy on Education is a testimony; since planning education has to substantially do with brain-work we have less challenge in that perspective.

But policy implementation, that is where the problem lies. This is so because many tempting factors come into play. At the implementation stage we deal with human and materials resources. Decisions are taken on how to apportion these resources equitably to meet needs. Then personal and organizational interests are also allowed to interplay. Honesty and Integrity are moral or spiritual entities. Although several other factors affect implementation, studies have shown that conflict of interest between individuals and their organizations has impacted negatively on policy implementation at all levels.

together is the springboard on which this day has become possible. I am pained that he did not live long enough to see the fruit of his effort.

My late Uncle, Chief Wilson Obulo Okoroma, who was a primary school teacher desired all of us to be educated. He rose to the occasion when it became obvious that our dream to attend secondary school would be unrealistic without his contribution. Out of his meager salary he paid fifty (50) percent of the cost of our secondary education. I am immensely grateful to him for his benevolence. It is only his flesh that died; his spirit is very much alive and is hearing this testimony. My late brother, Chief Matthew N. Okoroma also made a significant contribution. Late Mr. Clement Ikwuadi Masi was known in Omoku and beyond as a man of the people. His wife is a younger sister to my late mother. Late Clement showed me immense love that almost surpassed what he showed his biological children and siblings by my thinking. At the expiration of my Federal Government Scholarship late Clement Masi sponsored my education in the U. S. A. until I obtained a Master of Science degree without which I could not have done a doctoral programme later in the University of Port Harcourt. Clement Masi loved me so much that while it was obvious he would not survive his illness he did not think about himself but about my future. In my mind I asked, what manner of love is this? How did I deserve this? I wish he was here to see the fruit of his efforts.

I did not see much of my late mother due to some social dysfunctions. In her place my younger sister, Madam Roseline Ada-Obi, stood firmly like an iroko tree and functioned both as a sister and like a mother. Her love and care for me gave me much strength to move on. I cannot thank her enough. My brother, Engr. G. C. Okoroma and I behaved like a twin when we were growing up. I am very sure that it is the factor that resulted in this day. Our late father

10. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For a teacher there is not much difference between a life journey and an academic journey. Both are interwoven and run pari-pasu. I may not really know exactly what transpired at the early stage of my life's voyage especially at the infancy brackets. But I recall vividly that my academic adventure began shortly before Nigeria's independence in 1960. I was in elementary one then with a Nigerian flag in my hand marching and celebrating without actually knowing the reason for the celebration.

This marked the beginning of the academic race that brought me to this level. It has spanned through a time-space of 56 years and this has made my indebtedness to become very voluminous. Let me commence by thanking the HE who says "yes" and "no" one absolutely can say no. I mean the Almighty God who knows the end of every activity even from the beginning. He preserved and sustained me against all odds. But for HIM I would have been consumed and unable to get to this point. I voluntarily chose to give my inaugural lecture today because I am happy and proud of the present state of our university. I thank the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Blessing Chimezie Didia, for providing the enabling environment and granting me the opportunity to make this presentation. The sojourn of Prof. Didia in this University is a monumental blessing to all and sundry and especially, me. My late father, Pa Levinda Asah Okoroma sustained my academic efforts until he transited. He was not educated in the western sense but my father was a man of great intelligence. He was regularly consulted by the western educated men because of his great ideas. Though not schooled he believed in education and insisted that my brother, Engr. G. C. Okoroma, and me must be educated. His life of justice and equity facilitated who I am today. My late father's insistence that I, from one of his wives and Engr. G. C. Okoroma from another of his wife must attend school

In 1986 the then Governor of Rivers State, Police Commissioner, Fidelis Oyakhilome was worried about the implementation gap in education and he expressed this at the National Convention of the Nigerian Association for Educational Administration and Planning which held in Port Harcourt. He observed thus:

We know it is difficult to realize planned objectives one hundred percent. But our experience in planning education in this country shows a disturbing gap between planned objectives and attained resultsAs professionals in the field of education, it may be pertinent to identify whether those critical gaps are results of faulty planning or faulty implementation (Oyakhilome (1986:2)

Poor policy implementation in all aspects of our national life should be treated as a national emergency. Apart from education we can chronicle several other areas of policy somersaults or reversals. What happens to State and National budgets? Are they adequately implemented? What of Agricultural, Power, Communication, Industrial, foreign, transportation, monetary, housing, sports, defence, etc policies? Have these policies ever been adequately implemented in Nigeria? The answer is in the negative and this is why our country has remained under-developed and will continue so until we are sufficiently disciplined to put into practice any state or national decisions we take and be guided by national rather than sectional or individual interests. No nation can develop without this minimum requirement. We must talk and do (policy and implementation). Unfortunately, Nigeria is more of a talking than a doing nation which is the reason why true development has eluded us despite the oil wealth. It is time to change gear to save our country from imminent collapse.

Vice Chancellor Sir, I have almost sounded like a nationalist than an educationist: but I think they go paripasu. Perhaps, if we are familiar

with some of the factors that militate against the effective implementation of policies generally and educational policies in particular we will have a better opportunity to repent. Nothing can change Nigeria for better except we implement policies and programmes honestly and with commitment.

Adesina (1977) has listed the following among others as constraints that impede policy implementation.

- (i) Over – estimation of available resources
- (ii) Under-estimation of the costs of implementing a plan
- (iii) Over-reliance upon external assistance
- (iv) Inaccurate Statistical data

Furthermore, Van Horn and Van Meter (1977) also advanced the following three explanations responsible for poor implementation of programmes or policies.

- (i) The Communication process that may not be effectively utilized to ensure effective implementation
- (ii) The capability problem in which such factors as incompetent staff, insufficient information, political pressure, inadequate financial resources and time constraints may impede implementation.
- (iii) Dispositional conflicts which result in policy implementation failure because those charged with the responsibility of implementation refuse to carry out their own assignments.

Vice Chancellor Sir, let me point out that the implementation constraints listed above are substantially universal. But there are two additional factors that are peculiar to Nigeria as noted by Hodges (2001) and Adesina (2004). The two factors are:

profession and must be nipped in the board. Like in other professions some level of misconduct is going on in teaching but the TRCN represented by the TDC is far behind in addressing this challenge. Being a central body operating from Abuja or any city does not and cannot make the TDC effective. I recommend, therefore, that every tertiary institution should have a sub-committee of the TDC so as to address expressly the cases of professional misconduct. TDC should acquaint itself with how the Nigerian Medical Council, the Council for Legal Education, the Council of Registered Engineers of Nigeria, etc handle issues of professional misconduct.

- ❖ No Government in Nigeria (Local, State or Federal) should appoint a non-professional teacher as Education Supervisor, Commissioner or Minister of Education.
8. I wish to rest my submission here and urge the governments (Federal and State) and other relevant bodies to take these recommendations seriously and act appropriately. This is a very unique opportunity to rejuvenate our educational system so that development can come our way.

