



## The Social Demand Approach of Education Planning in Nigeria: Limitations and the Way Forward

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### Abstract

The interest and awareness of all nations in providing education for persons of school age is glaring. This may be the reason why from independence our national policy on education has always repeatedly used the clause that education is the right of every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, ethnic background and any peculiar individual challenges. The drafters of the document must have considered the school of thought whose opinion is that education should be seen as a welfare or social service. This assertion was re-emphasized by the United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Education for scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and World Bank sponsored World conference on education for all (WECFA) held in Jontien Thailand in march 5-9, 1990. Today, Nigerian has adopted the free education concept and thereby introduce the universal basic education program to provide education for its citizens. How well has the social demand approach of education planning worked in Nigeria? This paper examines the social demand approach of educational planning in Nigeria its limitation and the way forward toward making the approach better. The paper revealed that the underlying principles of the social demand approach is not strictly followed and recommends among others that government budget should be increased to 30% so as to provide total free education even to the poor and educationally deprived.

**Keywords:** Education planning, social demand approach, principles, way forward.

### Introduction:

Education is seen by both developed and developing nations as an instrument for national development and for developing hidden talent in an individual. Education is also conceived as a preparation for life, a productive activity and an investment in human resource a progressive state will never ignore the indisputable need for socialization of the citizen of which only education can offer. Sequel to the above benefits of education, most nations, of the world today sees education not only in the economic angle but also as a social service that is due to individuals. It is on this premises that education planners have place education on a social or welfare premises to guaranty individual satisfaction for education.

Social demand approach of education is relatively new since the advent of formal education in Nigeria. It is on record that formal education started with the missionaries with the building of the first missionary school. In Badagry from that time to 1950, schools were entirely left in the hands of missionaries and private owners. In 1952, Chief S. O. Awokoye was presented with the proposal for comprehensive free universal primary education program. As the then western minister of education, he will now see education as no longer an economic investment both a welfare service that is due all. This means that Nigerians will have to key into the global awareness

for education as a right to every child to agree with the child right act. This position is also pronounced by the National Human Right Commission (NHRC, 2008) where they opined that education is fundamental as a function for effective realization of human rights. In September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1976 the federal government of Nigeria headed by Lt Step General Olusegun Obasanjo launched the universal education scheme as a responds to the social demand approach for the world. It was however faced with challenges which led to its failure.

1. What then does the social demand approach of educational planning aim to achieve?
2. What are its set backs or limitations?
3. How can this approach be improved to serve the social needs of the people which are eligible for education without being deprived in one form or the other?

These and many more questions are begging for answers. Today, Nigeria's international obligation are guided by the provision of the universal declaration of human right. Article 26 of which provides inter-alia, that education should be directed to the full development of the human personality, maintenance of peace, strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedom. Again the international covenant and economic social and cultural right article 13 provides inter-alia that states parties recognize the right of every one to education. This has made



education a tool for empowerment to all national and all racial, ethnics or religious groups (NHRC, 2003) it is clear therefore, to say that the federal republic of Nigeria recognize that education is an instrument per excellences, the means of delivering human intellect, technical skills, character and effective national development (Osimini, 2020). This is to say that government acknowledges that education is an invaluable tool for solving the political, cultural, social and economic problem of the nation

Despite the effort of various (governmental agencies) toward ensuring that education is made accessible and qualitative to all, a large number of school age are still unable to access qualitative education in Nigeria. In 2018, the United National international (children emergency fund) (UNICEF, 2018) revealed that one in every five of the world's out-of-school drop-out is in Nigeria. The report also explained that even though primary education is officially free and compulsory, about 10.5 million of the countries children aged 5-14 years are not in school. Only 61% of children aged 6-11 years old regularly attend primary school and only 35.6% aged 36-59 months receive early childhood education. The report added that this age is found to be dropping as they proceed to secondary schools due to factors such as poverty, social economic factors (Gender biasness), ill-health etc. if this statistics Is something to go by, why then is the free and compulsory education not addressing the social needs of all qualified school aged children in the country?

### Conceptual Clarification

1. Concept of Planning: The word planning is the verb form of the noun plan. Plan is derived from the Latin noun-planus which means 'flat'. It was used to represent a plane or flat surface. The idea was drawn from the meaning of plan as a large scale detailed map or scheme for accomplishing a purpose, and incorporating a proposed method of action (Wali, 2018). It is from this idea that the term plan is made common to mean a set of decisions and policies made in advance to be used to achieve set objectives. Planning in a literal sense means to scheme, device, conceive something to be done or to take action in advance. The above idea is in line with the opinion of Osimini (2019) who sees planning as a rational decision process by which a problem is identified and solutions preferred in a bit to solving the existing problem using available resources. To Newman in Adiele, Obasi and Ohia (2017), planning is the process

of determining in advance what is to be done including classification of goals, establishment of policy mapping out programs and campaigns and determining specific method or procedures and fixing day-to-day schedules the above definitions of planning shows that planning is a process whose elementary concern is to prepare series of decision rationally which are future oriented with the aims of achieving goals by optional means.

