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COMMONWEALTH

NIGERIA: 50 YEARS OF PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

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Being a

LECTURE DELIVERED

To Commemorate

NIGERIA 50 YEARS IN THE COMMONWEALTH

by

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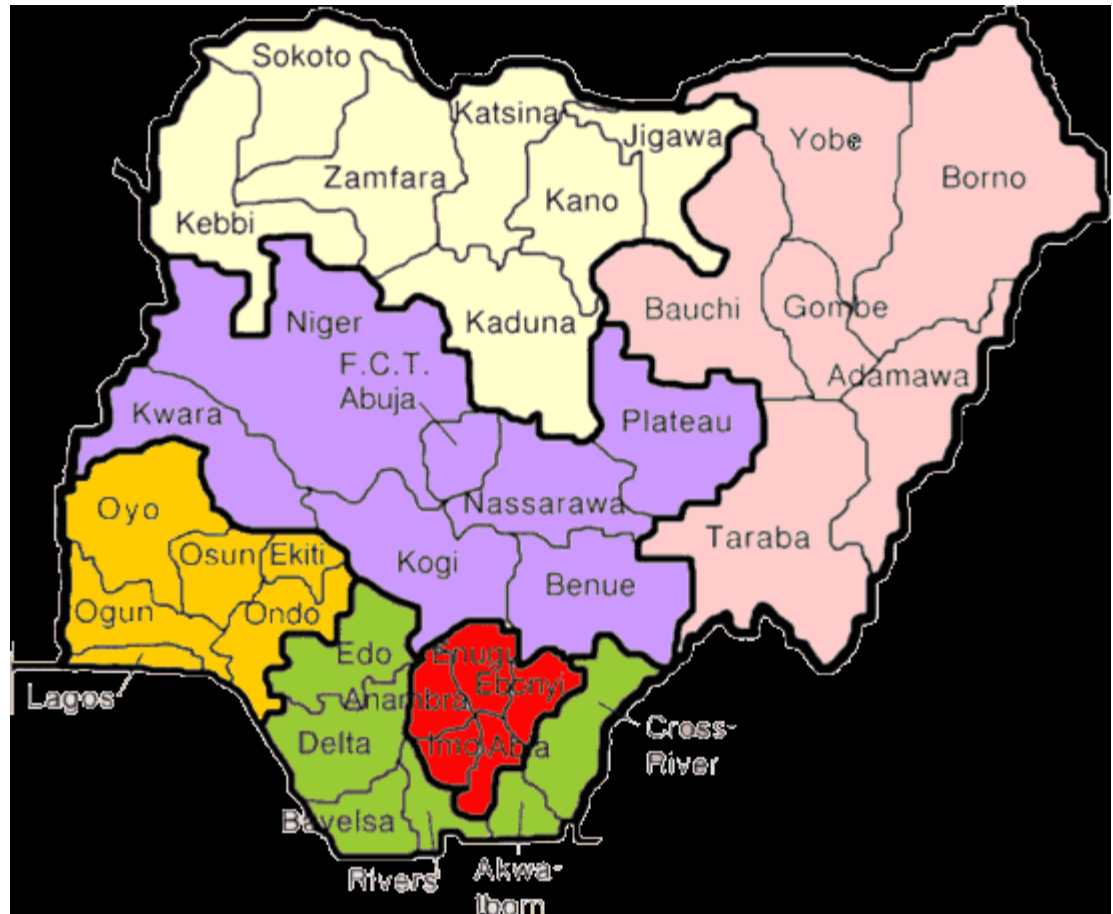


of Education, London and University of Sussex.

NIGERIA : 36 STATES AND FCT



GEO-POLITICAL ZONES IN NIGERIA



KEY :

GOLD – SOUTH WEST

GREEN – SOUTH SOUTH

RED - SOUTH EAST

LILAC- NORTH CENTRAL

WHITE - NORTH WEST

MAUVE – NORTH EAST

NIGERIA: 50 YEARS OF PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

PROTOCOLS

PREAMBLE

I feel some sense of uneasiness and of fulfillment in presenting this lecture on 50 years of progress and challenges in education in Nigeria to this honourable house of UK Parliament. Uneasiness, arising from the sense that I am here to give account of a sector you have vast knowledge of, being directly and indirectly involved in developing much of what is the Nigeria education system before 1960 and through UK Aid since 1960. Present here today are groups, agencies and individuals who have been greatly involved in the research, analysis and documentation on Nigeria education, to whom this lecture owes quite a lot. I feel a sense of fulfillment because the sector is my primary constituency in teaching, learning and service, sufficient bases for me to present issues related to progress and challenges of our education sector for today's discussion.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is blessed with a large territory; diverse natural resources and agricultural space; an overwhelming population of over 140 million people, with enormous cultural diversity; ruled essentially by democratic governance that takes cognizance of traditional leaders, as the nation is dotted with kingdoms and chiefdoms with paramount kings and subordinate chiefs exercising significant measure of authority over their subjects. Administratively, Nigeria is made up of 6 zones, 36 states, a federal capital territory and 774 local government areas. The 2006 national census puts Nigeria population at 140 million (140,431,790) of which 73,635,716 (52%) are of school age. The task to ensure quality education of all Nigerians irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity or location is one the nation has grappled with in the last 50 years with remarkable success though fraught with challenges.

Education is a basic right that every citizen should enjoy. This axiom has been supported by a number of enabling instruments beginning with 1948 Declaration by the United Nations that education is a fundamental human right, the Jomtein Declarations 1990, more recently the Dakar Declaration and the Millennium Treaties of 2000 of which Nigeria is a signatory. Nigeria has adopted education as an instrument par excellence for effecting individual and national development, and this is why the right of all Nigerians to education is provided for as seen in section 18 of the 1999 Constitution. These provisions, however, are in chapter two of the constitution, titled fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy which are not justiciable, of which the argument of many is in the affirmative as education is a socio-economic right. (Igbuzor, 2006).

Education in Nigeria has evolved over the years since independence, building of course on the foundations of western education introduced during the colonial era. Prior to the advent of western civilization, Nigeria like all other human societies and civilizations had used some form of education to perpetuate the culture of its people using the informal and non-formal platforms to transmit useful knowledge based on a curriculum that was indigenous, well accepted and capable of meeting the socio-

cultural, physical, mental, spiritual and occupational needs of society. Though largely undocumented in literary terms, indigenous education was comprehensive and diversified, catering for the physical, intellectual, social, spiritual, vocational, and character development dynamics of the learner

The structure and content of today's education system in Nigeria are derived largely from the well acclaimed 1969 curriculum conference that gave birth to the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1977, reviewed over time, with its last revision in 2004. The Policy has well defined objectives, principles, philosophies and roles; with commitment to funding passionately proclaimed; and development of paradigms, programmes and structure well defined to address perceived needs of our nationhood.

The objective of this paper is to review the process, progress and gaps of educational development in Nigeria and present a way forward from a collection of perspectives of diverse stakeholders and concerned agencies. In doing this all levels of education in the country will be x-rayed with greater emphasis on Policy, Access, Equity, Level Transition, Quality, Governance, Finance and International Assistance to the Education sector.

2.0 The Nigeria Education System: Progress so far from 1960 to date.

Pre-independent Nigeria had the burden to expand educational facility to meet with the socio-economic and political demands of self rule as the schools provided by the missions and private proprietors could no longer meet up with the human resources required. This was the reason for the introduction of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1955 in the western region and in 1957 in the eastern region although it was later abandoned. The Ashby commission was set up in 1959 to look into the educational needs of Nigeria and plan education for the young nation from 1960-1980. The report was published in 1960 stating that the nation's education industry was faced with a catalogue of problems including: lack of educational policy; absence of standards; inadequate curriculum; problems of funding and resources; balance between educational levels, regions, arts and sciences, sexes; quantity and quality; and shortage of qualified teachers, (Aghenta 2001). The commission recommended amongst others the expansion of educational facilities at all levels including 4 universities in addition to the university college Ibadan. The federal government accepted most of the recommendations and this formed the catalyst for the educational revolution in the 1960s.

2.1 Progress in Policy Formulation and Modification.

Policy generation to redirect the educational system towards the achievement of the goals and aspirations of independent Nigeria was a child of necessity because what the education system inherited from the colonial government was foreign; and its objectives were tailored to serve colonial interests. The new nation passionately desired trained and skilled local manpower with useful knowledge for rapid development, hence the strong desire to evolve a home grown education policy. Consequently, despite the bleakness created by the realities of the civil war between 1967 and 1970, Nigeria organized a successful National Curriculum Conference in 1969, attended by a cross section of people, unanimously expressing their dissatisfaction with the existing education system. This general outcry led to a seminar by experts drawn from a wide range of interest groups in 1973 to determine what a National Policy on Education for independent and sovereign Nigeria should be, (FRN1998) and

Fafunwa (1967, 1974).

These critical issues, deliberations, and the outcomes arising from them, gave birth to the first National Policy on Education in 1977. The document was in no way a perfect blue print but was a good start and has since been revised in 1981, 1998 and 2004 to ensure that desired innovations are made. The policy has clearly spelt out: the philosophy and goals of the nation's education system; the structure; curriculum; standards and stipulation; and financing, administration and supervision.