- ❖ Ensure that every person who performs the function of a teacher in primary, secondary, monotechnic, polytechnic, College of Education and University (Public or Private) is professionally qualified. At inception in 1993 of the TRCN Decree, a moratorium of ten years was given to unprofessional teachers to obtain the minimum qualification of Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE) or Postgraduate Diploma in Education or Technical Education (PGDE or PGDTE). Twenty-three (23) years later thousands of people are still teaching without this basic requirement. I recommend that TRCN should give another five years of moratorium for all teachers to become professionally qualified. At the expiration of this period the law should take its course. You will agree with me that this is very magnanimous as other professions such as Medicine, Law, Engineering etc will not tolerate outsiders for even one day. I want to use this opportunity to invite our colleagues who are yet to professionalize to come over to the Faculty of Technical and Science Education for a one – year PGDE programme. At the end of the programme we shall register them automatically as professional teachers. We have provided this service to many doctors and professors from other institutions.
- ❖ My second recommendation is that the Teachers Disciplinary Committee (TDC) should come alive and perform its function. There are many cases of professional misconduct in the school system. Cases such as sorting, sexual harassment, absenteeism, examination malpractice dent the image of the

1. Lack of political will, and
2. Corruption

After chronicling the failures of various Heads of Nigeria's Governments from independence in 1960 to the Olusegun Obasanjo era, Hodges (2001) noted thus:

In the final analysis, Nigeria's development failures have sprung from the lack of success in achieving an effective model of governance.

At the head of this problem has been the instability generated by the rivalry for control of the huge resources accruing to the State from the Oil industry; and the use of political power to milk the state for personal gains rather than promote economic and social development (p. 26)

On the issue of corruption as an impediment to policy implementation Adesina (2004:16) noted thus:

The 2004 Corruption Perceptions Index, released by Transparency International (TI), the watchdog on global corruption, ranks, Nigeria as the third most corrupt country in the world. In 2003, the organization ranked Nigeria second, a one-step improvement from the previous position as the most corrupt country in the world.

As recent as 2016 Transparency International stated that corruption manifests as Grand Corruption, Petty Corruption and Political Corruption which includes government acts to distort policies (educational policies inclusive) every day abuse of entrusted power at all levels and manipulation of rules and institutions in the allocation of resources to sustain the wealth and power of a few (Punch, July 17, 2016 p. 20). No doubt, corruption has stagnated our country's development in general and education in particular. If not

so, why is Nigeria still at this pitiable level of educational development despite the magnitude of resources available to our nation over the years. What has happened to the lofty educational policies carefully articulated in the National Policy on Education? These and other questions will be addressed in the next section of the lecture.

7.0 MY CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE

Vice Chancellor Sir, I started my career in Educational Management as far back as 1976 when I was a School Certificate holder. After a few months as a classroom teacher in Midtown College, No. 7 Emenike Street, Port Harcourt, I was located and appointed the Principal of the College. I superintended over the students and teachers (some of the teachers had higher qualifications than me) for three years. I think my performance was so good that the Proprietor of the College offered to pay me a higher salary in his innocent effort to discourage me from traveling to the United States of America in 1978 for further studies. But I knew my future was greater than that level.

The three years that I served as Principal exposed me tremendously to the issues of school management especially at the secondary school level and as pertaining to private schools. I was privileged to interface with the Ministry of Education regarding school inspection, approval and supervision.

I also had the privilege of early exposure to curriculum and examination management. So, when ten years later I enrolled as a doctoral student in Educational Management I received lectures on some educational issues that I had practically been familiar with during my tenure as Principal. For example, the course 'Principalship in Nigerian Secondary Schools' was only theoretically new to me and I coped very fast.

duplication of admissions as that is a far less evil to contend with. The system will naturally adjust itself and the carrying capacity of every tertiary institution will attain its maximum.

7. The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria via Decree 31 of 1993 has pronounced teaching as a profession like all other professions. But my studies showed that it is yet to practically attain that status. For examples, there are thousands of teachers who are not professionally qualified and are not registered with TRCN. Many registered teachers have acted unprofessionally in diverse ways but have not been called to question by the Teachers Disciplinary Committee (TDC) which is an equivalence of the Nigerian Medical Council or the Council for Legal Education. The implementation of the law that has professionalized teaching is still partial and this is not in the interest of education as well as the overall interest of our country.
8. Vice Chancellor Sir, I am advancing the following recommendations mindful of the fact that many of my relations, friends and colleagues may be disadvantaged temporarily. But if I fail to point out this crucial fact, I will be throwing over board the ideals that I have stood for and defended in the last three decades. All over me have been issues of educational policy formulation and effective implementation. For the purpose of putting a seal on teaching as a profession, there is need to urgently do the following:

6. Vice Chancellor Sir, since the establishment of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) in 1978 Nigerian Universities apparently have not known true peace. There have been too much inconsistency in the Policy in course of its implementation. While it has reasonably solved the problem of admission duplications, the JAMB has created greater problem of lower standards. Examination malpractice perpetrated by mercenaries at JAMB examination centres is a big challenge to the body. Many unqualified candidates are admitted into universities and the end product has consistently been poor. My investigations revealed that this central system of examination for the admission of candidates into various Universities with different visions and operating standards and commitment is unhealthy. This is even reflected in the regular tampering of the policy by Government. For examples, in 2005 Screening tests were approved and to be conducted by the individual universities in line with their standards. This is after the JAMB has completed its placements. Then, in 2016 the Government through the Minister of Education proscribed the post-UME Screening. Now, the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is romancing with a law that will enable JAMB scores to be tenable for three years without considering its implementation implications. This is another case of policy somersault and I recommend very committedly that the JAMB be scrapped in its entirety so that each university and other tertiary institutions will take full responsibilities for admitting their students. We should not worry about the

What has caught my fancy in Educational Management and Planning are the twin issues of Educational Policies and implementation. My doctoral dissertation focused on educational policies and performance level in Rivers State. My findings did not appeal to me. So, after graduating with a doctor of Philosophy in Educational Management and Planning I decided to dedicate my research efforts on many policy and implementation matters on Nigeria's education. I wish to declare to this great audience that I have conducted several investigations on educational policies and implementation efforts pertaining to Nigeria. It is not possible to present all the problems investigated and their outcomes within the time frame of one hour. But let me humbly state that as at the time I was pronounced a Professor I had conducted fifty one (51) investigations which are both quantitative and qualitative.

It is important to re-emphasize that the burden that ran through my mind for all the years of my investigations is the disparity between educational policy declarations and policy performance. In almost all the education elements investigated policy somersaults are very apparent which kept Nigeria's educational system ineffective. Now, please, flow with me as I recapitulate some of my research contributions.

7.1 A Model for Funding Education in Nigeria in compliance with UNESCO Standard

Vice Chancellor Sir, every one seated including millions of Nigerians who are not here agree that education is a veritable instrument for self and national development. The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria at Section 18 (3a – c) provides for

- (a) Free, Compulsory and universal primary education;

- (b) Free Secondary education
- (c) Free University education, and
- (d) Free Adult literacy programme

Nigerian leaders at various levels pledged to uphold the constitution including international agreements. Nigeria is a member of the UNESCO which is an agency of the United Nations and which Nigeria is a prominent member. In its wisdom and after careful researches the UNESCO set the benchmark for funding education of every member nation. Nigeria is a signatory to this pact. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights which guarantees equal educational opportunities for all was also signed by Nigeria. This implies that our country accepts that everyone has a right to education. Nigeria was not left out in the agreements that emanated from the 1990 World Conference on Education for All held in Thailand as well as the Dakar Framework for Action held in Senegal in 2000 which adopted education as a key factor for development.

