

Review

Provision of secondary education in Nigeria: Challenges and way forward

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Secondary education is critical to the education of a child, being the bridge between primary and tertiary education. In this paper, the challenges militating against the achievement of the objectives of secondary education in Nigeria were examined. They include: inadequate fund; inadequate and decay infrastructural facilities; inadequate and low quality teachers; negative attitudes of teacher; indiscipline of students; examination malpractices; low quality students-intake and poor academic performance of students; wastage; inappropriate curriculum; as well as the dilemma of disarticulation of schools. To tackle these challenges, and move secondary education forward in this decade and beyond, the paper suggested the provision of adequate fund for secondary education; effective administration of secondary schools; curbing examination malpractices; recruitment and training of more teachers; commitment and effectiveness of teachers; re-articulation of disarticulated schools; regular and effective inspection of secondary schools; recruitment of quality candidates into secondary schools; and review of secondary education curriculum.

Key words: Provision, secondary, education, secondary education, Nigeria, challenges, way forward.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of secondary education in educational system cannot be overemphasized. Apart from serving as the link between primary and tertiary education, it provides opportunity for a child to acquire additional knowledge, skills, and traits beyond the primary level. A major factor that necessitates the acquisition of secondary education in Nigeria is that the education being provided at the primary level is proving to be insufficient for a child to acquire permanent literacy, communicative, and numeracy skills expected from him/her at the end of the training (Chinelo, 2011; Ige, 2011; Yusuf, 2009; Osho and Osho, 2000). Secondary education is aged in Nigeria, having developed alongside western education, which was introduced by Christian missionaries in 1842 (Adesina, 1977). At the onset, only primary education received a boost from the Christian missionaries because it was used as avenue to woo the children into Christianity. Government's attention to secondary education started some decades after the development of primary education, particularly when the need for outputs of primary schools to further their education in secondary schools became paramount. Adesina (1977) reported that the first secondary school

(CMS Grammar School, Bariga, Lagos) was established by Church Missionary Society in 1859. The colonial government, for a very long time, did not complement the efforts of the Christian Missions in providing secondary education until 1909 when King's College, Lagos was established as the first government's owned secondary school. According to Adesina (1977) and Fafunwa (1974), many ordinances, edicts and bye laws were promulgated to improve the state of secondary education in Nigeria. Throughout the period of stewardship of the Colonial Governments in Nigeria, there were few secondary schools to provide secondary education for those that were then willing to acquire it. Statistics indicate that the number of secondary schools increased from 161 in 1955 to 275 in 1956, 297 in 1957, 303 in 1958, 305 in 1959 and 311 in 1960 (Adesina, 1977). Since the attainment of the country's independence status in 1960, secondary education has continued to grow in number and enrolment. In particular, the number of secondary schools increased from 1,227 in 1960 to 1,654 in 1965; 6, 231 in 1985; 6,279,462 in 2004, 6,398,343 in 2005 and 6,536,038 in 2006 while also enrolment increased from 168, 309 in 1960 to 252, 586 in

1965, 3, 807,755 in 1985 and 6,536,038 in 2006 (Ukeje, 1991; Federal Government of Nigeria, 2009).

SCOPE AND PURPOSES OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA'S CONTEXT

Secondary education is provided for children after primary education, that is, before tertiary education. It is aimed at developing a child better than the primary level, because it is obvious that primary education is insufficient for children to acquire literacy, numeracy, and communication skills (Ige, 2011; Yusuf, 2009). Such education is provided in secondary school, which can be owned by government (state or federal), individuals or community. It is divided into two phases as follows:

Junior secondary phase

This is the first three years of secondary education. The curriculum at this phase is pre-vocational and academic in scope. Core, pre-vocational and non-prevocational subjects are included in the curriculum. The core subjects include: English Language, Mathematics, French, and a major Nigerian language other than that of Environment, Basic Science, Social Studies, Citizenship Education, and Basic Technology. The pre-vocational subjects include Agricultural Science, Business Studies, Home Economics, Local Crafts, Fine Arts, Computer Education and Music while the non-prevocational subjects include Religious Knowledge, Physical and Health Education as well as Arabic. Certification at the end of this phase depends on the performance of a student in Continuous Assessment (CA) and the results of Junior School Certificate Examination (JSCE), being coordinated by State Ministries of Education or Federal Ministry of Education (if owned by Federal Government). A child has to do the Junior School Certificate Examination (JSCE) at the end of this phase. A child with minimum number of passes in the subjects in the curriculum including English Language and Mathematics (varies across the States) qualifies to proceed to the Senior Secondary (SS) level where he/she will be trained for additional three years. A child that fails the JSCE (that is those without the minimum passes including English Language and Mathematics) is expected to enroll in technical college, an out-of-school vocational training centre or an apprenticeship scheme, in line with the 6-3-3-4 system of education.

