

Impact of Decentralization and Privatization on the Quality of Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Nigerian Experience

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Abstract

The paper examined the impact of decentralization and privatization on the quality of education in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), with specific reference to Nigeria. The authors traced the antecedents of the evolution of educational policies in SSA, particularly in Nigeria. Decentralization and privatization as practiced by some countries in the sub-region were highlighted showing how they interplay with socio-economic and political scenarios, and the resultant impact on provision of quality of education. The authors remarked that these policies produced positive effects such as improved workers' welfare, community participation and widening access to education. On the other hand, unapproved and unregistered schools, while providing wider access to education for children in SSA do mortgage the quality and standard of education. The authors concluded that a sector-wide approach to resource mobilization and management in the education system, accountability in the areas of leadership, bureaucracies and best work practices would ensure quality control in the education sector of the SSA countries.

Keywords: Decentralization, Privatization, Quality of Education, Sub-Saharan Africa

Introduction

The policy issues that form the basis of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) educational systems reflect political and economic transactions influenced by the history, culture and traditions of the sub-region (Sahr, 1992). The sub-region, before the era of western (formal) education, had engrained within its social polity, tacit social contracts that formed the bedrock of traditional social life. These social policies, some of which are "undocumented", were binding on institutions such as marriage, traditional education, politics and religion. Functionalism was the guiding principle of African traditional education. It was an education that emphasized social responsibility, job orientation, political participation, and spiritual and moral values (Fafunwa, 1974; Osokoya, 2002). Its methodology,

instructional objectives, content and delivery were practical and integrated. The cardinal areas of African traditional education were the intellectual, spiritual, moral, physical and vocational development of the child. These cardinal areas coupled with their colonial past predominantly provided the foundation for the guiding philosophies that formed the educational policies of many African nations south of the Sahara. Nigeria is the focus of this paper as it is a nation south of the Sahara. This is because sharing basically similar colonial antecedents with many African countries, Nigeria's educational policies have evolved from the background of a colonial past to a philosophy of national development. Nigeria remains a forerunner in the development of the West African sub-region and African region in general. Taking cognisance of her position as the most populous black nation, Nigeria's educational policies and programmes are pivotal to the development and to her leadership role in Africa south of the Sahara.

Prior to Nigeria's independence in 1960, education was administered at Regional levels (western, eastern, and northern, as well as Lagos territory). The western region blazed the trail with its introduction of free primary education in 1955, followed by the eastern region and Lagos territory in 1957. The 6-5-2-3 system of education (six years primary education, five years secondary education, two years higher school certificate education and three years university education) was common to all regions at the time. However, the early education policies failed to provide Nigerians with adequate national philosophy, national goals and objectives of education (Osokoya, 2003). This is clearly borne out by the varied content and administration of education in different parts of the country. According to Osokoya (2003), the early educational policies failed to make provision for a national system of education. The 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 to unify the fragmentation occasioned by the efforts of the state governments at the time. Thus, in Nigeria, educational policy took a new turn between 1970 and 1979, when the government became more directly involved in the education sector. Government take-over of schools in 1973 marked a major landmark in the ownership of schools in the country. During the 1970s, the Nigerian government compelled private providers of education (basically missionary and community) at primary and secondary levels to hand over their schools to their respective state governments. The Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme was introduced nation-wide in September 1976. The major objective of the programme was essentially to provide free, compulsory and universal primary education to children between 6-11 years of age.

The country's former 6-5-2-3 education policy gave way to the more vocationally and technologically-oriented 6-3-3-4 policy in 1977. The 6-3-3-4 policy consists of six years primary education, three years of junior and senior secondary education respectively, and four years of university education. As laudable as the policy may have been, some problems assailed its implementation in Nigeria. First, as Osokoya (2002) noted, was the problem of the political climate that was prevalent in the country between 1976 and 1999. Nigeria witnessed unstable governance and leadership that had no clear-cut focus on education. Policies became "paper tigers" with succeeding governments lacking the political will to implement them. Other major problems facing implementation of educational policies in Nigeria include the fact that expansion at the secondary level did not take science and technology into consideration as emphasized by the policy (Osokoya, 2002). Thus, only lip service was paid to science and technology with nothing practical being done to promote its development. The dearth of trained teachers, particularly in the science-based and vocational subjects, posed a major problem that hindered the realization of the goals of the 6-3-3-4 policy. The non-availability of reliable statistics equally hampered the smooth implementation of this policy, making planning and adequate budgeting for the programme unrealizable. Babalola and Adedeji (2007: 3) summed up these antecedents:

The past three decades, when education was solely under the control of government in Nigeria witnessed unprecedented failures. There were crises of poor trainees, poor teachers, poor textbooks, poor teaching, poor technology and poor funding. At all levels, the public education system increasingly became less effective and efficient in

responding to the needs of the society and those of the individuals. This scenario created the veritable ground for private education to strive. In fact, private schools (primary and secondary) did go all-out to prove their worth to Nigerians at this period. Deregulation then became a rubber stamp to give legal backing to the already existing system of private participation in the provision of education.

Post-colonial governments, particularly in Nigeria, have treated education with levity, the cumulative result is that today, "...education in Nigeria is in terrible shape circumscribed by a general, persistent and chronic crisis in terms of funding, staffing, curricula, infrastructure and facilities" (Jega, 2007: 1).

The inability of the government to achieve the goals of the 6-3-3-4 education policy, owing to the above highlighted shortcomings, has witnessed the birth of a new education policy tagged the "9-3-4". This comprises essentially 9 years of basic education, 3 years of senior secondary education and 4 years of university education. This new policy is expected to begin in the new school year in September, 2007.

Concept of Decentralization of Education

Decentralization—a term covering a wide range of processes and structures—is often hard to define. In general, it refers to devolution of the centralized control of power and decision-making from government into private initiatives at state/provincial, local government and school levels (Bray, 1985; Naidoo, 2005). Although a hands-off approach is usually not absolute, federal governmental involvement in provision, financing and regulation of education is minimal. Decentralization also involves making minimum requirements for private participation in the provision of education (Babalola and Adedeji, 2007).

According to Bray (1985) and Naidoo (2005), decentralization is often motivated by political, administrative and fiscal considerations. For example, preservation of unity has been an objective of decentralization in Nigeria. When 12 states were created out of the four regions in 1967, it was primarily part of a bid to split the major power blocs and avert a civil war (Bray, 1985). Other motives include increasing efficiency, community participation, accountability, democratization, as well as increasing sensitivity and responsiveness to local needs and mobilizing resources and financial responsibility (McGinn and Welsh, 1999, in Naidoo, 2005).

In Nigeria, decentralization of basic education has taken many forms. One of these forms is deconcentration, which refers to a situation where central education authority opens zonal offices in the different parts of the country. The Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), which is the apex body in control of basic education, has 12 zonal offices across the federation. The 12 UBEC zonal offices are to ensure proper and effective monitoring of the UBE in the states and local governments. Also, there are State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs) in each state of the Federation. These were established by enabling laws. This form of decentralization is a form of devolution of power. According to Bray (1985: 185), "decentralization is usually considered to have been taken furthest when powers are devolved". In this case, powers are specifically transferred to sub-national bodies by law, and the central organization relinquishes a decision-making role.

Rationale for Decentralization of Education

Decentralization is often regarded as a key component of management structure in Africa, including education. Reasons for decentralization are numerous. The most colourful and glowing reason for decentralization is "efficiency in management and governance" (McGinn and Welsh, 1999). This often happens when management and bureaucracy at the centre is slow, ineffective and inefficient. Where purchase of equipment and teacher deployment takes very long to deliver, the very obvious solution to tackle this is to decentralize. Another reason for decentralization is political democratization; this is where people, particularly communities are given the opportunity to make decisions about concerns