No doubt, Nigeria took into cognizance these national and international commitments to educational development when the National Policy on Education was initiated in 1977 with subsequent revisions up to 2008.

Vice Chancellor Sir, despite these lofty agreements and funding policy declarations, my research findings on financing education in Nigeria are not encouraging. Nigeria is nowhere close to the recommended 26% funding benchmark and is worse than even most African Countries. The following tables aptly illustrate the funding pattern of education in Nigeria and can be contrasted with some other countries. The poor funding of education clearly illustrates

economic and social systems of our country. The UBE cannot be practically compulsory and free due to the following anomalies:

- Lack of social welfare
- High rate of unemployment
- Predominance of poverty
- Corruption
- Inadequate funding

The persistence of these conditions will continue to render the UBE policy and enabling law impotent. This is because no government will:

- Arrest a jobless parent for inability to send the child to school
- Arrest innocent children hawking various items to assist their parents to survive
- Harass school heads for collecting illegal levies when it has not provided adequate funds for running the schools meaningfully.

It has become apparent that, though the UBE policy was well intended, its implementation has remained impracticable. The enabling law has succeeded only in criminalizing the actions or inactions of Stakeholders but lacks the teeth to bite. Therefore, I recommend that the UBE policy should be free but not compulsory. As recommended earlier, funding for education should not be less than 20% of the total budget. If this is implemented then the free requirement of the UBE can be sustained. By this recommendation the UBE policy and Act, 2004 are due for amendment.

decentralized. As has already been recommended, the accreditation responsibilities should be distributed among the following competent bodies:

- ❖ The Nigerian Academy of Education to accredit programmes in education
- ❖ The Nigerian Academy of Science should accredit and supervise programmes in Science
- ❖ The Social Science Research Council should accredit and supervise programmes in Social Sciences
- ❖ The National Academy of Arts should accredit and supervise programmes in Humanities. With such decentralization the Universities will be more effectively supervised.

My investigation also found out that the NUC has been exercising an over-bearing powers on the Universities. Vice Chancellors of Nigerian Universities are usually at the beck and call of the Executive Secretary who often operates like a sole administrator. This posture of the NUC has hindered academic freedom and university autonomy. The National Assembly should amend the law that created the NUC to reflect the realities of the present and future as they affect University education. Such an amendment should check the excesses of the NUC so as to make it more democratic and effective.

5. The Universal Basic Education (UBE) Policy was well intentioned but its implementation has become very problematic. The UBE policy (1999) and the UBE Act (2004) are difficult to implement because of the political,

government's inability to practically translate its various educational policies and plans into reality. The inadequate funding of education in Nigeria is an endemic habit for both the Federal and State governments alike. This situation is at variance with the observations of some celebrated educationists. For examples; in 1959 Sir Eric Ashby noted that "investment in education is the greatest asset any country can leave for posterity" because "the education of the young generation is important in that a nation without educated men and women is doomed and bound for destruction" (Adesina, 1977:74). Similarly, Ukeje (1966:155) noted that "education is for life and for living; an investment in people which pays untold dividends to the society. When that investment is not made or is made inadequately the society suffers a loss.

There is no doubt, therefore, that by funding all aspects of education, primary, secondary and tertiary levels poorly Nigeria has dealt a great blow on her citizenry and denied herself of the opportunity to develop. It is obvious that poorly educated people cannot manage their resources adequately. This is why in spite of the enormous oil wealth at the disposal of our country we have both individually and collectively remained poor. Until and except we begin to fund education adequately by respecting the UNESCO 26% funding benchmark, Nigeria will remain in this State of under-development with the potential to get worse with increase in population and more pressure on educational resources.

Tables 1 and 2 provide the funding state of education in Nigeria since the past 28 years. From the data it can be seen that the highest provision for education is 14.86% in 1994. The funding situation is even worse in this 21st century. In

2016 only 8 percent was budgeted for education and in 2017 the provision is 6 percent even though it is yet to be passed by the National Assembly. This is to cater for a population of about 193 million people. Figures 1 and 2 are spending proposals based on my investigations on financing education in Nigeria.

STATISTICS ON FUNDING

Table 1: Education Sector Share of the Federal Budget, 1989-2001 (in Millions)

Year	Federal Government Annual Budget			Allocation to Education			% of Total
	Capital	Recurrent	Total(N)	Capital	Recurrent	Total(N)	
1989	9,297.0	208,810.1	30,107.0	221,880.0	1,719.8	1,941.7	6.45
1990	13,451.1	27,208.6	40,660.7	331,746.0	1,872.9	2,204.7	5.45
1991	13,085.4	25,580.5	38,665.9	229,049.6	1,488.5	1,787.6	4.62
1992	15,975.9	36,060.5	52,036.4	395,130.0	1,997.8	2,392.9	4.60
1993	18,116.0	93,500.5	111,616.5	1,563.0	6,436.0	7,999.1	7.20
1994	31,00.0	38,200.0	69,200.0	2,405.7	7,878.0	10,283.8	14.86
1995	44,55.0	56,957.5	111,457.5	3,017.9	9,798.6	12,816.4	11.50
1996	44,477.0	76,744.9	121,221.9	3,215.8	12,135.9	15,357.7	10.81
1997	88,693.0	99,396.2	188,089.3	3,807.9	13,033.2	6,841.2	11.53
1998	129,700.0	116,607.4	246,342.4	9,739.6	13,028.3	23,668.1	9.61
1999	88,000.00	161,000.0	249,000.0	8,291.8	19,421.7	27,713.5	11.13
2000	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	8.70
2001	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	n.d	7.00

Source: Federal Ministry of Education, 2002

n.d- Means no data¹³

3. In 2016 only eight percent (8%) of the National budget was allocated to education; in 2017 the provision for education is six percent (6%). The highest allocation to education in the 28 years examined is 14.86% in 1994 when Nigeria's population was just about 120 million people. With a population of over 190 million people we have proposed to spend a paltry six percent (6%) on education. This clearly shows that our country is very unserious. While Nigeria is doing this, Ghana, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa etc have education budgets of not below 20% which is close to UNESCO's 26% funding benchmark for education. So, we can see that apart from the challenge of inadequate implementation we have a greater problem of inadequate funding. It is for this reason that I call on the State Houses of Assembly and the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria never to pass any budget that fails to allocate at least 20% of its provision to education. In fact, we must aim at hitting 26% in the next few years if the fortunes of education must be turned around.
4. The National Universities Commission (NUC) is playing a very important role in University Management. But its carrying capacity has long been exceeded. With only five (5) Universities to supervise in 1962 the NUC currently has 143 Universities to manage and many more are springing up on a daily basis. Consequently, it is no longer able to adequately cope with enforcing minimum standards in all the Universities. In order to overcome this challenge the functions of the NUC should, without delay, be

our country does not collapse. It is time to rethink and change especially in the implementation of educational policies which is the key that drives all other sectors. Agriculture, industry, power, transportation, the economy etc are all in a state of coma because the education sector has been epileptic.

Permit me to use this medium to tell ourselves some hard truths that may be uncomfortable. But if Nigeria must develop we need to hear and do them. Someone has to say them sometime and someday. I have elected to be the one to propound them today. My recommendations emanate from my 51 research activities and ten (10) books which I have written. Let me number them for a better understanding and appreciation.