Senior secondary phase

This is the next three years after Junior secondary phase. It has wider scope than the Junior Secondary (JS) phase and aims at broadening the knowledge and skills of a student beyond the JS level and thus prepares him/her for further education. It is academic and vocational in

scope. A student has to offer minimum of seven and maximum of eight subjects, comprising the six core subjects: English Language, Mathematics, a major Nigerian language, one science, an art, and a vocational subject. One or two other electives are to be selected from the art, science, technical, social science, and vocational subjects. Certification at the end of this phase depends on the performance of a student in the Continuous Assessment (CA) and Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE), coordinated by West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and National Examinations Council (NECO). A child must obtain a minimum of five credits at two sittings including English Language and Mathematics to be able to proceed to the tertiary level of the educational system.

In Nigeria, secondary education aims at preparing an individual for:

- Useful living within the society, and
- Higher education.

Specifically, it aims at:

- Providing all primary school leavers with the opportunity for education of higher level irrespective of sex, social status, religious or ethnic background;
- Offering diversified curriculum to cater for differences in talents, opportunities, and future roles;
- Providing trained manpower in applied science, technology and commerce at sub-professional grades;
- Developing and promoting Nigerian languages, arts and culture in the context of the world's cultural heritage;
- Inspiring students with a desire for self improvement and achievement of excellence;
- Fostering national unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity;
- Raising a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the views and feelings of others, respect the dignity of labour, appreciate those values specified under our broad national goals, and live as good citizens; and
- Providing technical knowledge and vocational skills, necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial, and economic development (National Policy on Education, 2004).

CHALLENGES OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

It is not a gainsaying that secondary education is unique in the educational development of a child, being the link between primary and tertiary education. The knowledge, skills, values, and traits which a child acquires at this stage will complement those acquired at the primary level and when these are combined will prepare such child for tertiary education. In spite of the role of secondary education, Ajayi (2002) and Omoregie (2005) reported that it is riddled with crises of various dimensions and

magnitude all of which combine to suggest that it is at crossroad. An examination of secondary education in Nigeria reveals the following challenges that are plaguing it and undermining the achievement of its objectives.

Inadequate fund

The importance of adequate funding in educational development cannot be overemphasized. No organization can carry out its function effectively without adequate financial resources at its disposal. According to Obe (2009), without adequate funding, standards of education at any level shall be tantamount to a mirage, that is, building castles in the air. Money is important in a school because it is used to construct buildings, purchase needed equipment, pay staff' salaries and allowances, maintain the plants and keep the services going. In Nigeria, secondary education derives its major fund from the annual allocation to the education sector. Unfortunately, allocation to the education sector on which secondary education depends has been consistently low in spite of the strategic role of the sector in the training of manpower for the development of the economy. Statistics (Central Bank of Nigeria, 2010) revealed that between 2000 and 2010, allocation to the education sector by Federal Government in Nigeria was not more than 14% of the annual budget, which was even low when compared to the allocation of countries such as Kenya, Malawi, Botswana, Angola, Sierra Leone, South Africa, all in Sub-Saharan Africa (United Nations Development Programme, 2011). Furthermore, out of the three levels of education in Nigeria, tertiary education receives the largest share of Education Vote (Hinchliffe, 2002), thus implying that the remaining fund is to be shared by primary and secondary education (Hinchliffe, 2002). It has even been the practice of states to make provision for secondary education from the allocation to the education sector, which in most cases has been in form of running grant to schools, on term or session basis and depending on the size of enrolment of each school. Unfortunately, complaints of inadequate fund for the development of secondary education in Nigeria abound in literature (Omoriege, 2005; Jaiyeoba and Atanda, 2003; Moja, 2000; Federal Ministry of Education, 2003), which is attributed to lack of/inadequate as well as decay infrastructural facilities in secondary schools (Omoriege, 2005; Ahmed, 2003). To worsen the situation, the limited allocation to secondary education is being threatened by increase in enrolment as a result of the rise in the demand for it (Federal Ministry of Education, 2007; CBN, 2010; Jaiyeoba and Atanda, 2003).