**Educational planning:** Educational planning is a conscious and systematic effort toward addressing the challenges faced in education in futuristic terms. Williams in Amanchuku (2002) assert that planning in education in anything else, consists of forecasting what that person wants to do and how the person is going to carry it out. The United Nations Education For Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO 2018) defined education planning as a process that deals with what should be regarded as development. Ukeje (2012) opined that educational resources are in short supply. Since the time and resources available are limited, careful planning on education provides basics for control and planning forces the educational management and administrators to focus on objectives. Adiele, Obasi and Ohia in Osimini (2019:18) suggested that national development planning which mainly organize and fertilize the available resources should work hand in hand with educational planners. According to them, educational planning and national development planning are inseparable, inter-related and inter-woven in a networking of relationship. UNESCO (2018) pointed that the concept of educational planning deals with:

- a. Clarification of educational objectives
- b. Diagnosis of present conditions and resent trends
- c. Assessment of alternatives
- d. Translation of plans into action
- e. Evaluation and adjustment

some atoms of these actions are seen in the philosophy and goals of education in Nigeria articulated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2014) national policy on education. This document merited the quality of an educational working plan. Based on the (UNESCO) standard of an educational plan. Apart from the standard set by UNESCO as a basic for planning education, the planning process can be determined based on how a country sees education to be and the goals to be achieved. Many nations of the world see education as an investment which should



yield returns. Some sees education as a means of producing the required human resources for the development of the economic sectors, yet others view it as a right and social service that is due all citizens. The way a country views education can help in selecting the planning approach to put in place.

**Social demand Approach in Educational Planning:** this approach to educational planning considers education as a welfare or social service that must be provided for every citizen as a matter of right. this approach to educational planning considers education as a welfare or social service that must be provided for every citizen as a matter of right. This approach is anchored on the position of (ETF) education for all which Nigeria ratify in 1991. This idea emanated from the school of thought whose opinion is that education is fundamentally the right of every citizen of school age. The social demand approach considers education as one of the social services such as electricity, good roads, security etc. that the government is obligated to provide her citizenry. To this end, education Is planned with the aim of satisfying the quest for education by those who are qualified and demand for education to Amanchukwu (2002:33) this approach should provide access to all (branches of education) and to all those wishing to enter them. It is worthwhile to note that (SDA) deals with educational inputs. Therefore, both the inputs and the factors affecting them must be noted by the planner. The inputs into the educational process are (children), teachers, equipment and building. This must be noted by the education planners to study factors affecting them just as demography, socio- economics factors, job opportunities, policy decisions. Social demand approach requires that educational planners make projections and forecast on enrolment. This require information such as:

1. Data on past demographic trends
2. Enrolment by individual grades and age
3. Migration of school age
4. Population in and out of local, state and federal government schools and
5. Dropout rates.

This information will equip the planner to make rational decisions on schools or university to be build, teachers to be trained and the number that will be qualified to seek for admission

**The underlying Principles of Social Demand Approach:** This approach has some important

principles which make it unique. This principle has it that:

1. Education should be provided as a social service and as a right to every citizen of school age
2. No citizen of any nation operating on social demand should be denied education for lack of finance
3. Education policy must be geared toward promoting citizens right to education
4. Those who are qualified for admission to any level must be giving the opportunity to acquire that education
5. The education system must guarantee the individual’s satisfaction for education
6. If a sufficiently qualified citizen stands at the door of any educational institution, he must be admitted.
7. It is the responsibility of government to anticipate citizen’s request and provide enough capacity that will accommodate such request.

The above principles actually support the prof. Regayyatu Ahamed Rufai 4 years strategic plan for the development of the education sector: 2001-2015. In pages 10 and 11 of the MPC (2008,) the document pronouns education as the right of every Nigeria irrespective of gender, social status, religion, ethnic background and any peculiar individual challenge. This point is in agreement with the principle of social demand approach which solicit for free and quality education for all, no wonder education at primary and basic level is said to be free in Nigeria. However, whether the social demand approach of educational planning is implemented to the latter just as the policy statement and the underlining principles suggested is another story to consider.