that arise in the course of their daily lives. Other reasons could be to reduce the power of teacher unions and to mobilise for new resources. Very often, decentralization is embarked upon without due considerations for the socio-cultural, political, economic and religious realities in African states. Usually, the call for decentralization of power and decision-making is more often politically driven or externally inspired by development partners. An example of this is the introduction of tuition to Federal Universities in Nigeria, which was heralded by riots, and student unrest in various parts of the nation. This development resulted in the gradual loss of access to higher education by the less privileged. The resultant effect of this is made very obvious by the failure the policy suffers at the implementation stage. As tempting as decentralization may be as a management strategy, it is bound to fail when there is a lack of attention to and understanding of the social context, political structure, and existing administrative systems in which it is meant to operate. According to UNESCO (2004: 1) “Decentralization...can have disastrous effects for the education system in a given country, if too much administrative responsibility is transferred with too little preparation for financial support”. In essence, decentralization’s promise and potential is not automatic.

Concept of Deregulation and Privatization of Education

Due to the fact that economic factors dictate the pace and the rate of change in policy issues relating to education in SSA, many African countries have had to implement policies that will assure the financing, delivery and fulfillment of the conditions for the provision for Education for All (EFA). With respect to Nigeria, in response to the Dakar Framework for Action and in conformity with the directions set forward in the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) has developed a National Action Plan for EFA in collaboration with the states. The Education Sector Analysis (ESA) in Nigeria has been carried out to feed sound analytical basis of educational reform and for the development of the EFA and sector-wide plans. These plans set forth a number of ambitious policy goals for 2015 and necessary implementation strategies. To accomplish the formulation of the policy directions and implementation strategies, a policy and strategy simulation model was designed along the following premises: (i) early childhood care and education (ECCE) would be expanded, especially for 70% gross enrolment ratio (GER) for those aged 5 and with due attention given to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children; (ii) free and compulsory Universal Basic Education (primary and junior secondary education) will be achieved by 2015, with particular emphasis on girls and disadvantaged children and through the introduction of school feeding programmes at primary and junior secondary education levels; (iii) adult literacy rate will improve by 50% by 2015, while ensuring gender equity and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults; (iv) appropriate learning and life skills programmes will be provided through expansion of non-formal education and post-basic technical and vocational education and training (TVET) opportunities; (v) gender disparities will be reduced at all levels of education including higher education by 2015, and gender equality achieved for primary and junior secondary education by 2015; (vi) all aspects of the quality of education will be improved, particularly through a free provision of textbooks at primary and junior secondary education, the amelioration of pre-and in-service teacher training, the mitigation of the HIV and AIDS pandemic and the improvement of learning conditions and environment including catering for the needs of learners requiring special attention.

The educational systems of SSA countries, as noted by Daun (2000), differ in several aspects. Factors that shape educational systems and policies in these African nations include their colonial history, the religious composition of the sub-region, and the type of state, economic level and development strategy applied after independence (Daun, 2000).

Deregulation of education, as noted by Babalola and Adedeji (2007), pivots around the concept of the American free market enterprise. The underlying assumption in such a policy is that a nation’s economy operates best when government leaves businesses and individuals to succeed or fail on their own merits in an open and competitive market. In the U.S for example, between 1994 and 2004, there

has been a greater reduction of government authority and guidance in an effort to increase the autonomy of individual parents to control their children's education (Findlaw, 2004). A blending of public and private education is advocated under this deregulation policy.

Similarly, decentralization and privatization of education have in the last two decades dominated the education policy issues in the SSA. The context under which decentralization of education has manifested itself in African education policy is largely tied to issues of education access, quality of education, educational equity, girl-child education, school retention and completion rates, provision of infrastructure such as school facilities, and HIV/AIDS. The utilization of these policies, that is, decentralization and privatization, aims at a renewal of the educational thrust on the continent to enable Africa to meet the challenges of the 21st century (Mbeki, 1999). While many African nations recognize the fact that sustainable development can be attained only when a functional system of education exists, the framework and policy direction for achieving this is a main area of concern. There are also issues such as the growing financial resources requirement for basic education programmes in the states, as well as the need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of basic education delivery and democratization of education. Referring to the Nigerian experience, Jega (2007: 1) points out that, as a people and nation, Nigerians have always wanted “good quality education which is based on equity, and is accessible to all...”