Inadequate and decay infrastructural facilities

School facilities are the material resources that facilitate effective teaching and learning in schools. Jaiyeoba and

Atanda (2003) posited that they are things which enable a skillful teacher to achieve a level of instructional effectiveness that exceeds what is possible when they are not provided. Availability of infrastructures and facilities in the right quantity and quality is germane in education provision. A school with inadequate classrooms and facilities such as chairs, lockers, libraries, textbooks, laboratories, workshop will be uncomfortable for pupils/students to learn. Unfortunately, there are inadequate infrastructure and facilities in many secondary schools in Nigeria (CBN, 2010). According to Ahmed (2003), in most secondary schools in the country, teaching and learning take place under unconducive environment, lacking the basic materials, thus hindering the fulfillment of educational objectives.

Inadequate and low quality teachers

Teachers are the fulcrum on which the lever of educational system rests (Achimugu, 2005). Apart from students, they are the largest and most crucial inputs of educational system who influence to a great extent the quality of educational output (Fadipe, 2003). In the National Policy on Education (2004), it is stated that no educational system can rise above the quality of the teachers. In spite of the role of teachers in educational system, issues of inadequacy and low quality teachers in secondary schools in Nigeria are prevalent (Moja, 2000; Omoriege, 2005; Federal Ministry of Education, 2003; CBN, 2010). The report of the road map for Nigerian Education Sector by Federal Ministry of Education (2009a) specifically revealed that there was shortfall of 581 teachers in Junior Secondary Schools and 39,023 teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in Nigeria as at then. Obanya (2006), cited in Wasagu (2006), also reported the findings of a study of Secondary Education in four States in Nigeria (Enugu, Kaduna, Lagos, and River) as follows:

- There were shortfalls in the supply of secondary school teachers in the four states;
- The shortfall affects every subject taught at the secondary schools;
- Subjects such as Religious Studies, Commerce were also characterized by shortage of teachers;
- Mother tongue languages (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) were also characterized by inadequate teachers;
- Mathematics and technical/vocational subjects topped the list of teacher's deprived subjects; and
- Lagos, the most economically endowed among the four states had the highest list of teachers' deprived subjects.

The inadequacy of teachers is noticeable mostly in the core subjects such as English Language, Mathematics, French, and Sciences (Ndefo et al., 2006, cited in Okorodudu, 2011) and in the rural areas (Arhebo et al.,

Table 1. Analysis of qualified teachers in selected subjects including English Language and Mathematics, in secondary schools in Nigeria as at 2006.

| Subject | JSS (%) | | SSS (%) | |
|------------------|---------|------|---------|------|
| | Q | NQ | Q% | NQ% |
| English Language | 51.2 | 49.8 | 36.8 | 63.2 |
| Mathematics | 52.0 | 48.0 | 27.4 | 72.6 |

Q, qualified; NQ, not qualified. Source: Ndefo et al. (2006) cited in Okorodudu (2011): Innovations in Teaching and Learning Experiences. *Educ. Psychol.* 5(1):2-12.

Table 2. Analysis of qualified teachers in Physics and Chemistry in secondary schools in Nigeria as at 2006.

| Subject | No. | Qualified (%) | Not qualified (%) |
|-----------|-----|---------------|-------------------|
| Physics | 386 | 32.4 | 67.6 |
| Chemistry | 632 | 40.4 | 59.6 |

Source: Ndefo et al. (2006) cited in Okorodudu (2011). Innovations in Teaching and Learning Experiences. *Educ. Psychol.* 5(1):2-12.

2009; Ediho, 2009). Although Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) is the minimum qualification for teaching in the educational system (National Policy on Education, 2004), many secondary schools' teachers still parade lower qualifications such as Grade II certificate thus implying that they are unfit for teaching (FME, 2007, 2009b). UNESCO (2006) report indicates that in 2005/2006, the enrolment at the Junior Secondary Schools was 3,624,163 while the number of teachers was 61,938 out of whom 73.3% were qualified. Within the same year, the number of teachers at the Senior Secondary Schools was 74,841 out of whom 73% were qualified. Data in Table 1 also show the results of a nationwide analysis of qualified teachers in English Language and Mathematics in secondary schools in Nigeria in 2006.

