

THE IMPACT OF POLITICS AND POLICY ON NIGERIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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INTRODUCTION

The broad aim of any educational system is to develop the capabilities of the individual to be useful to himself and his society. Emielu opined that “certain plans, goals and objectives have to be formulated in order to attain the expected developmental transformation needed for man's society”.¹ These above named plans, goals and objectives are put together and formed into what is called “Policy”. This policy is meant to guide and direct the smooth running and implementation of what education sets itself to achieve in the individual and his society at large.

Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, successive government at federal, state and local levels have continued to spend considerable proportions of their annual budgets on education. Also, more institutions have sprung up at all levels and impressive increases in school enrolment have also been achieved. But beyond the spending of huge amount of money on education and enrolling of students at various educational institutions, not much has been done in terms of radical implementation of the various educational policies. Thus, according to Omoregie and Omoike, “Policies in education whether at the formulation or implementation stage are often under the whims and caprices of the political gladiators at various points in time.”²

METHODOLOGY

The following methodology will be adopted here. We shall make some clarifications on the terms 'Politics', 'Policy', and 'Education'; and then take a quick look at the Nigerian perspective of the impact of politics and its policy on education from the historical background. This will be followed by an evaluation and conclusion.

POLITICS

The term 'Politics' as Frolov puts it means activity linked with relations between classes, nations and other social groups, centered on the seizure, retention and use of State power.³ Okolo further stated that "politics conjectures about how political organizations actually work and the types of policies with which they employ to express their fundamental interests and ideas in political governance and socio-economic structures of a nation."⁴ In relation to Nigeria, Ejiofor defines Nigerian politics "as a process of controlling the authority to distribute the values of society as supreme arbiter; and the process and institutions for seeing who gets what, how and when from the resources and assets of Nigeria."⁵ However, from the above definitions we can say that Politics is an activity governed by rules and standards of propriety and success. It is a process of power possession and the use of authority to maintain law and order; it also concerns its influence on the different groups of person in matters that are likely to affect the course of government in the society.

POLICY

The word 'Policy' connotes choice. It means a plan in mind. Policy is quite different from habit. Omoregie and Omoike noted that "when we talk of policy decisions we may be talking of someone doing something with particular purposes in mind."⁶ It must be noted here that it is not the "doing" that makes the action a policy, but the doer's intention- his purposes and related considerations. Beyond doing something with a particular purpose in mind, there must be regularity as the true nature of policy. "Policy therefore can be seen as a deliberate programme planned and Undertaken with a particular purpose in mind."⁷ Without policy guidelines for decisions and actions, there will be inconsistencies which may lead to dissatisfaction and defeat of the systems. Adenaike *et al* further defined policy as "a rule for action, manifesting or clarifying specific organizational goals, objectives, values and ideas and often prescribing the obligatory or most desirable ways and means for their accomplishment."⁸ Such a rule for action established for the purpose of framing, guiding or directing organizational activities including decisions making intends to provide relative stability, consistency, uniformity and continuity in the

operations of the organization.⁹ Policy therefore, consists of a plan of some agents and agencies to do something in particular.

There are four basic elements which must be considered in terms of policy description:

- (i) A policy must have an **Agent [A]** or an agency
- (ii) The agent must be obligated to **Do [D]** something in particular.
- (iii) Whenever some special **Conditions [C]** occur
- (iv) The doing must be for some **Purpose [P]** and the purpose must be to serve the interest of some relevant public.¹⁰

There are two agents of policy namely (a) Authorizing agent (b) Implementing agent.

(A)**Authorizing Agents:** They are those who make the policy namely the federal and state governments, National Assembly, federal and states houses' of Assembly in Nigerian context; University senate, University council in the University setting.

(b)**Implementing Agents:** These are those persons who are responsible for translating policy plans to reality. Such persons can be principals, teachers, vice-chancellors, civil servants (in the various governmental parastats at federal, state, or local council); depending on the level of implementation and formulation or authorization one is looking at the policy making process.