1. Education policies and programmes of whatever design must be matched with adequate efforts at the implementation stage. We have not done so hence quality may appear to be improving while standards (output, product or performance) have continued to ebb. Consequently, many people are preferring to send their wards to smaller countries that are able to marry policy with effective implementation.
2. Arising from the above an Act of parliament should be enacted urgently barring public office holders from sending their children and wards abroad for the purpose of education at all levels. In the first Republic late Chief Obafemi Awolowo and other cabinet members compulsorily sent their children to public schools in Nigeria. This encouraged them to adequately implement the educational policies formulated during their time.

Table 2: Federal Budget and Educational Sector Share (2001-2016)

Years	Total Budget	Allocation to Education	% Allocation to Education
2001	894,214,805,186	66,441,434,271	7.13
2002	578,582,851,520	63,856,955,913	6.90
2003	699,057,649,979	59,146,740,250	7.75
2004	889,154,844,588	60,495,410,864	5.24
2005	1,354,615,243,138	79,911,096,069	8.21
2006	1,518,877,922,467	88,150,303,003	10.43
2007	1,880,923,949,983	95,702,067,069	9.75
2008	2,213,230,236,349	97,712,819,757	10.04
2009	3,101,813,750,626	102,940,740,202	8.79
2010	3,931,265,321,767	126,729,399,627	7.37
2011	3,571,815,678,134	127,860,445,381	9.32
2012	3,945,036,061,331	136,158,572,828	9.86
2013	4,920,000,000,000	141,008,230,959	10.21
2014	6,620,000,000,000	493,400,000,000	10.68
2015	4,500,000,000,000	492,034,986,591	10.93
2016	6,080,000,000,000	369,600,000,000	8.08

Sources: World Bank Data International Monetary Funds Analysis by Wale Micaiah (e:walergate@yahoo.com)¹⁴ Website: www.statiscence.com
<http://nairametrics.com/nigeias-federal.budget-summary.2010-2016/>

Tables 1 & 2 show that the Federal Government has consistently failed to implement the UNESCO agreement that at least 26% of National budgets should be allocated to education. Nigeria is a signatory to this important agreement which has been implemented in many countries that are enjoying qualitative education.

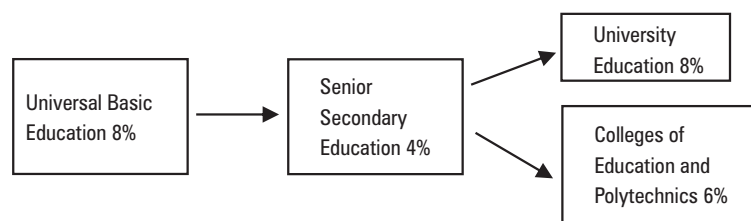


Figure 1: Proposal allocation formula to levels of Education in Nigeria by Okoroma, N. S. (2006).

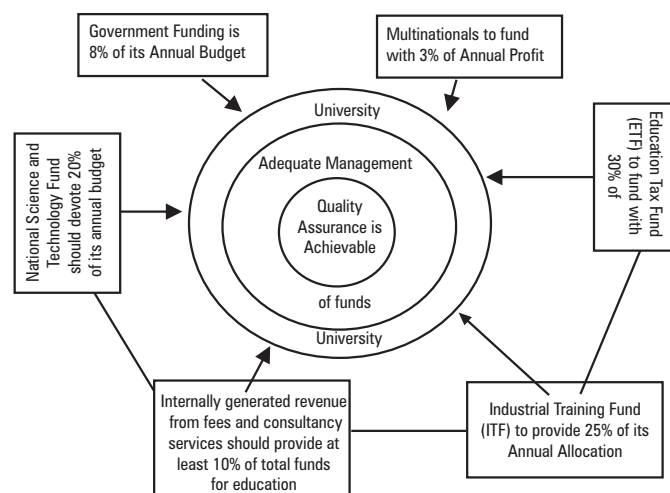


Figure 2: A model for funding and ensuring quality assurance of University Education in Nigeria.

Source: Designed by Okoroma, N.S. (2006)

Figures 1 &2 above are the funding proposals designed by this researcher to ensure that education is adequately funded.

showed that the UPE became extinct because of inadequate planning data and poor implementation. 1976 marked the commencement of the UPE and by 1977 there were sufficient cracks that made progress difficult. The introduction of the UBE in 1999 was quite palliative. The policy was better articulated and backed up by an Act. This would have made implementation easier and smoother.

But my findings about the progress of the UBE scheme have given me a little cold. As recorded earlier not less than 10.5 million Nigerian children are out of school which is the highest in the world. This is a clear manifestation of a significant difference between what we say and do in education as in other sectors of our national life.

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Vice Chancellor Sir, distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, let me reiterate that the difference between development and lack of it is education. As far back as 1959 and even prior to Nigeria's independence Sir Eric Ashby identified adequate investment in education as critical to Nigeria's development. About 56 years later this lecture has established that we have not invested adequately in education which is the fulcrum of national development. Our steps in all aspects of education have wobbled and are still wobbling dangerously. Our bearing in education lacks a compass or adequate mental grasp; consequently result-oriented actions have eluded us. At 56 Africa's most endowed and resourceful nation relies on Ghana, South Africa, Dubai, the western countries and other younger African nations for education support. It is an indictment on all of us. When certificates from smaller African countries are preferred to those from the giant of Africa, I 'weep' as an educationist. It certainly ought not to be so. It appears that as a nation we have sold our birthright by failing to do things (I mean everything not just only in education) correctly. We cannot continue in this trend so that

Another issue of importance is the appointment of non-professional teachers as Commissioners and Ministers of Education. Our investigations showed that over the years many States have appointed non-professional teachers and often times persons who are not teachers at all as Commissioners of Education. In a number of instances Ministers of Education have emerged from disciplines other than those of the teaching profession. Such square peg in round hole appointments have greatly affected the standards of education negatively. This is because no one can offer what he does not possess. Unfortunately, ASUU, NUT and other professional unions in education have not seen anything wrong with this practice and have remained silent.

On the contrary, this is not obtainable in other professions. For examples, it has not been recorded in modern history that a non-legal professional has been made Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice or Minister of Justice anywhere in Nigeria. Similarly, no person who is not a medical doctor has ever emerged as Commissioner or Minister of Health. The only exception was in 1993 when a Pharmacist was appointed the Minister of Health during Chief Ernest Shonekon's Interim Government. That appointment was unproportionally challenged by the Nigerian Medical Association who merely tolerated the Pharmacist Minister mainly because it was an interim government for just one; he was also tolerated because the pharmacist and the medical doctor share some things in common. Another domain of concern to me is the implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy. The UPE policy (1976), the UBE policy (1999) and the UBE Act, 2004 are instruments well designed and intended. These provisions are lofty and intended to put Nigeria's development on the fast lane by ensuring that basic education is within the reach of every child and adult who did not have an early opportunity. But my investigations

7.2 *National Universities Commission (NUC) and University Management In Nigeria*

Vice Chancellor Sir, after reading a few literature about the National Universities Commission and its enormous powers over University management in Nigeria, I decided to investigate the policy/law that established it and to find out whether the implementation efforts were complying with the policy. In 1962 the Ashby Commission Constituted by the Federal Government of Nigeria recommended the establishment of five regional Universities namely Ife, Lagos, Ibadan, Nsukka and Ahmadu Bello. The Commission also recommended the establishment of the NUC as one of the agencies of the Federal Ministry of Education with the mandate to maintain minimum academic standards in Nigerian Universities as well as carry out accreditation functions. Other similar agencies are the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) that supervises Polytechnics and the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) which has the mandate to superintend over Colleges of Education.