As indicated in Table 1, there were 51.2% qualified against 49.8% unqualified English Language teachers in secondary schools in Nigeria as at the year 2006. The table further shows that there were 52.0% qualified against 48.0% unqualified Mathematics teachers in the schools.

As indicated in Table 2, out of 386 Physics teachers, only 32.4% were qualified while 67.6 were unqualified. Also, out of 632 Chemistry teachers, only 40.4% were qualified while 59.6% were unqualified. The preponderance of unqualified teachers in secondary schools in Nigeria will have serious implication on the quality of education which students will acquire at the end if other factors that may influence the training are constant.

Negative attitudes of teachers

In Nigeria, teaching has low status (Achimugu, 2005) while many teachers are involved in unwholesome

practices such as examination malpractices, absenteeism from school and classes, late coming to school and classes, inappropriate and non-keeping of records, trading within and outside school, commercial driving, immoral relationship with female students, extortion of money from students, drinking and smoking during official hours (Ajayi and Shofoyeke, 2003; Adeyemi and Ige, 2002; Achimugu, 2005; Famade, 2001). The inability of teachers to show commitment to teaching in schools has been attributed to the unseriousness, indiscipline, poor academic performance of students in schools (Adeyemi and Ige, 2002; Nanna, 1997) which have continued to be of concern to secondary schools' administrators, government, parents/guardians and other education stakeholders.

Indiscipline of students

Students are expected to display high-level moral etiquette to show that they are from good homes. The behavior of a child outside reflects the situation in his/her home. A student is expected to obey the school rules and regulations and be committed to academics being the primary duty in the school. What can be noticed in secondary schools these days are cases of indiscipline such as lateness to school, truancy, disobedience to teachers, beating of junior students, stealing, rape, extortion of money from junior students, wearing of assorted dresses apart from school uniform, smoking, drug abuse, drinking among students (Achimugu, 2005).

Low quality intakes and poor academic performance of students

Over the years, complaints about low quality of primary

Table 3. Performance of students in selected subjects in senior school certificate examination (SSCE) in Nigeria: 2004-2008.

| Year | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| English Language | | | | | |
| Total Sat | 1,020,431 | 1,064,587 | 1,154,266 | 1,252,570 | 1,348,214 |
| Total passed (%) | 604,37 (59.23%) | 644,017 (60.49%) | 769,001 (66.62%) | 846,209 (67.56%) | 899,091 (66.69%) |
| Total failed (%) | 383,882 (37.62%) | 393,201 (36.93%) | 342,311 (29.66%) | 379,006 (30.26%) | 422,686 (31.35%) |
| Mathematics | | | | | |
| Total Sat | 1,019,524 | 1,054,853 | 1,149,277 | 1,249,028 | 1,340,907 |
| Total passed (%) | 633,594 (16.53) | 670,582 (63.57) | 829,999 (72.22) | 917,868 (73.49) | 1,086,031 (80.99) |
| Total failed (%) | 351,512 (34.48) | 363,055 (34.42) | 286,823 (24.96) | 302,774 (24.24) | 229,021 (17.08) |
| Biology | | | | | |
| Total Sat | 1,005,894 | 1,051,557 | 1,137,181 | 1,238,163 | 1,332,737 |
| Total passed (%) | 624,647 (62.09) | 689,677 (65.59) | 852,171 (74.94) | 810,564 (65.47) | 798,341 (59.90%) |
| Total failed (%) | 348,890 (34.68) | 338,491 (32.18) | 261,200 (22.97) | 402,148 (32.48) | 506,08 (37.97) |
| Physics | | | | | |
| Total Sat | 321,499 | 344,411 | 375,824 | 418,593 | 453,173 |
| Total passed (%) | 248,849 (77.40) | 244,979 (71.13) | 305,224 (81.22) | 320,969 (76.68) | 311,823 (68.81) |
| Total failed (%) | 61,940 (19.27) | 89,150 (28.88) | 62,119 (16.52) | 88,480 (21.14) | 124,420 (27.46) |
| Economics | | | | | |
| Total Sat | 973,611 | 1,007,710 | 1,089,355 | 1,183,154 | 1,273,178 |
| Total passed (%) | 726,802 (74.65) | 781,286 (77.53) | 896,216 (82.27) | 883,647 (74.69) | 1,038,984 (81.61) |
| Total failed (%) | 216,736 (22.26) | 206,654 (20.51) | 171,145 (15.71) | 270,918 (22.89) | 212,481 (16.69) |
| Chemistry | | | | | |
| Total Sat | 327,503 | 349,936 | 380,104 | 422,681 | 456,993 |
| Total passed (%) | 207,580 (63.38) | 243,773 (69.66) | 257,093 (67.64) | 298,964 (70.73) | 319,760 (69.97) |
| Total failed (%) | 107,318 (32.77) | 95,495 (27.29) | 114,475 (30.11) | 111,322 (26.34) | 116,892 (25.58) |