**Limitations of the Social Demand Approach to Nigerian Education System**

The first underlying principles of (social demand approach) (SDA) stated that education should be provided as a right to every citizen of school age. This means that every child born in Nigeria that is from age 3 and above must be in school. In Nigeria today, this is far from the reality as children of school age are seen in the street hawking one form of item or the other. UNICEF asserts that Nigeria is the highest in the highest in the terms of children that are not in school. This is seen in all parts of the street and neighborhood as minors’ are forced to child labor and subjected to all



forms of deprivation educationally without government intervention. it is on the bases of this that UNICEF Nigeria undertook the girl child education program in the Northern parts of Nigeria precisely sokoto and Niger to bring back the girl child to school and provide sound and quality education to them. This approach has not been able to provide education to all children of school age as perceived to be a right to them,

The second principles say that no citizen of Nigeria should be denied education for lack of finance. Education is not totally free in Nigeria even though some government has made lip pronouncement of total free education. Children of school age are turned back from enrolment due to registration fees, tuition fees and various contribution and charges. Some children are out rightly denied their right due to poverty as the parent's struggles to pay their fees, buy food, clothing's and other expenses in cued in cause of basic education. it is true that economic status of a parents' impact either negatively or positively to their children. The views of Blenden and Gregg (2004) supported this assertion when they stated that income and material deprivation are themselves important influence on educational outcome, particularly for very deprived families who experienced poverty in the long term. To Mba (2006:37) the national policy on education pronounce education at all levels to be tuition free yet parent make contribution to schooling through Parents, Teachers Association (PTA) and other forms of levies. This payment has deprived so many parent from enrolling their children due to the financial implication. It is also proper to say that this principle is not strictly followed. We can say in the negative that government in Nigeria has not be able to take care of financial requirement of students such as uniforms, transportation, feeding, clothing and textbooks. Again, government absence of anticipation for intake has resulted to either over-population or under enrolment. The Universal Primary education (UPE) program in old western region of Nigeria in 1955 came to an end due to wrong projection of enrolment as they amazingly skyrocketed from 170,000 to 547,760 as present intake and pupils ready for the program.in Nigeria, there is no reliable existing data bank of what has been and what is available. This also is one of the challenges faced by the social demand approach as UBE is being implemented this position is clear when we observe the River State Senior Secondary Schools Board (RSSSSB) student enrolment for 1<sup>st</sup> Term 2018/2019 section September/ to December 2018 for A kuku-Toru local government area the report reveals that in the nine schools in the LGA, GSS, ABISSA has 32, CSS Abonnema=54, CSS Obonama=72 AGSS Abonnema=99 while NGS

Abonnema and CCSS Elem-Sangama has no student admitted in SS1.this lopsidedness has cursed educational wastages and rendered the approach less effectively this information was giving by the Planning Research and statistic department of the senior secondary schools board River State(RSSSSB, 2019).

Lastly, education was supposed to guarantee satisfaction from the various educational programs they engaged in instead what we have in return is unemployment. The people of Nigeria are not getting satisfaction for what they see and get. This is because education is not planned and tailored towards societal needs

this position is held by FRU (2004) which states that education should be a strong prescription of all activities needed for the development of skills, knowledge and potential to those who receive it. To Nwankwoala (2016) an educated person is expected to have learnt to contribute meaningfully to the achievement of national goals and aspirations. But sad to say, the Nigerian educational programed in gives us nothing that can be used in the society. Osimini (2019) asserts that the educational program in Nigeria lacks relevance to the need of society. This is probably because most of these plans are lifted from other background or societies that may not be exactly like ours. These limitations and many more due to the government in ability to logically follow this approach based on its spelt out principles has given room to the private schools to explore.

### **The Way-Forward to Social Demand Approach in Nigerian Educational System**

the interest in social demand approach in educational planning as a means of providing education for all persons of all age triggered the universal declaration of human right to education. This position was re-emphasized by UNICEF, UNESCO and World Bank's sponsored world conference in education for all (WCEFA, 1990) held in Justine Thailand from March 5-9 1990.the world advocated among other things the extension of primary education to enhance quality and access. Today this approach has helped in producing a lot of human resources, adjust Nigerian education imbalance and equality access despite its limitations.it is hoped that this approach can be improved upon with the following measures.

1. Enforcement of total free education by all government to children of school age should be given premium, irrespective of their economics or social status as many children from poor homes



- are still seen hawking sachet water and other items on the streets of Nigeria. This will bring out the sincerity of government in employing the social demand approach of education planning
- Government should also provide for the needs of children from homes to enable them buy textbook, food, clothing and other necessary things require to be in school. This they can do by increasing the budgetary allocation to education based on the recommendation of a 26% by UNESCO to be able to provide quality education
  - The federal government of Nigeria should as a matter of urgent importance, declare a state of emergency in the education sector with special interest on the educationally deprived children especially in childhood and primary education with a view to impacting proper literacy and numeracy as stated in the policy objective. In a related development, the siting of school should be in an accessible place and for the purpose of equity and not for political consideration. Ibara (2018) observed that some schools both primary and secondary levels are sited on the basis of political sentiments. This is seen as some secondary schools are located in remote in accessible areas merely to score cheap political points. With the facilities grossly under-utilized.
  - Government engagement of relevant stakeholders in wider consultations and recognition of their input for effective implementation of education plans as contained in the national policy cum principles of social demand approach will in no small way help to check the lack of principles of equity that is being experienced in the distribution of educational resources. This principle seemed to be ignored or thrown into wind, resulting in lopsided distribution of educational facilities across and within regions (Ibara, 2018).

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