According to Adenaike et al “policy process is not static but a continuous process of decision and activities. Policy making process is a sequential pattern of action involving a number of functional categories of activities as follows:

(a)**Policy Formulation Stage:** This stage consists of process of identifying the social problems, deciding what is to be done and finally how it should be done. Under this policy formulation, there are lots of factors that do influence this policy by political office holders. These influences are described as “decision criteria”. They are: (i)Values (ii)Political Party Affiliation (iii)Interest of Constituency (iv)Public Opinion (v)Deference to the judgment of others and (vi)Decision Rules.¹¹

(b)**Policy Implementation Stage:** This is the stage at which policy is being translated into programmes. Here, “Implementation refers to the process of converting input like financial resources, material resources, information, technical human resources, demand, supports into policy output, like things government do for instance; construction of roads and drainages, building of hospitals, schools, maternity and health centers, provision of housing policy (low cost) to mention a few.” Unfortunately, policy implementation in Nigeria has been described as one major problem confronting development.¹²

(c)**Feedback and Evaluation Stage:** This is the stage of comparing between intended outcomes of policy and actual achievements of set goals and objectives. The process of evaluation is such that where is so much discrepancy between the expected and actual effect of policy; this could lead to reformation of policy. Thus, the policy can be enlarged or abrogated.¹³

EDUCATION

According to Osokoya , “the aim of education in any society at any period depends on the kind of values greatly cherished for directing human development within that society.”¹⁴ Adewole on the other hand sees “education as the key that unlocks the door of development and modernization most especially in the developing countries of Africa and Asia than elsewhere.”¹⁵ Therefore, the socio-political and economic development of any nation is mostly determined by the quality and level of educational attainment of its populace. However, from personal viewpoint, education is seen as the panacea to the problems of mankind, thereby aiding mankind to achieve holistic transformation of both mankind and the entire society.

POLITICS AND POLICIES IN EDUCATION: THE NIGERIAN PERSPECTIVE

As earlier mentioned, politics concerns the behaviour of groups and individuals in matters that are likely to affect the course of government; for instance in voting, in forming and running political parties or in exerting influences in other ways on those responsible for the conduct of government. Seeing politics as units of behaviour, Omoregie and Omoike opined that “these units of behaviour signify acts and events that are political in nature irrespective of the institutions where they occur.”¹⁶ Such conception of politics as units of behaviour satisfy three aspects which are (a) Authority and Control (b) Predominance of Public Interest and actions (c) Institutionalized legitimization and accountability

From the above understanding, it is important to note that the society only exists and survives through politics because it is the legitimate instrument of power to generate, maintain and allocate resources to the various groups in the society. The political power is meant to sustain and maintain the life span of the society. Although in some parts of developing countries like Nigeria, political powers have sometime been pursued, captured, retained and abruptly aborted by political unrest and coup d'état. In the real sense, Okunamiri noted that “the political power here is for the purpose of achieving political goals which are the fruits of power.”¹⁷ Therefore, there are two elements underling the end result of political power. They are (a) the mission of

power and (b) the fruit of power. The right of someone in political position to make public policy is regarded as "The mission of power". "This entails political responsibility and authority, and public interest on how the wealth of the nation is being distributed and re-distributed."¹⁸ On the other hand, "the fruit of power refers to the public goals and services produced by wise public policies."¹⁹

POLITICS AND EDUCATION

The relationship between politics and education is such that each of them depends on the other for the survival and sustenance of the society. Omoregie et al pointed out that "they are both necessary for the functioning of the social system of the society."²⁰ The political functions that determine what values and allocation of resources of the society go to who and what in the society depend largely on the functioning of the social institutions and agencies of which EDUCATION is one.²¹

EDUCATION AND POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

It is worthy of note that one definite contribution made by education has been the political enlightenment of the Nigerian people particularly the educated elite. The period between 1920-1950 was the critical period when many Nigerians nurtured and intensified their political intention and activities. Fafunwa noted that "a group of West African leaders met in Accra in 1920 under the aegis of the National Congress of British, West Africa to demand from the British a measure of Self-government and a West African University on such lines as would preserve in the students a sense of African nationality."²² Some of the leaders at the Accra meeting were Herbert Macaulay of Nigeria, Isaac Wallace Johnson of Sierra Leone and Caseley Hayford of the then Gold Coast.