The implementation of the national policy brought significant systemic changes including changes in the structure, curriculum content, evaluation as well as establishment of various management, supervisory and examination bodies. Structurally, it has departed from the educational level structure of primary to tertiary of 7-5-4 and subsequent 6-5-4 structures to the preferred 6-3-3-4 system stipulated by the modified policy in 1984. Although the policy stipulates 60-40 percent science- arts admission into institutions of higher learning the targets are far from been met.

2.2 Changes in Education curriculum content.

From the inception of the National Policy on Education, the content of education changed significantly to reflect the needs and aspiration of the Nigerian people. The curriculum is productivity based and hence it is comprehensive and diversified, catering for individual interest and national objectives at both the primary and secondary school levels. Nigeria is now supposedly operating a curriculum that is science, social science, arts, and vocational studies based. It also emphasizes the promotion of indigenous languages, French and Arabic and these are offered at the primary and post primary school certificate levels. English Language however has remained the language of instruction in schools. Over time, through advocacy in response to needs, the content of education has included regional and international issues such as gender, Family Life and Health Education (FLHE), HIV/AIDS, and moral philosophy.

2.3 Changes in educational Assessment System

The introduction of the National Policy on Education brought some pragmatic changes with emphasis on the use of comprehensive and continuous assessment in schools. Since then the objective multiple choice questions-type have been the popular choice for most examinations at both primary and secondary levels, although engagement in community projects, practical experiences and tests in the form of teaching practice and industrial attachment have also been employed. These are however, marked with irregularities as students are sometimes attracted to centers that provide little or no learning opportunity. The changes in educational assessment have not produced the best of results because the prevailing system encourages memorization favouring cognitive development above other domains of education. (Bolaji, 2007).

The practice of continuous assessment has proven demand on teachers' time, particularly in view of their heavy work-load and the large number of pupils to assess, and as a result the objectivity of the assessments is open to question. Furthermore, examination malpractice, especially at the level of the school, in the form of advance leakage of exam questions and other forms of cheating, has been a major source of concern, resulting in periodic investigations. Overall, there has been undue emphasis on paper qualification, accentuating the incentives to examination malpractice and the emphasis on learning by rote, (UNESCO, 2001).

2.4 Progress made in educational structure

The Levels of Education in Nigeria include the: Basic Education level; senior secondary level; and tertiary level. Education in Nigeria is on the concurrent legislative list with shared responsibility by the Federal, States and Local Governments, and manned by regulators, policy formulators, and examination bodies, given the responsibility to work together to give direction to the sector. The Federal Government plays a dominant role in the provision of post-secondary education while the States and Local Governments have the responsibility for the provision of basic and secondary education. The Federal Ministry of Education (FME) the regulator of the sector has the statutory mandates for policy formulation and quality control.

2.5 Progress made in Education System Governance

The Federal Government through the Ministry of education and its associated organs since independence ensures the coordination of education planning, policy, finance, and maintenance of standards in the Country. The Federal Ministry of Education (FME) acts as a liaison on educational matters between Nigeria and foreign countries, international and national organizations, agencies and foundations. The following are the administrative segments of the FME.

- (a) The Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC)
- (b) The Joint Consultative Committee On Education (JCCE)
- (c) West African Examinations Council (WAEC),
- (d) National Examination Council (NECO),.
- (e) The Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB)
- (f) The National Universities Commission (NUC).
- (g) The National Teachers Institute (NTI)
- (h) Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC).

3.0 Assessment of Key Systemic Issues:

3.1 Access and Equity

Universal access to education is well provided for the Child's Right Charter (CRC) and Nigeria Child's Right Act. CEDAW (article 10) and MDG 3 upholds the right of equity of access and forbids that a child be discriminated against on the basis of gender with respect to access to educational opportunities. Simply put, access to education implies facilitating all school age children to be enrolled into the education system particular at the basic level because it is viewed as a right of the child, while at the higher level, access is based on the carrying capacity of respective institutions. Usually, this is a function of a nation's ability to provide such education, taking into consideration policy dictates and implications for funding, manpower need, popular demand, and political inclination of the government in power. The UBE Act 2004 is the most recent demonstration of government's commitment in increasing access to education to all her citizens irrespective of age and sex. As indicated earlier state promotion of free and universal education predated the Jomtein 1990, Dakar declarations and The MDG of 2000 which are signed by Nigeria because the National Policy on Education attest to Nigeria's desire to commit to education for her citizens. Access to education at all levels remain a critical issue in the sector, with over 8 million children out of school. Equity in

both access to all levels and in utilization of resources has been assessed mostly with respect to gender, rural-urban divide and geographical divide of north and south, very little has been said with respect to limited access to quality education by children of the low income/the very poor and the implication of this on social justice/equity.

Enrolment rates are the main indicators of educational access. The two indicators usually employed are the Gross Enrolment ratio [GER] and the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER). Educationists are also interested in net attendance ratio (NAR), retention rates within a given level, completion rates, and level transition rates. Completion rates indirectly reflect on the quality of education retained by a registered learner.

With regards to sources of data, the Federal Ministry of Education collates enrollment data obtained from schools on the registration of pupils at the beginning of the school year. Such data are sometimes unreliable, due to the difficulties of obtaining comprehensive collection and compilation of registration data from all schools while in some cases, the authorities at various levels may have interest in distorting enrolment figures for increased allocation of fund, (FGN/UNICEF/UNDP, 2001).

3.1.1. Access to Basic Education

Basic Education according to the National Policy on Education (2004) is the education given to children aged 0-15. It covers Early Childhood Care and Education for ages 0-5, and 9 years of formal schooling consisting of 6 years of Free Primary Education and 3 years of Junior Secondary Education. Equally included in the education system are special interventions directed at nomadic and migrant children, mass literacy, adult and non-formal education for those above the formal school age. Objectives and necessary guidelines are stated clearly in the NPE. (FME, FIS, 2009).

The objective of the UBE Programme is to eradicate illiteracy, ignorance and poverty as well as stimulate and accelerate national development, political consciousness and national integration. The UBE Programme is Nigeria's strategy for the achievement of: 6 Goals of Education for All (EFA); Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2 and 3; and the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). Nigeria's commitment to UBE is driven by her desire to meet both the EFA and MDGs goals, by 2015. UBE includes the first nine years of formal schooling, adult and non-formal education and special education for children with disabilities. MDG 2 apart from focusing on increased enrolment, targets that by 2015, children everywhere, will be able to complete a full course of primary education.

I) Early Child Care Education (ECCE) **a. Day care and Pre- Primary education**

Early Child Care education is a recent development in the Nigeria education system. Until 2002 Government had only featured in Early Child Care Education (ECCE) in the area of policy formulation and standards control, such as the provision and distribution of guidelines for the establishment and management of pre-primary institutions, inspection, and the production and development of appropriate curricula and teaching materials. The demand for this level of education is propelled by the need for working mothers to have a safe place to keep their children while at work and the growing awareness of the value of pre-primary education, to prepare the child for school. There are now many day-care centres for children aged 0-3 years and pre-primary or nursery schools for children aged 3-5 yrs. The quality of nursery schools

vary wide therefore, attendance of any depends largely on the socio-economic status of the parents. By 1996, over 12,000 pre-primary institutions had been registered by the Government [FGM/UNICEF/UNESCO, E-2000], while many more are operating without being registered or inspected. Nonetheless, only a small minority of Nigerian children receives any pre-primary education. The 1999 Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) data show that only 18% of Nigerian children aged 36-59 months were attending some form of organized early childhood education centres.

Federal, States and Local government collaboration with UNICEF and the Bernard Van Leer Foundation (BVLFF) have ameliorated the situation with innovative steps to overcome these shortcomings. By 1996, these partners had established 2,045 early child care facilities, which are low cost and community based, in rural and poor urban areas, for 75,000 children in ten selected states. By 2000, the number had risen to more than 7,300 facilities, benefiting over 400,000 children, in twelve states. Investments have been made in the training of personnel, as well as parents and other care-givers, and in the development of a curriculum for early child care and development, which has been approved by the National Council on Education [NCE]. Yet, this is about a drop in the ocean, compared to the needs of the more than 20 million pre-school-age children in Nigeria. (FGN/UNICEF, 2001).

A major obstacle to government achievement of 100% enrolment of Nigerian infants and children in basic education is the poor state of birth registration in the country. Not all births in Nigeria are captured in formal records as not all birth occur in formal health facilities and regulations of registration of birth is not strictly adhered to by families. Taboos and local belief systems also prevent accurate population census of Nigerian infants. The need to adopt innovative measures to improve family attitude to birth registration cannot be over emphasized, for planning and implementation of basic education programmes.

II) Access to Primary Education

a.) Provision of Primary Education Facility.

Very crucial to increased enrolment of children into primary schools is provision of adequate number of schools.

Table 1a: Number of Primary Schools in Nigeria 1960 to 1983-84.