Privatization of education coincides with the principle of decentralization. Privatization, as a policy guiding the provision of education, has become a widespread policy in many African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, etc. The general concepts and principles of privatization are now widespread in industrialized, developing and transitional economies (Bayliss, 2000). Privatization is a term that has been associated with the transfer of assets of ownership from the public to the private sector. The policy encompasses the private initiative in education, implying that decentralization involves the “transfer of decision making, authority, responsibility and tasks from higher to lower organizational levels or between organizations” (Hanson, 1998: 111-28). The World Bank promotes privatization in developing countries as a policy principle, primarily, if not exclusively, to reduce poverty through the development of the private sector (Bayliss, 2000). “*De facto*” privatization of education extends provision of education and services to the poor (Tooley and Dixon, 2006). The concept underlining privatization, especially when viewed in relation to access to education and provision of basic education for a large number of the populace, has gone a long way to provide many children in urban and peri-urban Africa with some form of education. As identified by Tooley and Dixon (2006: 450), private schools in Nigeria can be categorized into the private (aided); private (unaided) unrecognized/unregistered and private (unaided) recognized/registered. From the perceptions presented by Tooley and Dixon (2006), unrecognized private establishments are unregistered and unapproved by Government agencies. Though these writers indicate the near to none existence of private aided schools in the Nigerian educational system, the new emergence of this category of private schools is becoming apparent with the Rochas Foundation playing a lead role in this area of education service provision for Nigerian children. The provision of this type of educational services may have motives underlining its establishment ranging from political to humanitarian reasons.

Unlike the misplaced conception that privatization will service the educational needs of the wealthy minority (Tooley and Dixon, 2006), many African children benefit from the private schools that have sprung up in various urban and peri-urban towns. The rapid multiplication of unregistered and unapproved private schools provides educational services that escape the quality control devices of monitoring organs of the state. While some scholars believe that the “mushrooming” of private schools in SSA countries like Nigeria, Uganda and Malawi is a direct effect of the poor quality of education provided in government schools, the quality of education provided by many of these private schools is also doubtful. The profit orientation of the private schools in their educational service provision, as well as the ineffectiveness of the standard and quality control agencies of the state governments have left questions as to the quality of some of these schools. For example, in southwestern Nigeria, the concept of “*jalesimi*,” which are private unaided unrecognized and unregistered schools (early

childhood/pre-primary educational establishments providing nursery and elementary education in unsanitary, unhealthy and mostly uncompleted structures as foundation before attending public or “private” schools) furnish children with poor quality educational foundation before attaining school age. Untrained teachers, indifferent caregivers, undefined curriculum or instructional modules, unorthodox and most times unaccepted instructional delivery methods as well as uncondusive learning environments characterize these establishments. Though there are no monitoring or quality control inspections, these unregistered and unrecognized schools such as the “*jelesimi*” (in southwestern Nigeria) have become “accepted” pre-school and early childhood elementary education providers in Nigeria.

A major advantage of the policy of privatization is in the area of expanding access to schooling for all children irrespective of their socio-economic status (SES). However, the question of quality of education that is provided by these schools in terms of learning environment, teacher qualification and capacity, instructional content, process and delivery, extra-curricular exposures and infrastructure is highly dependent on the affordability of the services provided by private schools. Nonetheless, in the provision of access to education in Nigeria, *de facto* privatization has helped. As Adelabu and Rose (2004: 2) noted, “in Nigeria, unapproved (private) schools are providing schooling opportunities to a significant number of children, particularly in urban and peri-urban areas”.

Socio-Economic and Political Issues and the Provision of Quality Education in Nigeria

Socio-economic and political issues play vital roles in the execution of government educational policies globally. They could widen access, improve quality and ease educational management. Africa, South of the Sahara, has had socio-political and cultural peculiarities influencing educational policies in its nation states. For example, these issues include the religious, cultural beliefs, especially the ones affecting the girl-child, the role of the military in Africa and its impact on basic education. In this paper, emphasis will be placed on the girl-child and budgetary and fund allocation as they affect basic education in Nigeria.