In 1921 Herbert Macaulay the 'Doyen of Nigerian Politics, formed a National Democratic party in Lagos with a view to contesting election to the legislative Council, at that time dominated by the Colonial Office. The Party was organized by the educated elites but sought and received the support of Lagos market women, chiefs and prominent elders and merchants.

In 1934 a group of youths who did not subscribe to Macaulay' politics founded the Lagos Youth Movement, which later became the Nigerian Youth Movement, even though its activities were largely restricted to Lagos and its environs.

Between 1930-1940 the two political parties gave Nigeria a lively political atmosphere (the political consciousness) particularly during election periods to the Lagos town council and the Nigerian Legislative Council, and during crises such as the workers' strike of 1947- the police shooting of workers in Enugu coal-mines, the Kano shooting of workers to mention a few.

In 1944 The National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroun (N.C.N.C) was founded by the Nigerian Union of Students (which was made up of mainly of senior pupils of the Nigerian secondary schools and some Yaba Higher College students. These young students pressured the political leaders of the two major parties and cultural and ethnic leaders to come together to form one strong political party. The unique effort resulted in the formation of the NCNC which was a collection of prominent individuals such as teachers, clerks, private individuals, professional people, and groups such as labour unions, ethnic organizations and its main goal was to win self-government for Nigeria as soon as possible. The two prominent members of the newly formed party were Herbert Macaulay and Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe. The Action Group Opposed to some of the NCNC views which was founded in 1951 by some of the old Nigerian Youth Movement members who refused to answer the Nigerian Union of Students' clarion call of 1944. The leader of the new party was Chief Obafemi Awolowo. In 1952, some Northern Nigerians who had remained relatively unmoved by the political activities of the south founded the Northern People's Congress under the leadership of Almadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto. It turned out that each of the three major leaders of the respective parties assumed the premiership of the Eastern, Western and Northern regions and the three parties later played a major role in the March for Nigeria's self-determination between 1950 and 1960.²³

POLITICS AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY IN NIGERIA

According to Adewole “the most significant attempt has ever happened in the history of Nigeria political system with the view toward gaining focused direction in her educational system based on genuine national needs, problems and aspirations was the evolving of the new “NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION (1977, 1981, and 2004).”²⁴ This policy contains some objectives that are formulated together into what is referred to as the “Philosophy of Education” in Nigeria. These objectives are five in numbers. They are five main goals which were formulated by the political class. For these goals to be achieved, they need to be transferred to the education system. This means that the education system serves as the instrument or avenue through which these goals come to reality. The whole essence of the National Policy on Education (NPE) is for the attainment of the national goals of the country. Here it serves as the political mission process. The outcome of this mission process produces a political fruit that is national development.

NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION

According to Adewole ” the new National Policy on Education can be seen as an attempt to provide a direction for Nigeria's education.”²⁵

The policy signifies awareness on the federal government's part of education as an instrument “par excellent” for effecting national development (FRN, 2004: 6). As Osokoya asserted, “the five main national goals or objectives as contained in the National Policy on Education (2004) are the building of:

- (i) A free and democratic society;
- (ii) A just and egalitarian society;
- (iii) A united, strong and self-reliant nation;
- (iv) A great and dynamic economy;
- (v) A land full of bright opportunities for all citizens²⁶

From the discussion above, we will notice the close ties relationship between politics and education as both social systems that perform the same functions; one corroborating the other for the effectiveness of the national developmental goals in the Nigerian society. Thus, it will suffice to note here that the quality of the political system, including its power and the polity is dependent largely on the type of educational system, which relies solely on the political system for its funding and definitions. A close look at the background of the political system and its impact that gave rise to the type of educational system and policy we have in Nigeria today will be appropriate here.