Primary	1960	1965	1966-70	1975/76	1980/81	1983/84
Number of schools	15,703	14,967	14,902	20,904	36,683	38,211

Sources: FME, Lagos

As seen on Table 1a, from a humble beginning of 15,703 in 1960, the number of primary schools in Nigeria grew to 38211 in 1983/84 showing an increase of 143.3% within the period. Although number of schools reduced in 1965 and 1970, this could be attributable to the civil war, as increases were again observed from 1975 reflecting the subsequent declaration of Universal Primary Education(UPE).

Table 1b: Number of Primary Schools in Nigeria, 1999-2005

Primary	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number of schools	49,326	49,326	49,306	50,516	59,131	60,188	60,188

Source: FME - NEMIS

As at 2005, number of primary schools have increased to 60,188 as seen on Table 1b, but reports of over crowded classrooms and absence of primary schools in some rural or disadvantaged communities indicate that more schools are required.

b.) Primary School Enrollment

Enrolment status at this level is crucial and it is a determinate of a nation's commitment to compulsory and free primary education. The data in Figure 1 show that in 1960, the number of children enrolled in the nation's primary schools was 2,912,618 but in the 1983/84 session, the number grew to 14,383,487, showing a 393.8% increase in 24 yrs. The primary school age population continued to increase rapidly while the GER sharply reduced from 82% in 1985 to 68% in 1990 and with fluctuating results as it rose to 86% in 1993 and slumped to 70% in 1996. Also total primary school enrollment fell from a peak of 16.2 million pupils in 1994 to 14.1 million pupils in 1996 [FGN/UNICEF/UNESCO/UNDP, E-2000]. FME records on enrolment between 1960 and 2008 in figure 1 and table 2 below indicate that the highest enrolment was recorded in 2003 with over 25, million registered pupils, nationally.

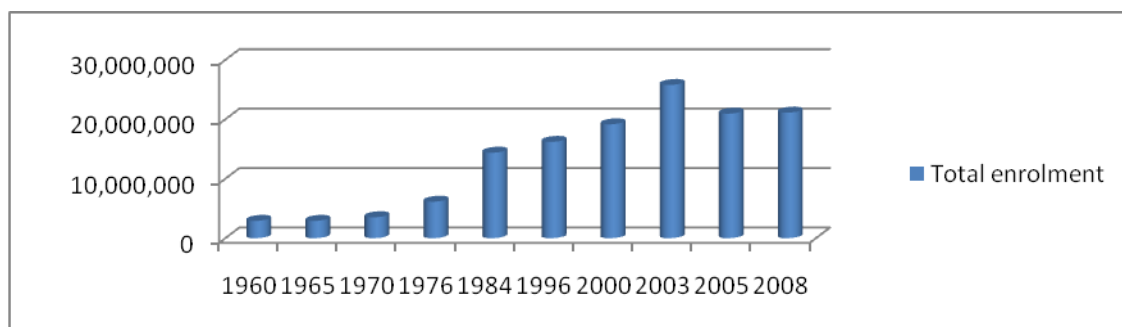


Figure 1 :Primary school enrolment between 1960 and 2008. Source: FME Statistics /NEMIS

Available data show that only 55% of primary school aged children were in school in 1999, compared with the 64% in 1995. When compared with the rest of Africa, Nigeria's performance on access to primary education is poor and the overall net attendance ratio (NAR) is well below the average for Sub-Saharan Africa despite its huge oil revenue, [UNICEF, A-2000]. For instance, South Africa records a gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 135% and a net enrolment ratio (NER) of 96% with almost total gender equity [UNESCO, E-2000]. It can be deduced from the NAR that approximately 45% of children of primary school age (6-11) were not in school.

It is necessary to mention here that there are major geographical disparities in access to primary education within Nigeria, with the rural areas at a great disadvantage compared with the urban areas and the north much worse off than the south. This pattern is the same as for Junior Secondary schools (JSS) and senior Secondary Schools (SSS). The 1999 MICS found a 22 percentage differential in the NAR between urban and rural areas, with the NAR only 50 percent in the latter. The NAR was almost three times higher in the South West 81% and the South East 79% than in the North West 28% and twice as high as in the North East 39%. (MIC 1999- FOS/UNICEF. A2000)

Some northern states, such as Jigawa, Kebbi, Katsina, Sokoto and Yobe have a primary school NAR of less than 25 percent. By contrast, some southern states have an NAR of more than 80 percent. These include Akwa-ibom, Anambra, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Oyo and Rivers. Some of the northern states, particularly those in the North West, also have a much higher gender gap in primary school enrollment. While the NAR at primary level is almost identical for boys and girls in the South West, the NAR for girls are only three quarters that of boys in the North West. The South East and North East are in an intermediary situation, with gender ratios of 0.96 and 0.90 respectively. UK Aid through education support managed by DFID, British Council, ActionAid International, has accomplished quite a lot in increasing the basic education access to children, especially girls, in disadvantaged states in the north for over ten years.

Retention of children through the system is a measure of educational efficiency. Retention rates contribute greatly to the completion rates. Repetition of classes has become rare in Nigeria primary schools as a result of the defacto practice of automatic promotion of all children completing a class, making attrition due to drop out and deaths the main issue. Could these alone be the reasons for the low retention rates in 1990 (67%). The low Primary 6 completion rates which range between 58% and 82% are due to the withdrawal of pupils after primary 5 by parents who desire that their children proceed to secondary schools without the first school leaving certificates. Table 2 and figure 2 present more details. Therefore survival rate of those enrolled is an important subject of further educational discuss and investigation.

Table 2: Retention (Survival) Rate of Primary school Enrollment -1990 – 2007

Indicators (%)	1990	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Net enrolment	68	95	95	-	-	81.1	84.6	87.9	89.6
Retained from Pri 1- 5	67	97	97	96	84	84	74	74	74
Primary Completion	58	76.7	76.7	-	82	82	69.2	67.5	67.5

Sources (1) Federal Ministry of Education, Abuja, 2008 (2) National bureau of Statistics, Abuja, (3) Universal Basic Education Commission. Abuja 2008.

As seen on Table 2 from 64.1% in 2000, the survival rate increased to 76.2% in 2005 and 82.4% in 2007, but dived in 2003 to 60.4%. Figure 2, show primary school completion rate

The **primary school completion** rate was lowest in 1991 with an average of 60% and was highest in 2003 for both boys and girls with 102% and 85% respectively. Figure 2 also indicate that completion rates vary from year to year for boys as well as girls. Girls completion rates are observed to be fairer than boys' in 1993 and 1995.

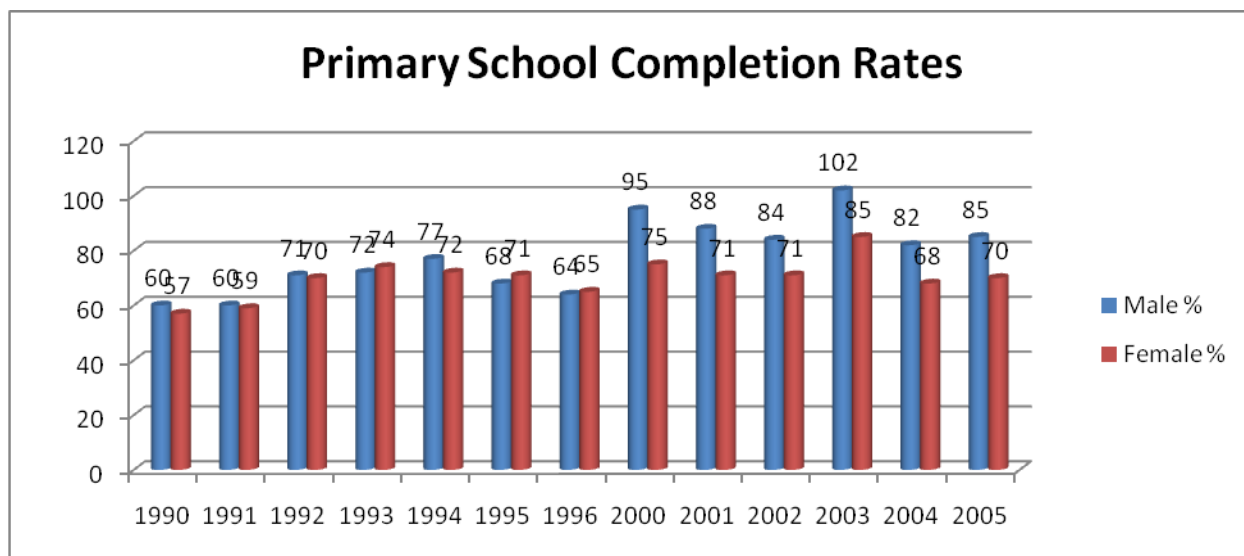


Figure 2: Primary School Completion Rate 1990-2005.