The Girl-child and Basic Education

Girls’ enrolment in SSA, as of the 1990s, was rather low, as documented in UNESCO Education for All Report (2002). According to the Report, girls’ enrolment in SSA and Central Asia remained low. In Nigeria, in particular, access to basic education and equality are matters of great concern for all tiers of government (Obaji, 2005). There is a national gender disparity in basic education enrolment, retention and completion, which is not in favour of girls. There are also regional variations in gender disparity in education with girls and women particularly from Northern Nigeria and rural communities generally at a disadvantage. In the North, girls are often given away in early marriage, and education of girls is considered a waste of time since only men/boys carry on the family name. The dropout issue has several dimensions to it. It is estimated that 7.3 million children of whom 60% are girls, are out of school. Drop-out is more pronounced at grade six level, where more than 17% of children drop out of school yearly (Obaji, 2005). Other reasons adduced to dropout include girls’ engagement in income-generating activities to supplement household income in the Southeastern and Northeastern parts of the country respectively, as well as in major state capitals across Nigeria. The poor quality, non-relevance of western education system to contextual realities and perceived weak employment prospects for school and university leavers are also key factors affecting dropout.

In recent years, the Federal Government of Nigeria has been making frantic efforts in terms of sensitization and advocacy in respect of girls’ education. The Federal Government of Nigeria is addressing the issue of gender gaps and inequality in education through the Strategy for Acceleration of Girls’ Education in Nigeria (SAGEN), which is supported by UNICEF (Osuji, 2005). This effort is being further reinforced by the Girls’ Education Project. This is a joint undertaking by the Federal

Government of Nigeria, Department for International Department (DFID) and United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF) to boost girls’ schooling.

Since the launch of SAGEN in July 2003, some state governments in Northern Nigeria have already enacted edicts to support the promotion of girls’ education. For example, Kano state prohibited the collection of all forms of fees in Girls’ Secondary Schools. Similarly, Gombe State enacted an edict against the withdrawal of girls from schools, while Niger, Bauchi and Yobe states have removed financial disincentives against girls’ enrolment in secondary schools. Those who have dropped out as a result of early marriages and/or teenage pregnancy are encouraged to return to school (Obaji, 2005).

These efforts have been fruitful as many more parents in some parts of the country, particularly the North, are willing to let their girls participate in other forms of education/training which are of shorter duration, close to their area of residence and have flexible time scheduling. According to Obaji (2005), these learning centres are perceived to be more compatible with their cultural beliefs and more likely to give functional skills and assuring them of future employment.

In years past, there was great disparity in girls and boys’ enrolment with particular reference to specific states in Nigeria. In the North, as earlier stated, girls were denied access to education because of cultural and religious practices ranging from early marriage, early pregnancy, the belief that only boys can carry on the family name, and consequently, training a girl-child is both a waste of time and resources.

In the Southeastern Nigeria, the story is different as boys’ enrolment was usually low, particularly in Abia and Imo states due to socio-economic reasons. The two states constitute the commercial nerve centres of Eastern Nigeria. In those states, boys engage in income generating activities such as sale of vehicle spare parts, while girls attended school. This attitude and practice evolved due to the lack of faith in western education to provide well paying jobs (Obaji, 2005). In the Southwestern part of Nigeria, the story appears to be different. Parents sell off properties to secure quality education for their children irrespective of their gender. Table 2 shows the different trends in enrolment in different parts of Nigeria.

Table 2: Enrolment by Gender for Primary 1 – Junior Secondary 3 for Six States in Nigeria, 2005

STATE	ENROLMENT (PRY 1 –JS 3)	ALL SCHOOLS			PUBLIC SCHOOLS			PRIVATE SCHOOLS		
		FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL
ABIA	ENROLME NT	11,634,173	14,257,433	25,891,570	10,548,754	13,181,643	23,730,397	1,085,383	1,075,790	2,161,173
IMO		379,167	376,885	756,052	344,759	343,507	688,267	34,408	33,377	67,785
SOKOTO		196,552	483,104	679,656	180,336	457,504	637,840	16,216	25,600	41,816
KEBBI		128,750	267,188	395,938	120,745	257,382	378,127	8,005	9,806	17,811
OGUN		281,857	293,676	575,533	237,865	247,976	485,841	43,992	45,700	89,692
OSUN		271,105	272,775	543,880	242,253	243,760	486,013	28,852	29,015	57,867

Source: Federal Ministry of Education, 2006

Budgetary Allocation and Funding

In most countries of SSA, funding of education is shouldered primarily by the central government. There are instances of private funding and shared funding between the central, regional and local governments, as well as individuals. The regional and the local governments, however, are allowed in some instances to generate funds of their own and introduce tuition while enjoying some autonomy, but are still accountable to the central government.