POLITICAL SYSTEM AND THE EMERGENCE OF NIGERIAN EDUCATION

Under this we shall look at the various political systems in the history of Nigeria and their impacts on the formulation of educational system in Nigeria. We shall look at; (a) Pre-colonial era (b) Colonial era (c) Post-colonial era (d) Modern/Contemporary Nigeria.

(A) PRE-COLONIAL ERA

The system of education in this period was predominantly based on traditional education that is “Indigenous Education”. The Nigeria at this period Osokoya explained “are the various ethnic groups' communities commonly called tribes with a common language, fairly common tradition, a remote ancestor and a common territory.”²⁷ The fulanis occupied the large empires and territories in the Northern parts, the Yorubas and Benins occupied the more forested south-west of the Niger, while the igbos and the ibibios inhabited the eastern part of the Niger. These various ethnic groups had their different political systems and distinct ways of educating their people. The educational policy of the indigenous ethnic groups in the Pre-colonial era is as follows:

- (i) Training for participation throughout one's life
- (ii) Training for allegiance and loyalty
- (iii) Training for mutual interest and interdependence

(iv) Training geared towards the solving of societal needs and aspirations.

In addition to the above, various ethnic groups most especially the core Nigerian tribal groups of Yorubas, Igbos and the Hausas engaged in different trades and commercial activities which subsequently projected their levels of economic prowess to the outside world. Notwithstanding, majority of their cultural traditions are still being passed on from one generation to another through cultural arts and artifacts in the various local communities.

(B) COLONIAL ERA

This period was dominated by the Western Christian Missionary type of education. These came to establish a prototype of Western formal education in Nigeria.

Historical Background

- 1472: The first encounter of western formal education on the soil of Nigeria was that of the early Portuguese Merchant and Adventurers. They were Catholic Missionaries who set up trading posts, Churches and schools. This contact did not last for they were unable to spread their educational influence to the interior parts of Nigeria.
- 1842: The Wesleyan Methodist Mission established by Mr and Mrs De Graft started mission schools at Badagry and Abeokuta.
- 1843-46: The Church Missionary Society (CMS) spearheaded by Samuel Ajayi Crowther, Mr. Townsend and Rev C.A. Golmer built two schools, one for boys and the other for girls.
- 1847: The United Free Church of Scotland started their missions at the Niger Delta and Eastern Nigeria. They built a school at Calabar.
- 1853-55: The Southern Baptist Convention had joined the Western Missionaries in Nigeria to also established schools at Ijaye and Ogbomoso.
- 1868: The Roman Catholic was not left out of the race of the establishment of the Western type of formal education. This was first championed by Padre Antonio.
- 1878: The Qua Iboe Mission founded a school at Old Calabar.
- 1892: The Primitive Methodist Missionary Society had also established their influence in Calabar and Owerri.

The educational policy during this early period of the Colonial era is based on the following objectives:

- (i) Education for conversion into the Christian faith that is "Evangelical"
- (ii) Education was meant to produce serviceable subordinates.

(iii) Education was to produce basic literacy that is how to read and write.²⁹

From the above objectives, the Christian missions were nothing more than humble servants being used by the political tricks of the Colonial masters to achieve their political aims. Thus, Osokoya revealed that “the missionaries fashioned Nigerian schools along the same line as the charity schools in Great Britain, which were financed by voluntary donations.”³⁰ It will suffice to note that between 1877-1882, the grants for the establishment of schools by the Christian missions came from their home churches. It was in 1882 when the colonial government promulgated the first West African Education Ordinance, which applied to the colony of Lagos through which grants were given to the Christian missions to operate with. In 1886, the territory of Lagos became independent colony in order to attend strictly to the administrative runnings of the Nigerian people. Therefore, in 1887 the First Nigeria's Education Ordinance was promulgated. Through this, provisions for scholarships worth (Ten Pounds Sterling) were given to poor children to assist them to further their education.