Sources: a.) Comprehensive Education Analysis (FGN/UNICEF/UNESCO/UNDP, E-2000

b) FMoE (Statistics of Education in Nigeria, 2005

Gender Parity

Gender disparity in access to education continues to constitute a major challenge to developing countries like Nigeria who is one of the E9 countries with a large number of children out of school. For any number of reason widely quoted and discussed, some parents in Nigeria don't consider it wise to invest in girls' education, even where user fees are zero. Socio-cultural factors such as male child preference, early marriage and fear of sexual abuses as well as poverty are the leading causes of low enrolment of girls for basic education, particularly in northern Nigeria. At the primary level of education girls' enrolment are in all situations lower than boys' in all parts of Nigeria. In the last ten years as shown in tables 3 and 4a total enrolment of girls is less than 50%.

Table3 : Primary School Enrolment of Girls and Boys (2000-2005)

S/N	YEAR	TOTAL	GIRLS	%	BOYS	%
1	2000	19,158,541	8413413	43.9	10,745,128	56.1
2	2001	19,263,534	8457812	43.9	10,805,722	56.1
3,	2002	19,861,682	8791072	44.3	11,070,610	55.7
4.	2003	25,772,044	11338280	44.0	14,433,764	56.0
5.	2004	20,036,950	8895336	44.4	11,141,614	55.6
6.	2005	20,951,818	9239339	44.1	11712479	55.9

Source: FME/EDB (2005)

Table 4a: Enrolment for UBE programme in 2007 &2008

Level of education	2007				2008			
	Male	Female	Total	% Female	Male	Female	Total	% Female
ECCE	630,171	614,294	1,244,465	49%	765,761	723,631	1,489,392	49%
PRIMARY	11,495,106	9,687,477	21,122,583	46%	11,539,767	9,581,390	21,121,157	45%
JUNIOR	1,531,582	1,259,575	2,791,157	45%	1,555,935	1,270,865	2,826,800	45%

SEC.								
TOTAL	1,3656,859	11,561,346	25,158,205	46%	13,861,463	11,575,886	25,437,349	46%%

Source : UBEC 2010.

However, girls enrolment in all the southern states are above the national average (approx. 43%). In 2005 Ekiti State had the highest proportion of girls (52.8%) in primary enrolment followed by Akwa Ibom (51.37%) and Kogi State (51.09%). In contrast Zamfara had the lowest enrolment of girls (28.3%) in primary school, followed by Sokoto (29.39%) and Katsina (35.36%). The road to Education for All remains bumpy. "The girls who are enrolled must struggle to learn against a pernicious gender bias so institutionalized and entrenched, it pervades policies and practices, curricular and textbooks, and interaction among teachers and students" UNICEF, 2000.

UK aid through Department for International Development (DFID), has supported a number of educational strategies to enhance good governance, access and quality in the Education sector in Nigeria. Support to improving girls access to education in northern Nigeria has been the area where DFID has invested greatly. Specifically the programme called the Girls' Education Project (GEP), has produced the greatest impact. GEP is a joint initiative between the Federal Government of Nigeria, DFID and UNICEF which aims to get more girls into school and to improve their quality of life. Increasing the number of female teachers in rural schools is a key element of the GEP programme and its trainee Teacher scholarship is encouraging more women and girls into the classroom.

3.1.2 Access to Secondary Education

(a) Enrolment at the Junior Secondary School

Between 1960 and 1984, the 5year secondary institutions were called Grammar schools or Commercial schools. Federal Ministry of Education (FMoE) records, 1985, revealed that Secondary/commercial schools increased yearly from 883 in 1960 to 6,336 in 1983/84 at the rate of 617.5%, while the percentage increase for vocational schools was 239%. It is seen that not much increase was attained in teacher training colleges during the period. Access to secondary schools from primary were usually by entrance examination keenly competed for across locations and regions. Entrance to the Unity Schools in the those early day in the 60s and 70s were limited to the very best who could cross the hurdle of the entrance and interviews to be admitted to class one or Lower Sixth grade, of the higher school certificate programme (HSC). The 6-3-3-4 policy introduced JSS and SSS system. Not all pupils who completed Primary school enter into JSS. Records shows far less enrolment in JSS than Primary. More disturbing was the trend of declining gross enrolment ratio (GER) in spite of the 100% transition policy in the system,(ESA 2000).

Low enrolment in JSS is a serious concern in the sector. UBE programme is yet to result in increased enrolment in JSS. UBEC reported an enrolment of 2,523,029 students in 6,330 schools in 2006. Overcrowded classrooms were also reported, 75,725 classrooms for 5,422,611 students in 10,913 in Junior and senior secondary schools averaging 72 classroom/pupil ratio nationally. The case being much worse in some states like Gombe with 680 classrooms for 115,078 students. Less than half the pupils who complete primary school in Nigeria move on to junior secondary school.

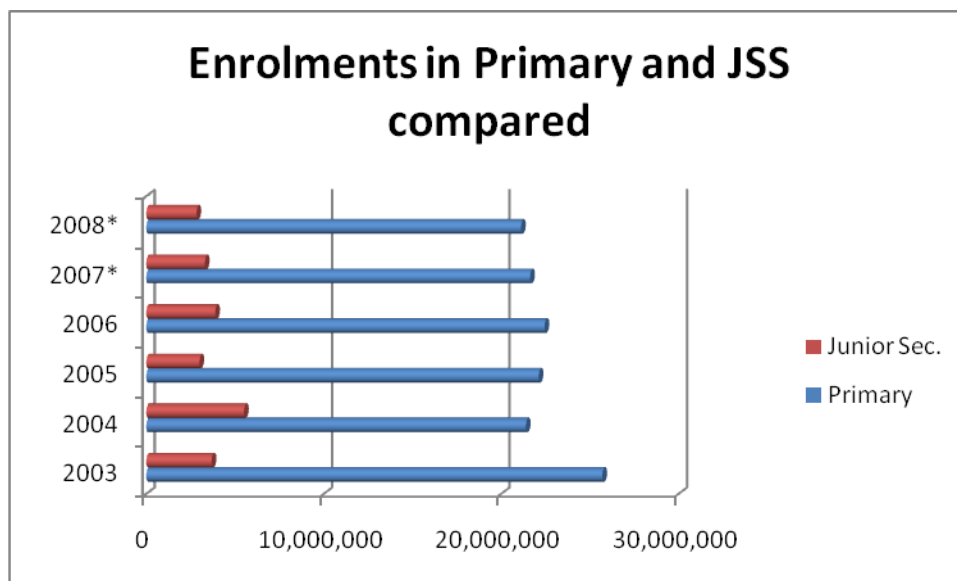


Figure 3 :JSS and Primary Schools enrolment compared

Sources: FME Statistics & NEMIS branch; FME Roadmap 2010 * Provisional data

Indeed, the transition rate from primary to junior secondary has been declining, from a peak of 53 percent in 1992 to only 44 percent in 1995 (Table 4b). Still in 2008, the difference between enrolment for Primary school level is far higher than that of JSS. Table 4 and figure 3, present primary school enrolment in 2007 and 2008 as 21, 122,583, 21,121,157 respectively. These could not be matched with JSS enrolment in 2007 nor in 2008- 2,791,157 and 2,826,800. Total JSS enrolment in 2007 was 13% of 2007 Primary school enrolment (Table 4a). This gives a stark picture of poor level transition. It is most likely that many children transited from public primary schools to private JSS, probably not covered by the statistics of reference as FME has confirmed difficulty to add data from private schools. (FME, 2010). Other factors could include inability to continue with basic education to junior secondary, exit to vocational training and apprenticeship programme in the indigenous education system.

Table 4b.: Enrolment, completion and transition in junior secondary education, 1990-95

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Gross enrolment ratio, JS [%]	-	-	35	38	41	39	34
Male	-	-	37	40	43	39	34
Female	-	-	33	37	39	38	34
Gross completion rate, JS [%]	-	85.1	88.0	87.7	85.9	80.9	-
Male	-	88.4	85.0	72.8	86.5	79.3	-
Female	-	84.2	92.1	96.6	85.3	82.7	-
Transition rates [%]							
From primary to JS	45.7	47.8	53.2	52.5	50.3	43.7	-
Male	47.6	48.2	51.7	50.4	48.3	41.6	-
Female	43.5	47.2	55.2	55.3	52.8	46.4	-
Source: Comprehensive Education Analysis [FGN/UNICEF/UNESCO/UNDP, E-2000							

In 1996, the gross intake rate for JS1 was 34 percent as shown on table 4b. This shows just how far there is to go before the UBE goal of universal access to junior secondary school can be attained.

Gender Parity.

Earlier in 1990s, the decline in the GER disproportionately affected boys, with a reduction from 43 percent in 1994 to 34 percent in 1996, according to the FGN/UNICEF- ESA, 2001. The GER for girls, which had risen sharply in the 1980s and early 1990s, declined from 39 to 34 percent in the same period as show on table 4b. The result has been a narrowing of the gender gap in junior secondary enrolment, even though the enrolment ratios fell sharply for both sexes.

Girls remain doubly at a disadvantage in most northern states, especially in the rural areas: not only are overall enrollment rates much lower than in the south or in urban areas, but proportionately, fewer girls are enrolled. About four in five junior secondary pupils succeed in completing this stage of education, with a slightly higher rate observed for girls than for boys, nationally. In 1995, the rates were 79 percent for boys and 83 percent for girls, according to the Comprehensive Education Analysis of 2000

In Katsina and Sokoto, there are twice as many boys as girls enrolled in junior secondary schools [FGN/UNICEF/UNESCO/UNDP, E-2000]. In both of those States, as well as Jigawa, the GER for girls was well under 10 percent in 1996.