In the SSA, there are different patterns of educational funding. Many countries have adopted free primary education in order to boost enrolment. For instance, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia “recognized the many implications of reducing the cost of education to parents, reacting to the enrolment surge and improving (or at least sustaining the quality of education” (UNESCO, 2003: 221).

The cost implication of implementing free primary education can be enormous. The underlying cost of teacher training, professional development, textbooks, school feeding programmes, uniforms and instructional materials can be difficult for the central government to address. Such a scenario usually results in the sharing of financial responsibilities among the central, regional, and local

governments and individuals. In Nigeria at present, educational funding is co-sponsored by the federal, state and local governments. Primary schooling in Nigeria is financed mainly from the local governments' revenue allocation with some modest state and largely *ad hoc* federal government support, especially through the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC). The role of the local governments is largely different. While they officially fund primary education, the funds are, however, deducted directly from what accrues to them from the Federation Account before the rest of the subventions are made available to them (local governments). Essentially, there are no inputs whatsoever from the local governments.

The term "free primary education" means different things to various African countries. For example, as at the year 2000, free education in Kenya meant "free tuition and no school levies, but the costs of uniforms and examinations remain" (UNESCO, 2003: 220). In Malawi, where free education was introduced in 1994, free education means "free tuition, books and stationery, uniform not compulsory" (UNESCO, 2003: 220). Zambia's form of free education, which was initiated in February 2002, means "user fees abolished, uniforms not compulsory, fees can be levied by Parents-Teachers Associations (PTAs) and boards but no student can be excluded because of cost" (UNESCO, 2003: 220).

The pattern of commitment of funds to education usually reflects the government's immediate priority or future expectations in terms of general development of their countries. The Nigerian picture is abysmal. For example, federal education spending in Nigeria represents less than 10% of its annual budget and less than 1% of its Gross National Product (GNP), a remarkably low level of effort, in comparison to other SSA nations such as Malawi, Kenya and Zambia. Prior to the nation-wide industrial action embarked by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in 2001, government budgetary allocation to the education sector was a mere 4%. However, the victory of the struggle by the Union resulted in an increment in the budgetary allocation to education reaching 8% of the budget by the Federal Government. As at 2006, the allocation was 14%. Meanwhile, this falls short of UNESCO's recommended 26% budgetary allocation to education by SSA nations. Other countries in the SSA, such as Kenya had 29% recurrent budgetary allocation to education prior to free primary education. Presently, it is 36, which exceeds UNESCO's recommendation. Zambia allocated 13.2% of its government budget to education in 1996 and subsequently increased to 20.1% in 2002 (UNESCO, 2003).

External agencies have for many years, contributed immensely to educational development in SSA. In many countries in the sub-region, several multilateral agencies contribute in terms of aids, grants, and technical support over the years. These efforts are more pronounced in primary education across the sub-region. In 2003, the World Bank and DFID approved \$50 million and \$21 million respectively, while other agencies helped to bridge immediate gaps in advance of the strategic plan (UNESCO, 2003). In Malawi, agencies contributed 4% of the primary education budget at the introduction of free primary education. In Zambia on the other hand, agencies covered 27% of total education expenditure in 2000 (UNESCO, 2003).