POLITICS AND EDUCATION: THE COLONIAL GOVERNMENT EXPERIENCE

It is significant to note that “the establishment of the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria and that of the Southern Protectorate in 1899 made a great impact on the educational development in Nigeria; for one thing,”³¹ it provided some measure of protection for Christian evangelism in Nigeria in general and in Northern Nigeria in particular. In addition to this it made the government become more involved than ever in the education of the people it was either ruling or protecting.

However, despite the amalgamation of 1914 of the Northern and the Southern Protectorates, each of the sections of the country still operates a separate educational department until 1929. The major significances that characterized this period in question were; (i) the promulgation of ordinances to guide and regulate the grants-in-aids to voluntary schools, and the curbing of the increasing numbers of unassisted schools and to simplify the procedure for school approvals. We have 'The 1882 Education Ordinance of colonies of West Africa', 'The 1887 Education Ordinance for the control and promotion of education in the protectorate of Lagos.' and the 1916 Lugard Education Ordinance for the unification of the administrative arms of government the North and South Protectorate;” (ii) the establishment of various educational boards called “Commissions”. These commissions were set up to attend to colonial government concerns about the growing and rising numbers of government schools and their needs. These commissions present reports on educational policy and

possible ways of solving educational problems. Below are the lists of the various commissions established by the colonial rule:

1920: Phelps-Stokes Commission report- directed towards the surveying of the educational ventures in Africa by the missionaries and the philanthropic bodies since 19th Century, so as to identify problem areas.³²

1943-45: Asquith Commission and Elliot Commission reports-to investigate into the principles which should guide the promotion of higher education, learning and research and the development of Universities in the colonies and to explore other ways that universities in the United Kingdom can co-operate and collaborate with the local institutions newly established.³³

1959: The Ashby Commission was another great landmark in the history of Nigerian government. Then the government appointed this commission to investigate into Nigeria's needs in the field of Post-Secondary School Certificate and Higher Education over the next twenty (20) Years (1960-80). The appointment of this commission is of special importance for three main reasons .

1. It was the first time in the history of education in Nigeria that Nigerians themselves as represented by the Minister of Education and the Federal Cabinet decided to examine the higher educational structure in terms of the needs of the country not only for that material time but for a period of twenty years.
2. It was the first time that a combined team of three Nigerians, three British and two American educators was ever given an opportunity in Nigeria to pool their experiences and intellectual resources in order to give Nigeria the best advice practicable in the field of education.
3. It was the first official comprehensive review of higher education in Nigeria to be undertaken by a team of experts.³⁴

REGIONALIZATION AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY IN NIGERIA

The first educational policy this period came out with was that of the Richard Constitution of 1946. This put Nigeria firmly on the path to political independence. This constitution divided the country into three regional administrative units. Osokoya revealed that “in the area of education, the constitution decentralized educational administration and classified it as a regional service.”³⁵ By 1950, the Ibadan Conference gave rise to a federal system of government whereby the regions existed as immediate units of Nigerian federation. By the Richard Constitution, the regions were assigned powers to legislate laws on the range of subjects of which education was inclusive. Furthermore, the 1954 Nigerian Constitution Order in Council strengthened the regional governments in their duties of legislation of laws within their

boundaries. Osokoya noted that “this 1954 Constitution had two schedules of legislative items namely: (a) Exclusive legislative list that is the prerogative of the federal parliament to enact laws. (b) Concurrent legislative list: that both the federal and the region legislatures could make laws provided that the federal law prevailed in the case of conflict between both of them on the same subject matter.”³⁶

The other subjects not on either list were termed the “Residual Subjects” that is matters that are exclusive legislative competence of the regions, for instance, the establishment of higher type of education. “Thus each regional government explained and put into practice the 1954 Constitution to suite their individual regional and local needs; all the new regional education laws made provision for the establishment of Regional Boards of Education and also Central Board of Education.”³⁷ These boards were charged with the primary responsibility of advising their respective Ministries of Education on matters connected with educational theory and practice.