On the contrary, according to the Comprehensive Education Analysis (CEA), in several states in the South East and South South, there is a strong tendency for parents to withdraw boys after primary school to engage in apprenticeships and informal sector employment. In states such as Akwa-Ibom, Anambra, Edo, Enugu and Rivers, girls greatly out-number boys at junior secondary level. In the most extreme case, Anambra, there were almost twice as many girls as boys in junior secondary school in 1996. UBEC 2006 reported enrolment ratio of 56.27% for boys and 43.73% for girls.

(c) Transition from JSS to SSS

Table 5 : Transition rates from JSS to SS 1990-95

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Transition From JS to SS	90.6	88.7	96.9	95.1	96.9	88.3	-
Male	90.4	88.8	95.4	93.4	97.1	84.5	-
Female	90.9	88.6	98.4	97.4	96.6	92.8	-

Source: Comprehensive Education Analysis [FGN/UNICEF/UNESCO/UNDP, E-2000]

Transition from JSS to SSS is burdened with policy shifts which totally undermine the achievement of stated objectives. For instance, the official policy stipulates 60% transition to the senior secondary school, and the remaining 40% to transit to technical, vocational and apprenticeship education, but as a result of the policy of 100% transition from JSS to SSS, the rate is about 95% in most years, as shown on table 5. The weak management of the vocational curriculum at the JSS level, the lack of appeal for technical education, and the seeming absence of adequate technical colleges has left students with no option than to enroll in the more appealing and academic SS programme. There is need for UBE implementation agencies to fix the policy clash. The stand of the present administration to review the present UBE arrangement needs care consideration.

3.1.3 Access to Post Basic Senior Secondary School

Post-Basic (Senior Secondary) Education has three categories which covers a three year academic programme preparation for all works of life and higher education namely: senior secondary education; science, teacher and technical education; as well as continuing education, provided in Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs). Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs) are found mostly in non-formal training schools and apprenticeship workshops offering programmes in the form of crafts. The senior secondary school is given to children aged 15-18 years. Minimal fees are charged in most states. The number of institutions offering secondary education has increased over time as shown on table 6.

Table 6 : Number of Secondary Schools in Nigeria between 1960 and 1984.

S/N	Level/type of Institution	1960	1965	1966-1970	1975-1976	1980-1981	1983-1984
	Secondary						
1	Junior sec. schools		-	-	-	-	(a)
2	Grammar/Comm. Sch	883	1,382	1,155	1,519	4,495	6,336
3	Fed. Govt. College	2	2	4	25	40	41
4	Teacher Training Col.	315	209	160	253	309	331
5	Techn./Voc. Schools	296,948	63	66	76	159	240
	Sub-Total	1,229	1,656	1,385	1,873	5,003	6,948

Source : F ME Lagos 1985

While there were 1,229 secondary institutions of different categories in 1960 with enrolment of 169,019. By 1984 the number rose to 6,948 with enrolment of 3,936,860, nearly 4 million. Remarkable increases in enrolment were seen particularly in federal government colleges, teacher training colleges and technical colleges. It can be averred that this period marked the beginning of educational expansion in Nigeria. However this data is not in tandem with the number of school age children at this level considering the low gross enrolment ratio revealed in table 6 which shows a higher GER for female than male. In all the cases however in a period of five years from 1992 -1996, GER ranged between 28.6% and 35.9% both gender combined as shown in table 7.

An issue of concern therefore would be the where about of children who dropped off while waiting to hear the outcome of their JS 3 examination results. Some may have enrolled in road side technical indigenous institutions for apprenticeship in different trades and vocations which are cheaper and more affordable for parents than the Senior secondary and formal Technical schools. Others may have enrolled in private secondary schools and other technical and teacher education programmes in the country. It is also not unlikely that a substantial number may have taken up employments as sales boys/girls and such menial jobs. The Education Data Bank should provide information that clears these issues.

Table 7 :Enrolment in Senior Secondary Education, 1992-96 [thousands]

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Enrolment, SS1-SS3					
Male	739	828	906	911	936
Female	613	694	760	807	815
Total	1,352	1,522	1666	1,718	1,751
Gross enrolment ratio [%]					
Male	28.6	31.2	30.9	32.5	32.4
Female	30.2	33.3	35.4	36.6	35.9

Source: Comprehensive Education Analysis [FGN/UNICEF/UNESCO/UNDP, E-2000]

(b.) Equity and Gender Parity in Access to SS Education

Table 7 reveals a higher GER for females than male, nationally, with increase from 1992 to 1996, a GER of 32% for boys and 36% for girls in 1996, even though the total enrolment for boys outweighs that of girl during the study period. In virtually all the southern states, especially those in the South East and South South, girls' enrolment at senior secondary level is much higher than that for boys. In Anambra, where the imbalance was the greatest in 1996, the ratio was 6-1 in favour of girls according to the CEA. The gender imbalance in the north, however, is once again strongly tilted against girls in the ratio of 2-1 in states such as Katsina, Kebbi and Sokoto.

Combining both junior and senior secondary levels, the overall secondary GER for 1996 was 34% for boys and 35% for girls. These figures are better than the averages for Sub-Saharan Africa [27% for boys and 22% for girls in 1990-96], but far worse than in countries such as South Africa, Ghana and Zimbabwe [UNICEF, A-2000b].

3.1.4 Access to Higher Education

Tertiary Education. is given after the post-basic education in Universities, Polytechnics/Monotechnics, Colleges of Education, Innovative Enterprise Institutions (IEIs) and institutions offering distance and correspondence education. The National Universities Commission (NUC), the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) are the supervisory bodies which coordinate the activities of these institutions within the sub-sector respectively.

Great strides have been made in improving access to higher education in Nigeria since independence. From 3 Universities, 4 Polytechnics in 1960 to 107 universities and 183 Polytechnics and Monotechnics in 2010. By the end of 2010, the number of universities in Nigeria would be no less than 110 with 6 newly approved, one in each zone in November, 2010. It is thus evident that a major recommendation of the Ashby commission may have been met, though not fully. Products of our Nigerian Universities have in some ways contributed substantially to the body of knowledge going by the number of globally acclaimed laureates in the humanities like Soyinka, Achebe, J.P. Clark and Niyi Osundare among others, who have made contributions which resound worldwide. (Ayodele-Bamisaiye, O. 2010)

Overall, Nigeria has a far larger and more diversified tertiary education sector than any other country in Sub-Saharan Africa, apart from South Africa. The GER for higher education was 6.1% in 1998, almost three times higher than the 2.3% for Sub-Saharan Africa, but still lower than the average of 9.6% for developing countries and 15.9% for South Africa [UNESCO, E-1999]. Today there are a total of 110 approved Universities and 115 approved university education programmes, (FMOE 2010), designed for the development of high level manpower. Polytechnics/Monotechnics award the National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND), for the middle level manpower. The Colleges of Education were established to provide quality teacher education for teachers at the basic education level. Currently, we have 86 Colleges of Education. However, the expansion in tertiary education has not been accompanied by a concomitant increase in resources, making the quality of output questionable.

Table 8a: Number of Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria from 1960- 1983/84

Tertiary	1960	1965	1966-70	1975/76	1980/81	1983/84
College of Education /ATOs	-	6	8	15	42	56
Polytechnics	4	5	6	10	24	29
Universities	3 (b)	5	6	13	17	27
Total	7	16	20	38	83	112

Sources: FME, Lagos

Table 8a shows that from merely 0, 4, and 3 in number for colleges of education, polytechnics, and universities in Nigeria by 1960, the number of institutions increased to 56, 29, 27 by 1983/4 session respectively.

Table 8b: Enrollment into Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria from 1960- 1983/84

Tertiary	1960	1965	1966-70	1975/76	1980/81	1983/84
College of Educ /ATOs	-	7,640(b)	36,345 (b)	59,480(b)
Polytechnics	3,880(c)	11,993	41,750	57,534
Universities	2,445 (d)	7,697	14,468	33,204	76,297	107,592
Total	(2,445)	(7,697)	(18,348)	52,837	154,392	224,606

Sources: FME, Lagos. Note: Totals in brackets are incomplete

From Table 8b it is seen that enrollment into the existing higher institutions in 1983/84 was 59480, 57,534, and 107,592 for colleges of education, polytechnics, and universities respectively. By 1999, the total number of public universities was 37, with a student population of 345,581. In 1999, there were also 41 polytechnics and colleges of technology with a total enrolment of 85, 102, while the 62 colleges of education enrolled over 88,000 students. (ESA, 2000)

Nonetheless, tertiary institutions particularly the universities, are not able to cope with the demand for places, as a result of the large number of successful graduates from the senior secondary schools yearly. For instance, there were only about 25% of places for the 470,000 candidates that sat for the university entrance examinations in 2000 [FGN, D-2000b]. In 2010, over a million candidates competed for space

in 107 universities. (FME , 2010) The difficulties faced in admission processes to Nigeria universities are far from being abated. They include payment of high UME and Post UME examinations screening fees, intake by quota system, and several other obstacles. These have resulted in restricted access to willing and qualified candidates, stiff competition for places and the attendant sharp practices including examination malpractice. While private sector participation has eased some of the pressure on access in public schools at the primary and secondary levels, the high fees charged by private universities has remarkably excluded the poor.