The NUC was conferred with the following powers as provided by Decree No. 1 of 1974 as amended by Decree No. 49 of 1988, to:

- (a) Advise the President and Governors of the States, through the Minister of Education, on the creation of new universities and other degree awarding institutions in Nigeria;
- (b) Prepare, after consultation with all State Governments, the Universities, the National Manpower Board and such other Bodies as may be

appropriate, periodic master plans for the balanced development of all universities in Nigeria;

- (c) Inquire into and advise the Federal Government on the financial needs both recurrent and capital of University education in Nigeria and in particular, to investigate and study the financial needs of university research and to ensure that adequate provision is made for this in the Universities;
- (d) Increase block grants from the Federal Government and allocate them to Federal Universities in accordance with the formula approved by the National Council of Ministers;
- (e) Undertake periodic reviews of the terms and conditions of service of personnel engaged in the universities; and
- (f) Recommend to the Visitor of the Federal Universities that a visitation be made to such University as at when it considers it necessary (Awopute, 2000:15)

Other regulatory functions of the NUC as highlighted by Oluchukwu (2005) include:

- ❖ Creation of new faculties, departments, programmes which must receive prior approval of NUC, acting on behalf of the Federal Government;
- ❖ Staff-student ratio must at all times conform to NUC guidelines;
- ❖ Academic staff mix must conform to the prescribed guidelines of NUC; and

this spontaneous policy direction. How will the candidates whose JAMB scores would be valid for three years be managed along with new candidates who will graduate from post-primary schools across the country every year and present themselves for the matriculation examinations? What parameters would be used in placing both old and new candidates for admission spaces? Certainly these would impose implementation challenges that were not adequately analyzed. The Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) Decree 31 of 1993 is one law that has given teachers a sense of belonging in Nigeria. Now, we know that teaching is a profession and no longer for all comers. Medicine, Law, Engineering, etc are well guarded professions that permit no room for infiltration. But our investigations have shown that despite the 24 years of existence of the TRCN the teaching profession still accommodates a large number of non-professionals who do not possess the minimum teaching qualifications of Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE) or the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE or PGDTE). This inconsistency in policy and implementation is observable at all levels of education but more conspicuously at the tertiary level. The Act provided a moratorium of ten (10) years for all unprofessional teachers at all levels to undergo retraining and become professionals to enable them continue as teachers. But our investigations showed that over 80% of teachers in tertiary institutions in Nigeria are not professionally qualified. They may be qualified in their various professions but certainly not in the teaching profession.

The Teachers Disciplinary Committee (TDC) provided by the TRCN Act has so far appeared non-functional as no unprofessional teacher in Nigeria has been invited for questioning. This, obviously, will not be permitted in other professions such as Medicine, Law, Engineering just to mention a few. These situations are sure to affect the quality and standards of education in Nigeria.

suggestion that other educational bodies such as the Nigerian Academy of Education, the Nigerian Academy of Science, the Social Science Research Council, and the National Academy of Arts, should be drafted to assist the NUC in the enforcement of standards. The role of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) was also brought into focus. The JAMB has proved to be a good policy but, badly implemented or managed. A sound policy brought the JAMB into being in 1978. Essentially, the objective was to discourage multiple admissions which enabled some intelligent candidates to obtain admissions in a number of Universities but utilized one chance while leaving many admission chances wasted. At the same time less intelligent candidates were without admission opportunities. Our investigations found out that this well articulated policy was poorly implemented due to other unpopular policies that were associated with the implementation of the JAMB programme. They included; quota system of admission; catchment area, backwardness factor or educationally disadvantaged areas; and discriminatory fees. These after-thought policies enabled less bright candidates to be offered admission spaces at the expense of very intelligent candidates. In this way, the main objective of establishing the JAMB was compromised. This led to the policy of post-JAMB (Post-UME) screening that was given vent to in 2005. Even the implementation of this new policy could not be sustained for long as the Minister of Education abolished Post-UME screening on June 2, 2016.

Another inconsistency in the implementation of the policy is in the offing. The Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria recently commenced the amendment of the Act that established the JAMB in its desire to extend the validity of the annual results of the examination conducted by JAMB to three years. No adequate considerations have been given to the nitty-gritty of implementing

- ❖ Draft statute of each University must receive approval of NUC.

Vice Chancellor Sir, the NUC has come a long way since 1962 when it was set up. Then it had only five (5) Federal Universities to manage.

Today, the NUC is supervising 40 Federal Universities, 42 State Universities and 61 privately owned universities. This gives a total of 143 Universities in Nigeria (Punch, July 20, 2016, p. 20). My investigation on NUC threw up the following findings

1. The NUC has powers to withhold funds from Universities that fail to comply with its control measures and this makes the Universities subservient to the NUC. Lack of financial autonomy is a big challenge to the effective management of university education in Nigeria.
2. The NUC is not adequately equipped to singularly enforce minimum standards requirements in all Nigerian Universities (there are 143 of them and more are being established). On this score Ejiogu (2003) has suggested that the NUC no longer has the capacity and capability to adequately supervise Nigerian Universities and has therefore suggested thus:
 - ❖ The Nigerian Academy of Education should be empowered to accredit programmes in Education
 - ❖ The Nigerian Academy of Science should accredit programmes in Science
 - ❖ The Social Science Research Council should accredit programmes in Social Sciences, and

- ❖ National Academy of Arts to accredit programmes in Humanities.
3. My investigation also found out that the modus operandi of the NUC eroded academic freedom and University autonomy. Although the NUC was established by the Ashby Commission in 1962 the law that gave it functional teeth was Decree No. 16 of 1985 promulgated by the Federal Military Government of Nigeria. The NUC, being a creation of the then Military government, adopted the culture of the military in its operation. It showed little or no respect for academic freedom of Universities. For examples;
 - ❖ The NUC requires Universities to strictly comply with its guidelines and this hampers academic freedom
 - ❖ The Vice Chancellors of Nigerian Universities are usually at the beck and call of the Executive Secretary of the NUC. Such subservient relationship is often a hindrance to academic freedom and University autonomy
 - ❖ The appointment of Vice Chancellors of Universities has become so politicized that University autonomy which is an important condition for academic freedom is not adequately guaranteed.
 4. The overall outcome of this investigation is that the NUC has become ineffective because it lacks the capacity to play the various roles assigned to it effectively. From five (5) Universities in 1962 it now

8.0 CONCLUSION

Vice Chancellor Sir, this lecture explored the inconsistency between educational policies and implementation efforts in Nigeria. I worried that policy somersaults in education have impeded educational development in our country and consequently, hampered national growth generally. This is so because education is the core instrument for all aspects of a nation's life that result in meaningful development.

The lecture has presented only a minute fraction of the works that led to my elevation to the status of a Professor. I would require at least twelve (12) hours to acquaint this distinguished audience with all my relevant research efforts.

In this presentation I have acquainted you with the state of educational financing in Nigeria. We noted that despite the constitutional provision of free education at all levels, membership of various international bodies that emphasize the right of the child to education and signatory to UNESCO's 26% funding benchmark for education, Nigeria's funding level for education has been dismal. This situation has remained inconsistent with our country's educational aspirations and pronouncements.