(C) POST COLONIAL ERA

The British adopted educational policies failed because they did not meet the local needs and aspirations of the Nigerian people. This increasing need for educational relevance prompted the agitation for a re-evaluation of the old system and a desire for a national policy on education in Nigeria to unify the fragmentation occasioned by the efforts of the State governments at the time. According to Omoregie et al “the National Policy on Education (NPE) first published in 1977 revised in 1981 and 2004 became the first indigenous policy in education for Nigerians and their aspirations and needs.”³⁸ This National Policy on Education is built upon the following philosophical objectives:

- (i) The development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen.
- (ii) The full integration of the individual into the community.
- (iii) The provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system (FRN, 2004)³⁹

(D) MODERN/CONTEMPORARY NIGERIA

The greatest masterpiece coming out of the consensus efforts of Nigerian people was the drafting of the National Policy on Education (1977, 1981, and 2004). Despite the constant review of this document, experts are of the view that the philosophical foundation still lacks clarity and coherence. It has not efficiently demonstrated evidence that it was based on the nation's sociological perspectives as it ought to have been. The policy stated that “the federal Government of Nigeria has

adopted education as an instrument 'par excellence' for effecting national development" (FRN, 2004). Consequently, Adewole noted that "in order that the human and material resources put into it might effect national development, education has to be geared towards a reasoned philosophical orientation and based on the social, economic and political problems facing the nation."⁴⁰

EVALUATION

So far, it is worthy of note that the political system of Nigeria even in the just concluded past dispensation despite all efforts made to revive education has only given a cosmetic growth to the survival of the present National Policy on Education. The following political issues are among many notable issues responsible for the setbacks in Nigerian education in this modern time. They will be evaluated.

(1) Control and management of Education: The responsibility and roles of control and management of education in Nigeria are shared between the three tiers of government namely the federal, State and local government. This makes them exercise some degree of freedom in their political roles on education. However, this relationship which these tiers of government enjoyed has often resulted into educational and political problems like;

(a) Conflicts in the area of common boundaries shared by different agencies commissioned by federal and state governments on matters of education

(b) Problems flowing from political interests of the powers at the helm of administration especially with the political parties cross carpeting and their utopian manifestos. Thus, the American Consul General to Nigeria Jeffrey Hawkins on June 29, 2015 commented that Nigerian politicians are Opportunistic when they do not get something in a party they quickly cross somewhere else"⁴¹

(c) Issue of control of education especially in higher education has caused several frictions between federal and state governments in the areas of autonomy with various governing councils of higher institutions and their academic staff.

(2) National Unity and Political Cohesion: It has been an age long interest of the government in Nigeria to see education as the uniting force for national unity. In fact one of the objectives of the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) stated that "it should build a united, strong and self-reliant nation". However, despite the various challenges that have been confronting the country with the wide gap between the Northern part of Nigeria and the Southern Part of Nigeria; the damage caused by the military dictatorship in the first and second republic; and

the present day menace of Boko haram in the North East part of Nigeria; there has been constant threat to the unity of Nigeria as a nation. In order to see lasting solution to these threats, the federal and state governments have embarked on various educational projects as palliative measures to solving the problems of disunity and division in Nigeria.

(a) There has been more emphasis on the teaching of general studies/programmes such as Social studies, civic education in schools' curriculum.

(b) Introduction of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in 1976 was put in place for cross socio-cultural experiences for Nigerian youths.

(c) Establishment of more tertiary institutions in Nigeria to solve the problem of federal character and quota system in admission policy was also put in place. (Recently, four Federal Colleges of Education were raised to the rank of Universities)

(d) Establishment of educational programmes to cater for out- of-school children, girl child education and the "Al majiris" phenomenon in the Northern part of Nigeria. Consequently, we still notice more Nigerian children not only in the Northern part of Nigeria are daily deprived of access to quality education despite the huge sum of money rolled out year by year.

(3) Social and Economic Gaps between States: There has been also this contending issue of educational gaps between the Northern and Southern states. That the former is educationally disadvantaged while the later is educationally advantaged. The recent efforts of the federal government as earlier mentioned to establish more new federal universities are put in place to bridge this gap. The state government too has also sought to take advantage to do likewise in the establishment of Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and other institutions across the states based on their political convictions and the need to spread government resources. But it is noted that the major problem of the issue is funding of these established institutions.