Contributors to the review of 50 years of University education in Nigeria, organized by the University of Ilorin, all agreed that funding has been a big challenge to all universities. Being starved of funds university authorities were compelled to freeze staff employment, greatly impacting negatively on quality, as student inflow could not be controlled to match available resources. This has of course led to series of disturbances to academic calendar , a situation which has greatly benefited the insurgence of private universities. Students’ riots and academic staff Union (ASU) strikes have common features in Nigerian universities to date. We recall the “Alli must go”. “Ango must go” and, extra kobo, we no go pay” and current axiom of ASUU “my take-home pay cannot take me home” and government response of “no work, no pay”?

The demand for tertiary education is not evenly spread within the different categories. Only 100,000 candidates recently sought admission to COEs, which currently stand at 63, while more than one million candidates competed for spaces in 107 universities and only 400,000 candidates sought admission to 183 polytechnics, monotechnics, colleges of agriculture, health technology and the likes. (Prof. Afolabi, O. PS- FME, November 2010. THISDAY Nov. 17, 2010)

Right from colonial times, vocational studies had been treated with contempt, in spite of our “huge” revenue from agricultural products prior to the emergence of crude oil. This has continued in our times because Nigerians still grudgingly patronize vocational education as provided in the trade centers, monotechnics and polytechnics. Even though we are now in the era of massification of university education in the country, the motive (especially the socio-economic) apparently remains the same. University education is still seen as the passport to clean collar employment: the gospel of “the dignity of labour” appears reserved for the lower ranks of the social ladder (Ayodele-Bamisaiye, O. 2010)

Equity in access to Tertiary education

Table 9: Ratio of Girls to Boys in 3 levels of education compared

Indicators	'90	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	Target 2015
Ratio of girls to boys in primary education (girls per 100 boys)	76	78	78	79	79	81	81	-	93.6	100
Ratio of girls to boys in secondary education (girls per 100 boys)	75	81	81	80	78	78	90	-	97.6	100
Ratio of girls to boys in tertiary education (girls per 100 boys)	46	66	68	87	72	-	-	-	-	100

Sources: (1) Federal Ministry of Education, Abuja, 2008. (2) Universal Basic Education Commission, Abuja, 2008.
(3) National Bureau of Statistics, Abuja, 2008. (4) Education for All (EFA), 2001

Compared with the primary and secondary levels, there is much greater gender disparity in tertiary education, except in the colleges of education, where there seems to be a balance. While progress is gradually being made towards 2015 targets of 100%, the ratio of girls per 100 boys in tertiary education in Nigeria has increased from 46% in 1990 to 72% in 2003. Percentage admission to Universities alone for females between 1999 and 2005 ranged from 38% to 43% as shown on table 9.

Table 10: Jamb Admissions to Nigerian Universities By Sex (1999-2005)

YEAR	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	% FEMALE
1999	39342	25016	64358	38.87
2000	26665	19016	45681	41.63
2001	54972	35797	90769	39.44
2002	31942	19903	51845	38.39
2003	59742	45415	105157	43.19
2004	69715	52777	122492	43.09
2005	38529	27080	65609	41.27

Source : FMoE (Statistics of Education in Nigeria, 2007)

The 1999 records from the National Universities Commission [NUC], the National Board for Technical Education [NBTE] and the National Commission for Colleges of Education [NCCE] show that a total of about 500,000 students were enrolled in all the higher educational institutions in Nigeria. Of this number, females account for only 34 percent. The male/female disparity is especially acute in the polytechnics and in non-Arts disciplines in the universities, such as Engineering/Technology, Environmental Design and Veterinary Medicine. Table 10 depicts the low percentage of female enrolment in tertiary education in seven years.

3.1.5 Access to Adult Literacy and Non-Formal Education.

Mass literacy, adult and non-formal education has built on the gains of the activities of Islamic scholars and Christian missionaries in Nigeria's social landscape pre-independence. The formal structure may have been birthed in 1965 at the University of Ibadan with the creation of African Adult Education Department (Unit) which has led to over 20 Tertiary institutions offering courses and programmes in adult education. In March 1971, the Nigeria National Council for Adult Education was set up and located Adult Education Units and Departments were also located in both Federal and State Ministries of Education. The Department of Food, Roads, and Rural Infrastructures (DFRRI) and the Directorate of Social Mobilization (MAMSER) were directed by the Federal Government to assist in raising campaigns to popularize mass literacy.

The National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education was established by Decree No 17 of 1990. This has been interpreted as Nigeria's response to Jomtein Treaty of 1990, Article 1 of which affirmed that "every person – child, youth and adult – shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs". The

Nigerian state is committed to this declaration as expressed both in the constitution and in the education policy. Five years report from the commission between 2004 and 2008 shows a remarkable increase in 2007 as seen in figure 3.

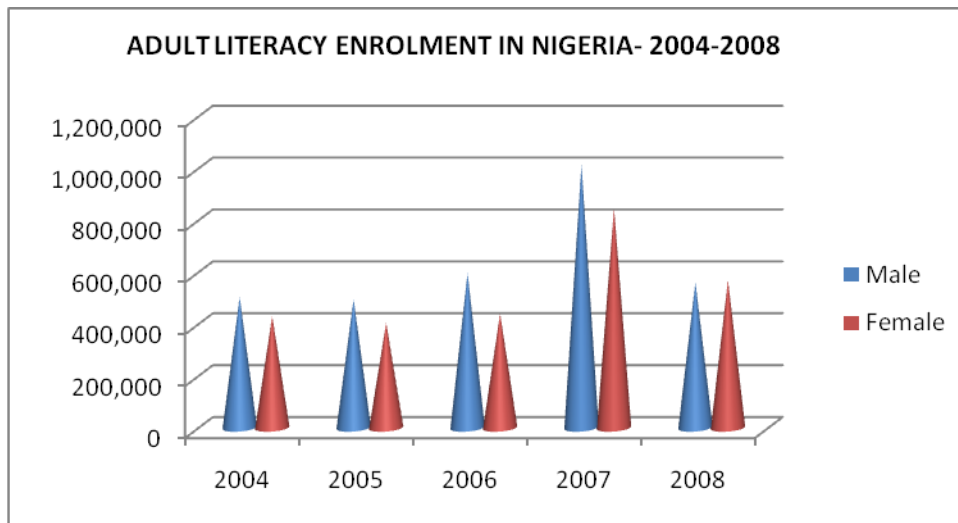


Figure 3 : Adult Literacy Enrolment (2004 -2008)

Source: National Commission for Mass Literacy

There are also striking geographical and gender disparities in adult literacy rates. The FME/UNICEF ESA data of 2000 show that there are more illiterate female adults than male in all the parameters isolated for assessment. The figure further showed that adults in the southern zone fared better with about 74% male and 57% female, while the north recorded about 41% male and 21% female literacy rates. Also, urban adults had a higher literacy rate than rural adults. The need to research the full literacy picture with respect to all major languages of communication and instruction is one of urgent concern.

FME 2010 report on EFA score card presented at the Addis Ababa High level meeting, state that the current population figure of non-literate adults stands at 40 million with enrolment in literacy recording 500,000 leaving 39.5 million not enrolled. It further revealed that of the 3.5million nomadic and migrant children needing education, only 450,000 are enrolled thus the dream to meet EFA goal 4 (reducing illiteracy by 50%) is still a tall order. The report also stated that 35,779 literacy centres have been established in Nigeria. The campaign and advocacy on literacy continues with the literacy by Radio for which 1,850 facilitators have been trained; and the development of language books in English and many indigenous languages; and books on life skills. The question being asked is how many in the Nigerian public are tapping into these opportunities? Available records from the Mass Literacy commission revealed that less than 25% of women above 45 years are literate, and this declines to a mere 15% for women aged 55-65 and 7% for women above 65.

Consequence of Female illiteracy

The literacy rate among women is directly related to other statistics on women development in all spheres of life: health, poverty level and their visibility in governance particularly with respect to the poor pace of meeting the Beijing Declaration Affirmative Action in Nigeria. Ignorance among women is a major reason for their rights denial and abuses, marginalization in politics and social life, poor economic development and employability, poor health status-early marriage and incidence of Vesico Vagina Fistula (VVF), high maternal mortality, and their poor health seeking behaviour.

3.1.6 Disadvantaged groups

For a long time, some categories of Nigerian children were not given attention with respect to their special needs. Two of the largest of such groups are the children of pastoral nomadic and migrant fishing communities, for whom a special nomadic education programme has been established. Pastoral nomads migrate within and across state boundaries in search of grazing grounds for their livestock. As these migrations invariably involve entire families it is difficult for their children to enroll in normal primary schools. Migrant fishing communities are found mainly in the Niger Delta, with remote creeks and waterways, accessible only by boat.