Source: West African Examinations Council, in Annual Abstract of Statistics (2009). Note: According to SSCE standard, pass means obtaining the minimum pass mark, which is 40 while failure means scoring less than 40% in each subject.

education pupils and outputs in Nigeria abound in literature (Chinelo, 2011; Ige, 2011; Yusuf, 2009; Osho and Osho, 2000). Many people are contending that Nigeria's primary education can no longer provide the expected literacy and numeracy skill for its clients. Unfortunately, the recruitment of many low quality outputs of primary schools into secondary creates stress for teachers who have to double their effort to teach the students effectively. Reports (Adeyemi and Ige, 2002; Omoregie, 2005), however, confirm the poor quality of secondary schools' students and outputs in Nigeria, which reflects in increasing failure in examinations, particularly the Senior School Certificate Examinations, as confirmed by data in Table 3.

Prevalence of examination malpractice

Duyilemi (2003) opined that examination is the most

difficult hurdle which all categories of pupils and students have to scale over at one time or the other in educational institution. The fear of examination is thus the beginning of wisdom for pupils and students. The fear has been leading many pupils and students into indulgence in examination malpractice. In Nigeria, examination malpractice is now 'a demon with more than a thousand faces' due to its persistence in spite of efforts at curtailing it. Although the menace is not peculiar to secondary education only, it is a fact that secondary education has over the years been recording significant share of it. Reports by West African Examinations Council (WAEC), cited in Daily Sun of 29th August, 2006 indicates that between May/June 1995 and May/June, 2006, 14,408,336 candidates sat for Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE); out of these, 1,367,726 representing 9.4% were involved in examination malpractices. Report further reveals the blacklisting of 324 secondary schools in 2007 by Honourable Minister of

Table 4. Distribution of cases of examination malpractice in secondary schools in Nigeria in year 2007.

| Geo-political zone | No of schools involved | Percent (%) |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| North Central | 54 | 16.6 |
| North East | 08 | 2.5 |
| North West | 12 | 3.6 |
| South East | 48 | 14.8 |
| South South | 116 | 36.0 |
| South West | 86 | 26.5 |
| Total | 324 | 100.0 |

Source: Federal Ministry of Education, in Olatunbosun (2009). Examination malpractice in secondary schools in Nigeria: What sustains it? *European J. Educ. Stud.* 1(3):101.

Table 5. Incidences of wastage in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria as at 2003.

| Parameters | Total wastage (%) | Male (%) | Female (%) |
|------------------------|-------------------|----------|------------|
| Secondary rep. rate | 1.9 | 1.7 | 2.2 |
| Secondary dropout rate | 9.8 | 9.1 | 10.7 |

Source: Nigeria, Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) 2003.

Education in Nigeria, due to examination malpractice (Edukugho, 2007, cited in Vanguard of 22nd February, 2007). Such schools were barred from serving as centres for any examination being coordinated by West African Examinations Council (WAEC), National Examinations Council (NECO), and Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board (JAMB). The distribution of cases of examination malpractices across the six geo-political zones of the country in year 2007 is shown in Table 4.

Unfortunately, as a result of the prevalence of examination malpractice at the secondary level, many low quality candidates are now in tertiary institutions in Nigeria (Ajeyalemi, 2002; Okebukola, 2000). Olamouisi (1998) lamented that the universities and other tertiary institutions are complaining that those candidates admitted on the basis of high grades in the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) are being withdrawn due to academic incompetency and the resultant inability to understand lectures.