Conclusion

The writers are of the view that the educational policies of decentralization and privatization and its impact on the quality of education in Nigeria present two sides of a coin. Governments all over the world embark upon the policies of decentralization and privatization of education because of the conviction that they can lead to higher quality education services. Quality, when viewed from assessment and monitoring perspective, defines the input and processes (i.e., curricular content, delivery, assessment and examination) that make learning possible within the educational setting. Input here is in terms of the infrastructure such as classroom facilities, textual materials and teaching personnel. In many SSA countries, these policies produce differing results depending on the degree of appreciation of socio-cultural situations. The results in Nigeria are double-sided, producing both

positive and negative results. In one way, the educational system gains, and in another, it loses. For example, in Nigeria, decentralization results in better welfare for government schools and their teachers. Teachers are paid their salaries promptly as their monies are deducted from the monthly subventions made to the local governments by the federal government.

Decentralization and privatization as policies towards education provision focus on wider access to schooling. Privatization presents two sides of a coin. On one side, it has made its limitations obvious in the affordability of its patronage. While on the other, the 'poor' seem to have greater opportunity for schooling (Adelabu and Rose 2004). The fine line of this demarcation is in the quality of education provided. On one side, high fee-paying schools are affordable only by the very rich. They provide quality education in terms of curriculum delivery, internal quality control, highly qualified teaching personnel, facility availability and a conducive learning environment.

Public schools on the other hand cannot provide all-round quality education. However, many private schools can, but cannot be accessed by all. Hence the '*jelesimi*' pre-school education providers give many Nigerian children access to a very low and poor quality education foundation. Essentially, rote learning seems to be the main teaching strategy, and there is no provision of learning aids and pre-school teaching materials. The misconception that school is to provide 'baby sitting' services only at this level of education militates against strong education foundations for Nigerian pre-schoolers. School fees are paid in some of these schools on a daily basis.

The other side of the coin is in terms of private school registration, which has been on the increase over the years. The observation is that quite a number of schools have been registered without proper standards being met. These schools get registered because the officials are alleged to collect bribes from proprietors. Pupils who end up in such schools are taught by unqualified and unmotivated teachers. The necessary conditions for learning are usually not met. It is in such schools that you find pupils pay tuition on an instalment basis. This is the negative aspect of corruption, which has become a part of the fabric of Nigerian society. This is also made very conspicuous in the recruitment of teachers in the public sector of education. From anecdotal experience, many public school teachers get recruited based on their relationship with people in power, and not necessarily on merit. The writers are strongly of the view that this definitely would impact negatively on the quality of education being delivered in public schools.

The authors are also of the view that decentralization would further help in the area of simplification of supervision of schools. Supervisory bodies have multiplied a great deal, with each body monitoring the different areas of school life for quality control both at the public and private schools. The state monitoring team sees to the quality of curriculum delivery at the government schools, while the local government areas (LGAs) have an oversight of the school structure, the relationship among members in the school, and the financial management. This kind of inspection is done at least twice a month. In Federal Government schools, government has inaugurated a School-based Management Committee (SBMC), which sees to internal financial matters, school and community partnership, and hiring of contract teachers, usually called 'PTA teachers'. In many ways, the SBMC has been able to put in place quality measures.

The provision of textual materials for effective teaching and learning remains a big challenge. Even where government, through its privatization policy has provided textbooks, bureaucratic bottlenecks in the Ministries not only thwart the timely supply of textbooks, but also nullify the concept of provision when a large percentage of beneficiaries from anecdotal records do not receive books to make effective the learning process.

In many public schools, there is lack of infrastructural facilities, and where they are, they are broken down completely. In certain schools, two different classes are housed in one singular classroom, where one class backs the other. Two teachers are therefore forced to teach their individual classes at the same time. Demarcation is usually done with the help of a moveable chalkboard. One is forced to wonder whether students can assimilate anything in this kind of classroom.

Decentralization seems to have granted more autonomy to schools and communities. For instance, the PTA has the prerogative of hiring contract teachers who are not on government payroll, but are paid monthly stipends from the Association's purse. This innovation has complemented the government's effort in teacher recruitment.

Decentralization in Nigeria has brought closer partnership between the parent, school and the community, which has produced synergies driving the quality of education. This has given parents and communities a sense of ownership and participation. Maintenance of school infrastructure and facilities are to a large extent the concern of the parents and communities.