The National Action Plan (NAP) in response to EFA goal 2 has targeted 50% increase in the number of disadvantaged children especially those with disabilities, mainstreamed into primary school by 2015. A number of measures have been put in place to achieve this including the integration of Quranic schools into UBE programme and the translation of UBE Curriculum Hausa and Kanuri Languages and primers for the core subjects. A major progress made in this direction was the establishment of the Commission for Nomadic Education.

Table 11: Nomadic education enrolment 1991-99

	Nomadic education enrolments	
	Total	% Female
1991	24,184	37.9
1992	33,404	38.0
1993	39,963	41.9
1994	49,617	42.7
1995	64,459	39.5
1996	-	-
1997	118,776	39.6
1998	116,944	40.5
1999	122,517	38.3
Source: Comprehensive Education Analysis (FGN/UNICEF/YBESCO/UNDP, E-2000)		

Since 1989, the National Commission for Nomadic Education [NCNE] has responded to the special needs by establishing over 150 nomadic schools, as well as training more than 500 teachers and adapting curricula for nomadic children. Enrolment of 122, 517 was recorded in 1999, with girls making up about 38 percent of pupils, as in Table 11.

Impact of external Aid

Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) between 2004 -2008 in implementing part of its objective, supported innovative approaches which have proved effective in extending education to marginalized groups of children. With constructive engagement with government agencies and officials, CEF partners were able to get government adopt these pilot ideas for scaling up. Learning experiences from these process were also fed into local and national dialogue. Among the notable achievements under this objective are that :

- Over 10, 000 children benefited by having access and remaining in school
- Hundreds of pastoralist children are being taught by trained pastoralist teachers who move with the parents of these children
- CEF innovative advocacy activities achieved the construction of separate infrastructures for children with special needs. This has encouraged parents to send such children to school in project states in North west.
- Children affected by HIV/AIDS have also benefited from inclusive education advocacy.
- In Bida, Niger state , in particular, hundreds of children were missing education because there were no schools in their immediate communities except far away – 2hrs trekking distance. Children followed their mothers to the markets instead. A pool of such children have been enrolled in market schools. CEF succeeded in registering 40 of such schools with government. Each of those schools have 150 children enrolled, making parents happy.

4.1 Quality of Nigeria Education

The ultimate to schooling success is output quality which is a function of a nation's ability and political will to provide the necessary platform for a good education. The driving force of the success of the educational business is the adequacy of its philosophy, objectives, curriculum, resources, management, commitment, as well as the orientation of the individual learner. Therefore, much as access is advocated, and seen as an indication for commitment to education provision, it can better be likened to an athlete in a relay race who effectively made a good take off for his team but could not guarantee that they will come tops, because success is the product of a complex and inter-twinned matrix of interwoven components mutually working together, all things been equal. Reflecting on the zeal and the expectations of the founding fathers towards nation building, pre-independence, the lofty objectives of the National Policy on Education, and the actual situation on ground now, one is at loss what report to give because it is with mixed feelings, firstly because the industry is a shadow of what it ought to be and the true state of quality leaving much to be desired, and secondly because it is a true and sincere report that will herald the platform for informed decisions towards rapid development.

At the National Stakeholders Consultative Forum on Education in August 2000, convened in Abuja by the Federal Ministry of Education, with a view to identifying the underlying problems of the education system and proffering solutions, a diagnosis of the main challenges facing the education system was presented. Most of the challenges listed bordered on the low quality of educational services and output. These included deficiencies in the curriculum and its delivery; inadequate school infrastructure and overcrowded classrooms; weak motivation of teachers; the emphasis on examinations rather than skills development; and inadequacies in financing, management, planning, statistics, monitoring and evaluation in the education sector. The stakeholders also highlighted the fact that there had been a lack of political will to

tackle this systemic crisis. Ten years later, in September 2010 when President Goodluck Jonathan called an Education Summit in Abuja the stakeholders continued to lament on the decline in quality of educational inputs and outputs.

(a) Learning Environment

Learning is known to be facilitated by the architectural finesse and infrastructural adequacy of schools for both students and teachers. However the situation on ground depicts a near sorry state as a result of un-halted infrastructural decay in more than 70% of the schools. It is like a frightening tale, but absolutely true that Nigerian children in this 21st century learn under trees; or in classrooms that are unsafe, with Leaking roofs, falling ceilings; shortage of desks and benches; over crowded classes. Libraries, laboratories, equipment, audio and visual aids, and toilets are in short supply, making the learning environment totally un-conducive for learning. The resultant negative effects are: in-attentiveness, truancy, youth restiveness, examination malpractice and mass failure and the like.

The physical quality of schools is another factor with a potentially depressing effect on enrolment and attendance, particularly in the case of girls, and even more negative effects on the quality of the learning experience. If the number of schools that met the criteria for refurbishment by the Petroleum Trust Fund [PTF] between 1997 and 1998 is a measure, over 80 percent of schools can be considered deficient in physical quality. (UNICEF 2001).

(b) The Teacher Quantity and Quality.

All resources required to facilitate the schooling process are important in enhancing the productivity of the system, but the role of teachers is distinct because without them other factors may be abundantly put in place but to waste, as teachers are the active agents entrusted with the responsibility of translating the curriculum to produce quality outputs. Teachers are required in quantity, quality and specialty based on policy dictates and curriculum offerings of a particular school and level of education. However, reports indicate that teachers have never been sufficiently supplied in schools because of the high manpower demand, the comprehensive and diversified nature of the curriculum at all levels, huge financial demand for payment of teachers, high attrition rate, brain drain syndrome, lack of motivation, inadequate training facilities, low morals on the part of students to opt for a teaching profession, low rating of teaching profession, and low quality of those available for training. Another glaring problem is poor recruitment and distribution processes as these exercises are plagued by the, who-you-know-syndrome and hence persons that are qualified and specialized are left out and the distribution of those employed is lopsided to the detriment of rural and disadvantaged schools.

In 1997, less than 70% of primary school teachers had the Grade 11 Teachers Certificate. This was adjudged to be too low to make quality impact on learning output. In an attempt to solve this problem, a new policy emerged in 1999 that primary school teachers should possess the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) Less than 40% of primary school teachers then, had NCE.

The challenges of quality are more evident in the area of teacher preparation, management and monitoring. The challenges are particularly acute at the basic education level, particularly ECCE, primary and adult literacy. Especially in short supply are, English, Science, Math, and TVE teachers at primary and junior secondary levels. More importantly, less than 50 percent of the primary school

teachers have the minimum teaching qualification, leading to a qualified teacher/pupil ratio of 1:74. To achieve UBE by 2015, Nigeria would need to recruit between 408,000 and 1,431,512 new qualified teachers serving 57,260,499 pupils, although the actual figure could be much higher if accurately assessed. In addition, there are serious disparities in teacher deployment in urban and rural schools. Most of the qualified teachers are placed in urban areas, leaving rural schools undersupplied and saddled with unqualified teachers." UNESCO, Abuja Newsletter, Vol 2 No.3 July- September 2010

Entry into the Teaching profession has been poor because of the low rating of the profession by students which is seen in the shortfall in applications for admission to faculties and colleges of education. In 1999, out of more than 500,000 applicants for university admission, less than 2% applied for courses in Education. Worse still, there were only 10,000 applicants for places in the 67 colleges of education. These figures point to the lack of interest in a career in the teaching profession.

(c) The Learner

To the Nigerian public, a quick assessment of the standard of education is viewed from the perspective of the output of the learner. Parents are disappointed by the level of performance of their children. Many bemoan the performance of students when results are released by West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO). Public commentators have expressed concern over the crave for entertainment and monetary award reality shows among students, sometimes involving the entire family, to the neglect of quality attention and supervision of children's education by parents. (Nigerian Tribune October 14, 2010).

Today, all that Nigerian youths know is entertainment, and they come in different forms- reality television shows, dancing competitions, singing competitions. Foreign football leagues have taken over the minds of young Nigerians. A young football follower in Nigeria today can reel out the names of players of his favourite football club than he can of the subjects he is offering in school.

Satellite television stations are also wreaking more havoc than good. School age children can spend hours in front of the television, thereby not giving ample time for studying. Adewale Oshodi Nigeria Tribune, Thursday October 14, 2010

Last September, the low performance of candidates in 2010 WAEC and NECO examinations compelled President Goodluck Jonathan to call a Stakeholders Summit on the state of education in the country. The most worrisome is the declining interest in education by young people who no longer see schooling as a means to their desired end. Today, non-curricular activities like dancing, singing, drama (film acting) theatre which are viewed as extra curriculum or co-curricular activities in the formal education system, have taken the better attention of learners.

Monitoring of Learning Achievement [MLA] project is a nationwide study first conducted in 1996 by the Federal Ministry of Education, with the support of UNICEF and UNESCO. It featured a set of tests on literacy, numeracy and life skills, given to pupils in Primary Grade 4. It was possible to assess the extent of pupils' mastery of the skills that are supposed to be imparted to them by the fourth year of primary education.