The roles of the National Universities Commission (NUC) in the management of University education in Nigeria were adequately highlighted. The NUC is a great asset, no doubt. But it has accepted more responsibilities than its capacity to handle. At inception in 1962 the NUC had only five (5) universities to contend with. Presently, it has 143 to supervise. This number has become unwieldy for the NUC to effectively enforce minimum academic standards. The general view nationally and internationally as has been supported by some empirical studies, is that the quality and standards of education in Nigeria have declined. There has been the

Vice Chancellor Sir, and distinguished audience, you can see that a wide gap exists between the policy statements and implementation of the UBE scheme as has been the situation in all the 51 education cases that I investigated and which culminated in my professorship.

INVESTIGATION ON POOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UBE

Purpose:

To identify the constraints on the implementation of the UBE.

Methodology

An opinion research design was employed. A sample comprising 520 (50%) of primary school head teachers in Rivers State, 23 Local Government Education Secretaries, 10 members of the State Primary Education Board, and 1150 parents of UBE pupils and students from the 23 Local Government Areas were selected through a random sampling technique. Fifty (50) parents from each Local Government Area were used. A total sample of 1,703 participated in the survey. The instrument used for gathering data was christened "Repositioning the Universal Basic Education for Better Performance (RUSEBP) was used. Simple percentages were used to analyze the data obtained.

Findings: The following factors were found to be responsible for the poor implementation of the UBE.

1. Poor funding
2. Inadequate teaching and learning facilities
3. General Poverty among the populace
4. Poor motivation of teachers
5. Non-enforcement of the UBE statute

has 143 Universities to manage. This is why I am in agreement with the position of Ejiogu (2003) that the NUC should be divested of the powers that enable it to influence funding, appointments and the regulation of academic standards. The accreditation of Nigerian Universities should no longer be left to the NUC solely. Other bodies such as the Nigerian Academy of Education, the Nigerian Academy of Science, the Social Science Research Council and the National Academy of Arts should be empowered to accredit programmes in Education, Science, Social Sciences and Humanities respectively. If we take the above measures then we can guarantee administrative autonomy, academic autonomy and financial autonomy to Nigerian Universities.

5. It has therefore, become imperative that the statute which established the NUC should be amended.

INVESTIGATION ON THE NUC AND THE MANAGEMENT OF NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: A CASE STUDY OF THE SOUTH-SOUTH ZONE

Purpose:

The study was conducted to ascertain the effective implementation of the supervisory mandate of the NUC over Nigerian Universities.

Methodology

The study adopted Universities in the South-South zone of Nigeria as a case study. Four Federal Universities, four State Universities and two private universities were used for the study. They represent the ten universities that existed in the zone as at 2006 when the investigation was conducted.

The population comprised 10 Vice-Chancellors, 10 Deputy-Vice Chancellors, 10 Registrars, 50 Deans of Faculties (each university had five Deans), 200 Heads of Departments (each University had 20 Heads of Departments) and 100 Executive and Ex-Officio members of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) (10 from each university). A total population of 380 persons was obtained as sample and used for the study as respondents. No sampling technique as used because sampling was not necessary.

A survey design was adopted. The instrument for data gathering was the “National Universities Commission Supervisory Role and Effect Questionnaire” (NUCSREQ) designed by the researcher. The content scope covered NUC regulatory influence on funding, minimum standards, academic freedom, University autonomy. The instrument was tested for validity and reliability. A correlation coefficient of $r = 0.72$ was obtained and found acceptable for the study. The chi-square statistic was used to test the five (5) null hypotheses postulated.

Findings

The following results were obtained from the analysis of the data gathered.

1. The NUC has the powers to withhold funds from universities that fail to comply with its control measures.
2. The NUC is not adequately equipped and broad enough to singularly enforce minimum standards requirements in all Nigerian Universities.

presence of high rate of unemployment and absence of social welfare scheme. To enforce this provision will be a huge liability for Government because the prisons will over-flow. In fact, the UBE Act may have to be amended so as to enable children to accompany their parents when arrested as no one will be there to take care of them.

(d) The Services Provided in Public Primary and Junior Secondary Schools shall be free of charge (Section 3 – 1).

As stated earlier our investigations show that various forms of levies are charged in many UBE schools and the provision of sanctions against any person who contravenes this section as provided in (Section 3 – 2) has hardly been enforced. No person or persons in Government UBE schools has or have been tried, convicted and fined N10,000.00 or imprisoned for thee (3) months as provided by the Act.

(e) States are to contribute at least 50% of the total Cost of Projects in Order to qualify and benefit from the Federal Government Block Grant.

The outcome of our investigations shows that some States have huge sums of unaccessed funds in the Consolidated Revenue Account. This, no doubt, is affecting the UBE scheme negatively in those States.

Unfortunately, the Act did not stipulate any sanction(s) against any State Governor or Government that fails to provide its counterpart funding. It is the children that are at the receiving end and suffer the inactions of the affected State governments. (Okoroma, 1999:1; Okoroma, 2005:11; Okoroma, 2006:136).

UNICEF/UNESCO in 2012 placed Nigeria as a country with the highest number of children that are out of school (Punch, October 14, 2015, p. 24). My investigations on the UBE scheme in Nigeria have revealed a wide gap between the policy, its enabling law and actual implementation. Let me illustrate;

(a) Free and Compulsory

Both the UBE policy and the enabling Act provide that it will be free and compulsory. My investigations show that some levies in diverse forms are charged.

(b) Adult and Non-Formal Education or Out-of School Youths

This category of persons are expected to benefit from the UBE policy. The true position, however, is that Government has technically abandoned this aspect of the scheme to private individuals who charge fees to operate. The few centres run by Government suffer from inadequate funding and abysmally low standards.

(c) Every parent must send the child to Primary and Junior Secondary School (Section 2-2) of the UBE Act. A parent who contravenes this provision commits an offence and is liable on conviction to various degrees of sanctions (Section 2 – 4) of the Act.

Our findings show that many children who are supposed to be benefitting from the UBE policy are on the streets and market places hawking diverse items and nothing has happened to their parents or guardians. We found out that Government has no moral standing even if it has a legal instrument, to arrest, convict and punish parents in the

3. The interference of the NUC on the academic freedom of Universities does not affect the effective management of the Universities
4. The interference of the NUC on University autonomy impedes University management.

7.3 *Influence of JAMB on quality of Education in Nigerian Universities*

Vice Chancellor Sir, I was worried about the quality of University education as influenced by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB). The relationship between Nigerian Universities and the JAMB has been like that of dog and cat. It has been over two decades since the quality of University education in Nigeria has come into question. Prior to the emergence of the JAMB in 1978 individual universities conducted their placement or entrance examinations. This policy enabled many intelligent candidates to secure multiple admissions but settled for only one at the end. This left many vacancies unfilled and many candidates without placements. This decentralized approach was found not to be in the national interest. So, the JAMB was essentially established to solve this problem. In less than three decades after the establishment of the JAMB the concern and debate about falling standards of university education in Nigeria took a centre stage. It almost became a consensus in course of the national debate that the JAMB was responsible for the falling standards of university education.