The pedagogical and psychological advantages of the use of mother tongue (MT) in the early years of a child's life for education are universally acceptable. This informed the Nigerian government, through the National Policy on Education (NPE), on the use of language for education. The policy prescribes the MT at primaries 1-2 as medium of instruction, and English Language as a subject, while they transition to English as MT at primary 3 with English as a school subject.

However, the implementation of this policy is not universal. In the Nigerian context, this policy is followed to the letter in the public school, while private-owned schools ignore the use of the MT in the lower classes. What obtains is the use of English Language as the MT all through the class levels.

Inspectors overlook this violation of the NPE because of the assumed superiority of the English Language over indigenous languages. Most of the children of these inspectors attend private-owned schools, and they take pride in the fact that their wards use English as a medium of instruction.

Recommendations

Finally, it is of paramount importance that provision of quality education to the vast majority of children in SSA remains the goal of governments in the sub-region (SSA). Improving quality is the responsibility of all stakeholders involved in educational provision. This therefore implies clear identification and acceptance of responsibilities by stakeholders within the education sector while taking into consideration the peculiarities and limitations of each stakeholder. Responsibilities should be such as are bearable.

The issue of resource mobilization and management transcend the apex education management body. The place of pride education takes in national development makes a demand on all sectors. This therefore, requires a sector-wide approach to resource mobilization and management in the education system. The issue of accountability in the areas of leadership, bureaucracy, and best work practices ensures good resource management and quality control.

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Impact of Decentralization and Privatization on the Quality of Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Nigerian Experience. Charles B. U. Uwakwe Dept. of Guidance & Counselling, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria. E-mail: uwakwebudr@yahoo.com. Abstract The paper examined the impact of decentralization and privatization on the quality of education in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), with specific reference to Nigeria. The authors traced the antecedents of the evolution of educational policies in SSA, particularly in Nigeria. Sub-Saharan Africa saw the fastest growth in its tertiary gross enrollment ratio (GER) during 1970-2013 at 4.3 percent annually, faster than the global average of 2.8 percent. The report highlights a few primary factors for the growth of private institutions such as the inability of the public sector to meet rising demand, privatization of public universities in some countries, the perception of higher efficiency at private institutions, and more labor market-driven training programs at private institutions. The supply constraints of public tertiary education are visible given that while the number of public universities grew from 100 to 500 between 1990 and 2014, private universities expanded from 30 to over 1,000, according to the report. Dhruv Gandhi. The impact of globalisation on education in sub-saharan africa. Der einfluss der globalisierung auf bildung in sub-sahara afrika. Vorwissenschaftliche arbeit. Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the poorest regions in the world with 33 of the least developed countries. Until now SSA has never fully managed to escape the sufferings from its former historical background. The most important factor for SSA's poor development is its history, specifically Africa's colonial time and the following post-colonial time. The colonialization of Africa began when European traders established the "Triangular Trade" in the Early Modern age. The Triangular Trade included three regions involved in the trading route: Europe, Africa and America. Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Nigerian Experience. Charles B. U. Uwakwe. Dept. of Guidance & Counselling, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria. The paper examined the impact of decentralization and privatization on the quality of education in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), with specific reference to Nigeria. The authors. traced the antecedents of the evolution of educational policies in SSA, particularly in. Nigeria. Decentralization and privatization as practiced by some countries in the sub-region. were highlighted showing how they interplay with socio-economic and political scenarios, and the resultant impact on provision of quality of education. The authors remarked that. these policies produced positive effects such as improved workers' welfare, community. Nevertheless, studies of education research in sub-Saharan Africa highlight constraints to conducting high-quality research at the level of human, material, and financial resources. Universities are increasingly reliant on early career members of faculty with heavy teaching responsibilities (Sehoole and Ojo 2015; Fussy 2018). Access to the latest research is undermined by inadequate computer and network systems, unstable power supplies, and limited capacity to pay for subscription content (Marfo et al. 2011). Some commercial publishers have sought to mitigate the latter through low-cost or affordable access schemes, but the impact on usage is difficult to determine.1 In some cases, academic incentive systems themselves can undermine concerns for quality.