Incidences of wastage

Wastage has been an issue of concern in Nigeria's educational system. Even though the issue affects the entire system, it is worthy of note that secondary education has over the years been recording its share of it. Unfortunately, at a time when Nigeria is clamouring for education for all its citizens by year 2015, many students are dropping out of secondary schools due to institutional and non-institutional factors (Martinez and Monday, 1998; Adeyemi and Ajayi, 2006; Callaway, 1967; Adesina, 1983) while many are also repeating classes due to failure in internal examinations as confirmed by data in Table 5.

As indicated in Table 5, the repetition rate at secondary level was 1.9% in 2003 while dropout rate was 9.8%. Apart from the data shown in the table, research findings (Durosaro, 1985; Adeyemi, 2012) confirm the prevalence of wastage in secondary education in Nigeria. It is noteworthy that situation where students repeat classes and drop out of schools prematurely constitute waste of the resources of the parents and government on the education of the children. When a student repeats class, not only will extra money be spent on their education, the chances of those intending candidates for admission will be blocked. A pupil/student that spends more than the normal years is deemed to have over-utilised resources, both financial, human, and materials.

Inappropriate curriculum

Curriculum has been defined as the experiences/activities (co-curricular) provided under the auspices of school to bring about a change in the learner in the desired direction (Ngwu, 2008). The idea of having a curriculum for education in Nigeria's educational system dates back to the year 1969 when a National Curriculum Conference was inaugurated, sequel to public criticisms of the educational system inherited from the colonial governments (Ogunnu, 2000). Since that time, the curriculum of education has been undergoing review and improvements. Even though secondary education curriculum had undergone a lot of review and improvements over the years, the curriculum is still laden with shortcomings and has been a subject of criticisms (Akpan, 2008; Ukpai and Okoro, 2011; Balogun, 2009). Arguments against secondary education curriculum in Nigeria have been that it is overloaded, content driven,

not relevant, fails to give regards to vocational training as a major component of a child's development, irrelevant to the needs of the society, too wide in scope, does not take care of teachers' qualification and training, as well as laying too much emphasis on intellectual development of a child.

Dilemma of disarticulation of schools

One of the strategies for implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Nigeria is the disarticulation of secondary schools, which entails the carving out of the three junior classes (JSS 1 to 3) in a secondary school to form a separate and independent school and the remaining senior classes (SS 1 to 3) to form another separate school. Such disarticulation however involves the sharing of the assets and liabilities of the parent school. The inclusion of disarticulation in the implementation strategies of Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme is premised on the belief that if effectively implemented, it will give room for proper focus on Junior Secondary aspect of basic education as well as enhance the achievement of UBE objectives. It is also envisaged that with the JSS forming separate entities, more students can have access to secondary education while more teachers, infrastructures, and facilities can be acquired for teaching of students. There is the belief that if Junior Secondary Schools operate as separate entities, there will be better accountability in the management of resources being committed to UBE while effective monitoring of the situation in the schools will be achieved. At the meeting of National Executive Council of All Nigeria Conference of Principals of Secondary Schools (ANCOPSS), held at Abeokuta in 2010, it was confirmed that since 2004 when UBE Act became operational, many states were yet to fully comply with the disarticulation directive, few states had fully disarticulated, many states had haphazardly disarticulated, while some states are yet to commence the process. From all indications therefore, the issue of disarticulation is turning to be a carryover of the existing problems in secondary education such as inadequate teachers, infrastructural facilities, fund, and the creation of new ones such as rivalry among teachers and schools' administrators for positions; redundancy. Many people are contending that the policy is only meant to create vacancies for those aspiring to take up leadership positions in secondary schools while some believe that it will at the end be another investment in futility. As such, many states that had disarticulated their schools are re-articulating them thus implying a return to the *status quo* and confusion in the implementation of UBE.