The operators of Nigerian Universities were in total agreement that the JAMB was the problem and favoured its scrapping to enable them conduct their individual matriculation examinations. Their position is supported by

the view of Eluemunor (2005), Babalola (2005) and Osawe (2005) who noted that 'available information shows that many unqualified candidates have been offered admissions into Nigerian Universities through JAMB and thereby lowering standards in these institutions.

The Minister of Education at the time, Mrs C. Obaji, agreed that the JAMB has not been performing its job creditably. As a measure to check the JAMB a policy of post-JAMB (post-UME) screening was approved in 2005. This conferred on the Universities the authority to take final decisions on the admissions of their students. Although this new policy was vehemently resisted by the Registrar of JAMB it was sustained up to 2016.

Vice Chancellor Sir, my investigations showed that there have been further policy somersaults with respect to the admissions policies in Nigeria. In June, 2016 the Minister of Education abolished the post-UME practice which implies that candidates are no longer to be tested for intellectual capability. In November, 2016 our country embarked on another policy somersault. Just before the exit of 2016 the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria commenced the process of amending the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board Act of 1978 to enable JAMB results be valid for three years. The reasons given by the Senate for this policy reversal is to 'reduce the burden on the parents, candidates and the institution that is conducting the test' (Punch, November 1, 2016, p. 22). Of course, these policy reversals will further reduce standards of University education.

- 3 - (1) The services provided in public primary and junior secondary schools shall be free of charge.
- 3 - (2) A person who receives or obtains any fee contrary to the provisions of subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding N10,000.00 or imprisonment for a term of three (3) months or both.
- 4 – (1) Every parent shall ensure that his child receives full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude by regular attendance at school.
- 11 – (1) The implementation of the Universal Basic Education shall be financed from –
 - (a) Federal Government block grant of not less than 2% of its Consolidated Revenue Fund;
 - (b) Funds or Contributions in form of Federal guaranteed credits; and
 - (c) Local and international donor grants.
- 11 - (2) For any State to qualify for the Federal Government block grant pursuant to sub-section. (1) of this section, such State shall contribute not less than 50% of the total cost of projects as its commitment in the execution of the project.

Vice Chancellor Sir, these are lofty and laudable provisions with the capacity to transform primary and junior secondary education to an enviable State in Nigeria, nay Africa. This would be so if implementation efforts were in tandem with the set objectives. The first bad news that I have for this respectable audience is that 10.5 million or more school age children are out of school in Nigeria. A joint study of

UBE Enabling Act

A law to give teeth to the UBE policy was enacted in May, 2004 by the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Among others, the law provides thus:

- 2-(1) Every government in Nigeria shall provide free, compulsory basic education for every child of Primary and Junior Secondary school age.
- 2-(2) Every parent shall ensure that his child or ward attends and completes
 - (a) Primary school education; and
 - (b) Junior secondary education, by endeavouring to send the child to primary and junior secondary schools.
- 2-(3) The stakeholders in education in a Local Government Area, shall ensure that every parent or person who has the care and custody of a child performs the duty imposed on him under section 2 (2) of this Act.
- 2-(4) A parent who contravenes section 2 (2) of this Act commits an offence and is liable
 - (a) On first conviction, to be reprimanded;
 - (b) 31
 - (b) On second conviction, to a fine of N2,000.00; or imprisonment for a term of one (1) month or to both; and
 - (c) On subsequent conviction, to a fine of N5,000.00 or imprisonment for a term of two (2) months.

7.4 The Real Problems Militating Against Educational Standards

There is no doubt that inconsistent admission policies are a big problem in ensuring acceptable standards in our Universities. My various studies have confirmed that problem. But beyond the role of JAMB in contributing to low standards of University education in Nigeria lie other factors with graver effects. Several investigations have shown that the problem of poor educational standards in Nigeria cannot and will not give way until the identified factors have been dispassionately addressed. The factors are:

- Quota system of admission
- Catchment area
- Educationally Disadvantaged States or Backwardness factor
- Discriminatory fees

These admission policies were introduced to correct some observed imbalances in the Nigerian society. But in doing so, standards have been consistently compromised. The quota admission policy has permanently allocated various percentages of admission spaces to the 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory. This must be taken into account in every admission exercise. This discriminatory policy has ensured that less qualified candidates have secured admissions at the expense of very bright candidates. The situation is the same in the implementation of policies on Catchment area, backwardness factor and discriminatory fees, which have affected adversely the chances of very bright candidates with potentials for standards improvement of the educational system.

Vice Chancellor Sir, I am not oblivious of the fact that Nigeria is a pluralistic society with over 250 ethnic colorations and diverse interests. But these obnoxious policies have made a ridicule of the 1999 Constitution which provides as one of the Fundamental Rights of Nigerians as 'Right to freedom from discrimination.'

These policies are also at variance with the Philosophy and Goals of Education in Nigeria which have emphasized standards as one of its cardinal objectives. Furthermore, these admission policies are inconsistent with the Universal Declaration of Human rights which guarantees equal educational opportunities for all and which Nigeria is a signatory to.²² Other factors that influence educational standards are:

- Teacher Quality and Character with regard to teaching, evaluation and integrity standing
- Students' Attitude to work
- Curriculum (Academic programme) and implementation
- State of physical facilities
- Funding disposition

Vice Chancellor sir, my investigation clearly shows a yearning gap between policies on educational standards and their practical implementation. This is the core problem of educational development in our country. Policies are well articulated but poorly implemented and often times most people deliberately fail to understand where the issue pinches and merely play the blame game. But there can be no remedy to poor educational standards at any level until we are committed to world best practices with respect to policy

every child. Adesina (1977) maintains that primary (basic) education being the foundation of education should be invested adequately in. Ake (1988) noted that "education is the process of becoming the best we can be"; Ukeje (1966) asserted that "education is for life and for living; an investment in people which pays untold dividends' to the society; when that investment is not made or is made inadequately, the society suffers a loss."

These views about education helped to shape and sharpen Nigeria's ideology of universal Basic Education. For Nigeria, UBE encourages the liberalization of educational opportunities to the child without discrimination in respect of gender, socio-economic status, religion and geographical entities so as to enhance the opportunity for self-development and fulfillment of every child.

The UBE Policy

Right from its inception in 1976 as Universal Primary Education (UPE) and in 1999 as Universal Basic Education (UBE) the philosophy and operational principles have remained the same. The National Policy on Education (2004:13) provides that:

Basic education shall be of 9 – year duration comprising 6 years of primary education. It shall be free and compulsory.

It shall also include adult and non-formal education programmes at primary and junior secondary education levels for the adults and out-of-school youths.

This policy is not a law and cannot be enforced legally.

3. The TRCN Decree has not been committedly enforced for effectiveness due to lack of political will.
4. Uncertificated teachers are still politically allowed to head educational institutions over and above trained and certificated teachers.

7.6 Universal Basic Education in Nigeria

Another area that struck my research interest is the implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy in Nigeria. The importance of the UBE has been established long ago. From late Chief Obafemi Awolowo in 1955 to late Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe in 1956 and Chief Olusegun Obasanjo in 1976 all have demonstrated that UBE has no replacement. The UBE Act of 2004 is a reinforcement of the 1999 Constitutional provision at 18 (3a) that Government has a duty to provide “free, compulsory and universal primary education.” As a member of the United Nations Organization Nigeria is privy to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which guarantees equal educational opportunities for all. All of these impose on Nigeria both moral and legal obligations to continue to drive the programme of Universal Basic Education until every Nigerian can have access to basic education which is basic for national development.