(4) Political Party Creeds and Interest in Education: From time to time, politicians have often regard education taking the first place in their political manifestos. They see education as an instrument for national unity and development. They often take advantage of the electorate to seek to sell their manifestos. And as earlier noted by the American Consul General Jeffrey Hawkins, "Nigerian Politicians are Opportunistic" in their approach. They promise heaven and earth before election but by the time they grasp power, it becomes difficult for them to fulfill their promises. This has led to the problem with the

funding of our educational institutions. Thus, Dike in his opinion stated that “political leaders should take politics out of education as its continued neglect would lead to social paralysis.”⁴² What this means is that our politician are still toiling with the glories of our country Nigeria.

(5) Equality of Opportunity and Education: In the National Policy on Education (2004) it stated that “there will be provision of Equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country.” The issue here is 'Equal Access'. This means that all qualified students shall get equal access to education at any level no matter the person's socio-economic background, sex, ethnic origin, political or religious affiliation or intellectual ability. Equal opportunity is not only to gain admission to any school of one's choice but to also receive the best possible quality education available that could be compared with any other in the world. However, in spite of the efforts of government at federal and state levels with various programmes, the issue of equality of opportunities still constitutes serious challenges and problems for our nation today. The problem of selection, federal character and quota-system in the Nigerian political system still leaves many Nigerian children outside the school today.

(6) Policy Implementation: In Nigeria, there are many wonderfully enacted policies. Nigeria does not suffer want or lack of them. However good they are, they still fall prey of haphazard implementation. Every new government prefers to start its own projects with new policies attached to them. They are not ready to complete the ones started by their predecessors. The consequence of this is an array of abandoned buildings, projects and policies. In addition to this, the average tenure of a Minister to enact and execute a policy is less than two years. This does not augur well for policy implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For our education in Nigeria to join the league of the developed countries globally, the following recommendations could act as a catalyst for our educational system:

- (i) Our National Policy on education must be re-defined, reviewed and be implemented for the purpose for which it was enacted.
- (ii) Government at all levels especially the political leaders should be ready to fund education adequately by having the right political will. It is not enough to provide access to education on principles but it must show in praxis.
- (iii) The wind of change declared by the present political administration must openly and sincerely wage war out rightly against

corruption. Corruption is a serious vice in Nigeria that does not allow resources allocated to education to see the light of the day.

(iv) On-going training of teachers and prompt and adequate payment of their salaries must be strictly adhered to.

(v) Public-Private sector initiatives should be earnestly promoted more than before. The private sectors like banks, oil companies, telecommunication companies to mention a few, can partner with the government at all levels to fund education. Although, some of these private sectors are trying but the fact still remain that many of these companies sit and control a lot of wealth and money. All they do is to perpetually collect from Nigerians but in turn give out their leftovers which are not making any significant impact in the lives of Nigerians.

CONCLUSION

In this work, we have been able to address at length the relationship between politics and education and its policy using the Nigerian experience and its political impact on education in history. We have come to understand that politics cannot exist outside education. The two are the life wire of the existence of any society, its growth and development. Both of them are instruments for political and national development. Therefore by implication, the quality of our political leaders depends solely on the quality of our education. Therefore, government policies on education should be allowed to see the light of the day so that what education sets out to achieve in the society namely the development of the populace will yield fruitful results.

ENDNOTES

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³⁸ Omoregie et al,p,216

³⁹ Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004) *National Policy on Education*. Lagos: NERDC Press, p, 6.

⁴⁰ A. Adewole, p,3

⁴¹ Tell Magazine, June 2015 Edition. (Jeffrey Hawkins outgoing United States, US consul-general to Nigeria aired his views in an interview with Tell Magine editorial crew on Nigerian Politics, Political parties and the New Nigerian Government in 2015 election. V.Dike, *The state of Education in Nigeria and the Health of the Nation: African Economic Analysis*, in Omoregie et al, p,225