MOVING SECONDARY EDUCATION FORWARD IN NIGERIA: WAY FORWARD

In view of the role of secondary education in educational

development of a child, it is imperative that the challenges facing it in Nigeria be tackled so that there can be meaningful development at that level of education. To achieve this, the under-listed suggestions are made:

Adequate funding of education, particularly secondary education

In view of the persistent limited allocation to the education, government should increase the allocation to the sector so as to give room for increase in the running grant to secondary schools and ensure the provision of more infrastructure and facilities for the training of students. It is worthy of note that UNESCO has recommended the allocation of 26% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of each country in the world to education. It will not be too much if this standard is attained in Nigeria by government. It needs not be overemphasized that the funding of education is becoming a yoke for government, being the major financier. It thus becomes imperative for private sector including the parents/guardians, companies, Non-Governmental Organizations to contribute to the funding and sustenance of education in Nigeria. Aspects in which the private sector can be involved include the donation of money, provision of services for schools, building of libraries and laboratories for secondary schools. Secondary school's principals should also mobilize members of the old students of their schools towards donating to the development of their schools.

Effective administration of secondary schools

Secondary schools' administrators should be more alive to their responsibilities. They should double their efforts at ensuring that there is high-level discipline in their domains. They should supervise the teaching of teachers in schools regularly and ensure that discipline is maintained among the students and teachers. Teachers and students found to have shown dereliction of duties and contravene school rules and regulations should be reprimanded.

Curbing examination malpractices

There is need to arrest the increasing trend in examination malpractice in schools. Secondary schools' administrators should investigate any reported case (s) of this menace and ensure that those involved are punished to prevent others from indulging in it in future. Teachers should however be committed to teaching so that students can acquire deep knowledge that will enable them pass examination without recourse to malpractice. Government should also enforce the laws against exami-

nation malpractice. Those caught in the act should be punished to serve as deterrent to others. Teachers, being role models to students, should also refrain from examination malpractice. Parents also owe it a duty to inculcate high-level moral training on their children so that they can refrain from examination malpractice in schools.

Recruitment and training of additional teachers

In view of the strategic role of teachers in education process and the level of inadequacy in secondary schools in Nigeria, government should recruit additional teachers from the pool of unemployed graduates in the society and distribute them to secondary schools. Government should also enforce that those teachers without the minimum teaching qualification (NCE) should make effort to upgrade their qualification through in-service training. There should also be periodic training of teachers (old and new) in secondary schools through seminars, workshops and conferences, to improve their performance.

Need for commitment and effectiveness of teachers

It is obvious that teachers play significant role in the teaching-learning process in schools. Teachers thus have to be committed to teaching in schools. This can be achieved through prompt attendance to lesson delivery, coverage of syllabus, effective teaching of students among others, to improve the level of academic performance of students both within the school and at the end of their training.

Re-articulation of disarticulated secondary schools

In view of its negative effects which outweigh the positive effects, government should make it a policy to rearticulate the disarticulated schools. Re-articulation of schools should however be complemented with the fortification of schools in terms of the provision of more fund, facilities among others.

Curbing wastage in secondary education

In view of the negative effects of wastage on the educational system, it is imperative for government to curb wastage in the system. To achieve this, Government should initiate advocacy measures for parents and students through print and electronic media, and parents/guardians should be given orientation against premature withdrawal of their children from schools. As far as poverty of parents/guardians is a major factor influencing wastage in Nigeria, government should award

scholarships and bursaries to pupils and students of secondary schools, to ameliorate the effect of the poverty of their parents/guardians. Government should also re-introduce education loan for pupils/students to enable poor parents pay the fees and procure needed materials for their children.

Review of secondary education curriculum

Even though government has not relented in its effort to review curriculum of education at all levels in Nigeria, the review of secondary education curriculum is highly imperative in view of the shortcomings inherent in it. Such review should however be a regular process.

Recruitment of quality candidates into secondary schools

In view of the need to improve the quality of students in secondary schools, government should ensure that a thorough admission process that will give priority to merit be put in place in Nigeria. Passing entrance examination should however be complemented by a n interview process which will ensure that only the best candidates are recruited into schools and that the quality of secondary education will improve from its status quo in the country.

Regular and effective inspection of secondary schools

It is not a gainsaying that inspection plays great role in achieving quality education in schools. There is thus the need for attention to be paid to inspection of secondary schools in Nigeria. Ministry of Education and other concerned agencies should continue to organize regular inspection visits to schools and present reports of such inspection.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this paper, the challenges facing secondary education in Nigeria, which include the poor performance of students, negative attitudes of teachers and students, inadequate fund, infrastructures and facilities among others were discussed. The ways to tackle the challenges were also looked into. The government, parents, and secondary schools' administrators have roles to play towards ensuring that these challenges are combated and that secondary education is moved forward, from its *status quo*.

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