For the avoidance of doubt, let us note some of the perceptions about the importance of education and especially basic education. Edward (1983) believes without any equivocation that the entire world has accepted education as an important instrument for the overall development of man and a significant vehicle for social change. Plato (427 – 347 BC) advocated a free and compulsory education that provides equal opportunities for

implementation. This also speaks volume about other sectors of Nigeria's economy which are under the burden of ineffective policy implementation.

THE JAMB, ADMISSION POLICIES AND THE QUALITY OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: AN INVESTIGATION

Purpose of the Study

The investigation aimed at finding out the effect of the federal character policy of admission on the standards of education in Nigerian Universities.

Methodology

The study focused on the Universities in the South-South of Nigeria. The ten universities in the zone as at the time of the investigation in 2006 comprised four Federal Universities, four State Universities and two Private Universities. The private Universities were excluded from the study. The total population which was used as the sample is 224 persons made up of 8 Vice-Chancellors, 8 Deputy-Vice Chancellors, 8 Registrars, 40 Deans of Faculties (each university produced five Deans), 160 Heads of Departments (20 from each university). There was no sampling and no sampling technique was adopted.

The survey research design was used in the study. A Questionnaire known as “Admission Policy and Effect on University Education Quality” (APEUEQ) designed by the researcher was used for data gathering. The instrument was tested for validity and reliability. The chi-square statistic was used for data analysis.

Findings

The following results were obtained after analyzing the data generated.

1. Catchment area or quota system admission policy compromised standards in the Universities.
2. The backwardness factor or educationally disadvantaged States consideration also compromised University standards.
3. Discriminatory school fees policy that compel non-indigenes to pay higher fees has contributed to the reduction in standards. Less financially viable but academically good students are often unable to finance their education. While weak but financially viable students have the opportunity of being in school.
4. These results are not in consonance with the National Policy on Education that has promised to deliver quality and good standard of education at all levels.
5. The JAMB policy and enabling Act are generally constrained by these admission policy encumbrances investigated in this study and as a result, makes it ineffective.

7.5 Implementation of the Teachers Registration Council Of Nigeria (TRCN) Policy

Vice Chancellor Sir, I am one of the people who worried greatly about the state of the teaching profession in Nigeria. Despite the fact that teaching is the best profession even from biblical point of view as Jesus Christ was recorded as the

tolerated by professions like Law, Medicine, Engineering, Architecture, etc.

AN INVESTIGATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION CONSTRAINTS OF THE TRCN

Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study was to ascertain the implementation challenges that have constrained the effective execution of the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) Decree 31 of 1993.

Methodology

An opinion research design was used. A sample of 1,751 consisting of 125 principals drawn from a population of 245 principals, 125 Vice-Principals from a population of 245 Vice-Principals and 1501 teachers drawn from all the public secondary school teachers in Rivers State.(Average of 65 teachers per Local Government Area).

An instrument known as TRCN Implementation Survey Questionnaire (TRCNISQ) was used for data collection. The data analysis involved the use of non-parametric statistics.

Findings

The following results were obtained.

1. Large number of untrained and unregistered teachers constitute a monumental problem to the TRCN implementation.
2. There is no effective disciplinary body to check the excesses of teachers as found in other professions.

- ❖ Rudeness or insubordination to school head
- ❖ Corruption or fraudulent practices
- ❖ Forgery of certificate and other personal documents
- ❖ Engaging in criminal activities
- ❖ Drug addiction
- ❖ Falsification of records
- ❖ Refusal to go on transfer
- ❖ Having immoral dealing with students
- ❖ Incompetence
- ❖ Cruelty

(Peretomode, 1992:196-197)

Vice Chancellor Sir, the TRCN Act has, indeed, professionalized teaching but my investigation shows that there are lapses and gaps in its implementation. For examples;

- Many non-professional persons are still teaching at all levels of our educational system. The situation is worst at the tertiary level where uncertificated persons are teaching in our Universities, Colleges of Education, and Polytechnics. This is happening after 24 years of the TRCN Act that professionalized teaching;
- Most educational institutions at all levels are still headed by non-certificated teachers as Principals, Rectors, Provosts and Vice Chancellors. This cannot be contemplated in the legal, medical, and other well-guarded professions;
- Some Ministries of Education are manned by persons who are non-certificated teachers. Again, such practice cannot be

greatest teacher that ever lived, the profession of teaching was sadly unrecognized until recently. The Nigerian Union of Teachers came into existence as far back as 1931 and satisfied all the characteristics of a profession. Yet, academic debates went on for years as to whether teaching was a profession or not. The amorphous (vague) nature of the teaching profession did not abate until 1993 when Decree 31 established the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN). This ended the boring debate about the status of teaching and of the teacher. By the provisions of the TRCN it can be equated to the Council of Legal Education (in the law profession), The Medical Council (in the medical profession) and Council of Registered Engineers of Nigeria (COREN) as pertains to the Engineering profession.

Among others the TRCN provides thus:

For a person to be a 'Certificated teacher' he should possess the following qualifications:-

- (a) a degree in education or with education component
- (b) a Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE)
- (c) a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE)

The TRCN has the mandate to:

- (a) determine who are qualified as teachers for the purpose of the Decree;
- (b) establish and maintain a register of teachers, and publication from time to time of the list of those persons;
- (c) Regulate and Control the teaching profession;

- (d) Classify from time to time members of the teaching profession according to their level of training and qualification

Code of Conduct

The TRCN established a Teachers Code of Conduct (TCC) which has defined the minimum ethical standards expected of professional teachers.

Some minimum ethics for teachers are listed below. The Code of Conduct for teachers is regulated by the following two organs:

- (i) Teachers Investigation Panel (TIP)' and
- (ii) Teachers Disciplinary Committee (TDC).

Teachers Investigation Panel

All cases of professional misconduct by registered teachers are thoroughly investigated by the Teachers Investigation Panel (TIP) for action.

Teachers Disciplinary Committee (TDC)

All cases of established misconduct against registered teachers are referred to the TDC for necessary actions. There is conviction where guilt is established and subsequent sanctions in line with the provisions of the TRCN Act.

The cases that are considered and determined by the TDC as provided in Section 10 (1) of the TRCN Act include those involving:

- (1) a member who is charged with infamous conduct in any professional respect;

- (2) a member who is convicted, by any court or Committee in Nigeria or elsewhere having power to award imprisonment of an offence which in the opinion of the Committee is incompatible with the status of a teacher.
- (3) The name of any person has been fraudulently registered or a member has made false claims

When any teacher is convicted by the TDC, the Committee is expected to give directives for :

- (i) Advice;
- (ii) Reprimand;
- (iii) Suspension of registration;
- (iv) Cancellation of registration; and
- (v) Criminal prosecution in accordance with the relevant laws of Nigeria (FRN, 2005).

Code of Conduct for Teachers

In order to advance the profession of teaching, teachers are expected to conduct themselves appropriately avoiding the following among others:

- ❖ Lateness to school
- ❖ Absenteeism from school
- ❖ Examination malpractice
- ❖ Indecent dressing
- ❖ Punishment of students in disregard to rules and regulations
- ❖ Stealing of school property
- ❖ Fighting with colleague or student