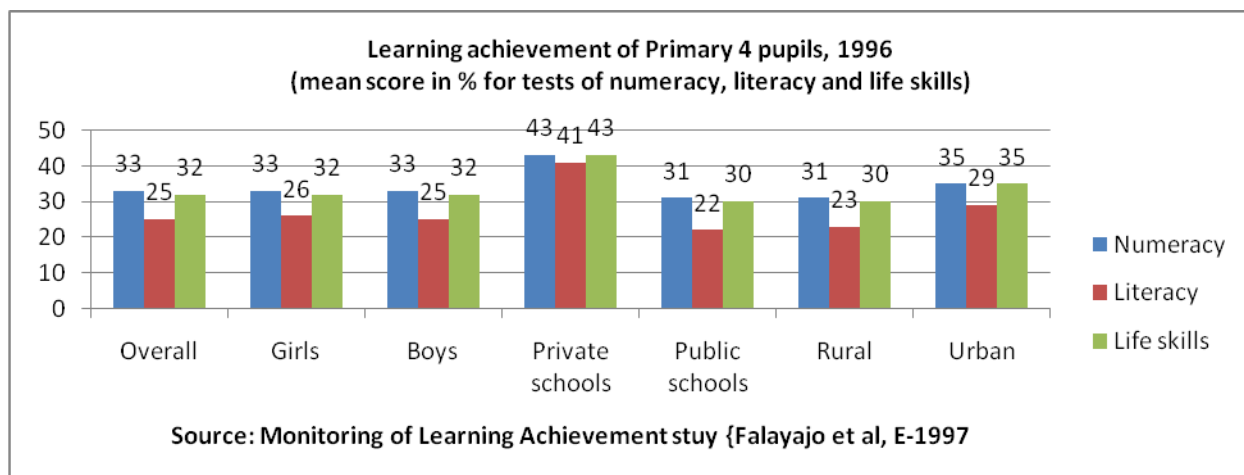


Figure 4: Learning Achievement of Primary 4 Pupils in 1996.

The study found that most children in Primary Grade 4 are not acquiring essential learning tools and the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that are critical to their future [Falayajo et al, E-1997]. The interpretation of this is that in most Nigerian primary schools, children are being denied their right to quality education. The data in figure 4 show that pupils score was well below the pass score of 40% in each of the tests, as the overall mean scores were 33% for numeracy, 25% for literacy and 32% for life skills. There was no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. However, pupils in rural schools did much worse than those in urban schools, with a differential of between four and six percentage points, depending on the test. The only category of pupils who on average go more than the pass score were those in private schools, whose mean scores was 41% for literacy and 43% for the other two tests. On state bases there were major differences but only Kano, obtained a mean score of 44% in numeracy.

A more disturbing trend is that many pupils and students go to school without the relevant textbooks. A typical example is displayed below in table 12 where only 12.7 % of pupils in Primary 4 had books on science subjects and only approximately 12% had books in all subjects.

Table 12: Percentage of Primary 4 pupils with textbooks, 1996

English	Maths	Social studies	Reading	Writing	Science	All
52.1	32.4	23.0	13.6	13.5	12.7	12.2

Source: Monitoring of Learning Achievement Study [Falayajo et al, E-1997]

At the junior and senior secondary levels, output leaves much to be desired in quality, judging by the examination results. Performance in both the Junior School Certificate Examination [JSCE] and the Senior School Certificate Examination [SSCE] in federal and state school, has been far from encouraging. The credit pass rate in English Language, Mathematics and Biology has ranged between 16 and 30 percent between 1985 and 1998.

UBEC conducted a follow-up assessment of learning achievements of primary five pupils in English and Mathematics in 2001. The result still showed low level of achievement in the two subjects, national mean score for English was 40.30% and Mathematics was 34.02%. In 2003

a National Assessment of the UBE Programme (NAUBEP) was conducted with tests in English, Mathematics, Primary science and Social Studies to pupils in primary 4,5,and 6 and questionnaires to the same pupils and their teachers. Key findings from the exercise were that only 41% of the pupils had text books in English, Mathematics, Primary Science and Social Studies. Performance mean score in the 4 subjects were 24.70% (English), 30.94% (Mathematics), 40.33% (Primary Science), and 25.18% (Social Studies). Other significant views of pupils and teachers were the need for teachers' professional development in some aspects of curriculum delivery, classroom management, that most schools were not child-friendly, that school curricula are rigid, over-burdened, centrally prepared and leave no room for local input or adaptation to meet peculiar local needs. (UBEC DIGEST, 2003)

(c) Impact of External Aid : Education Sector Support Programme In Nigeria (ESSPIN)

UK Aid to the Education sector through the Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN) has been specifically designed to add value to quality of education service delivery and demand. ESSPIN, the latest of DFID package to salvage Nigeria education, is a programme on partnership between the Nigerian Government and the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID). The six-year programme (2008 – 2014) supports Federal and State governments – Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara and Lagos initially with Enugu added in 2010 – to develop effective planning, financing and delivery systems that will improve the quality of basic education. ESSPIN works closely with other DFID-funded State Level Programmes (SLPs). It builds on DFID's Capacity for Universal Basic Education (CUBE) Project and the Girls Education Project (GEP) and works alongside the World Bank State Education Sector Project.

The central vision of DFID in ESSPIN is to support Nigeria in accessing and managing its own resources to create a sustainable and deliverable education system that is equally beneficial to all. In a short space of time the programme has accomplished admirable achievements working with Federal and State Ministry departments and agencies, (MDAs), establishing at least 28 State School Improvement Teams (SSIT) in 6 project states; over 1200 head teachers and local school support officers have been trained in school management and professional leadership; 1,000 School-based Management Committees (SBMC) have been established (approx 8,000 individuals, of whom approx 3,000 are women; water has been supplied to 83 schools through provision of boreholes. School health clubs have been established in these schools.

Separate girls and boys toilets have been provided in 83 schools; 36 civil society organizations are being actively engaged in a programme of working visits to 1000 school communities to support SBMCs and community participation and voice; Revised Quality assurance procedures have been developed. In addition, 500 school inspectors have been trained in new inspection methods; Revamped, independent Quality Assurance Agencies have been established in Kwara and are being established in Kaduna and Lagos. Functions and statutory mandate of the Federal Inspectorate Service has also been revised. Already 960 "almajiris" children have been provided with Mathematics and literacy learning aids in 140 Tsangaya schools in Kano. IEC materials, public information support, regular newsletters, lesson plans, SBMC guides, films have been produced to support the realization of programme objectives.

MTN Education Portfolio

A number of corporate bodies have also rendered various assistance to schools and students to improve their level of performance. These include MTN with a record of listed support to schools and colleges in the area of provision of information and technology resources. Among the project so far completed or still on going under the education portfolio are: MTN Universities Connect Project and Foundation Schools Connect. A number of institutions at all levels have benefited from different services offered in each of these projects: 128 networked computers, 3 servers, 2 high capacity printers and 100KVA generator. School Connect has provided: Technical training for 12 members of existing library staff to work with NetLibrary for 2 years to build capacity; distribution of a total of **44,808 exercise books, 7,316 school bags and 11,620 toys to 189 schools** nationwide as part of the MTN CSR strategy of providing learning and play support items to children and youth.

5.1 Financing Education

It is in the realization that '*money counts*' that the National Policy on Education states that education is a huge government venture in Nigeria, FRN (2004). Adequate financial input into the education sector commands the essential purchasing power for all other resources towards the achievement of universal basic education, wider access at the higher levels of the education system and quality of education at all tiers. The Education Sector is funded from many sources and criteria for sharing are as laid down in the relevant legal documents. It has been a repeated complaint, most recently expressed in the Abuja Declaration in August 2000, that the education sector has been seriously under-funded and that this is one of the fundamental reasons for the poor performance of the sector in recent years. (UNICEF, 2001).

a.) Sources of Funding:

Financial contributions to the sector are largely derived from government and external Aids. The financial resources for education come from Federal, State and Local Governments, non-governmental agencies [such as religious groups] and individual households. Communities also sometimes participate in the financing of education through the donation of land, building of schools, supply of school furniture and equipment and the granting of scholarships. Sometimes, Parent-Teacher Associations play an important role in mobilizing such contributions, which are noteworthy and should be encouraged. While basic education is declared free in the public sector, in the sense that tuition fees are not charged for enrolment in such schools, parents are responsible for many other direct and indirect costs, including textbooks, uniforms, transport and various levies. Private costs in the context of widespread poverty have become one of the main causes of low school enrolment, particularly in the case of girls in some parts of the north and rural areas.

Funds allocated by the Federal Government to the education sector are normally redistributed to the various tiers of the system-primary, secondary and tertiary. State Governments also fund education. Their source is primarily their allocation from the federal account, their state VAT and state general revenue through local taxes, school levies etc. States are responsible for funding secondary education and state owned tertiary institutions. However, since April 2002, States control and fund primary education as funds for primary education are sent through Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC). Local Governments are also involved in funding education at the primary school level. Local government revenues

come from statutory allocations from Federal Account proceeds from VAT and internally generated funds.

All States are expected to fulfill certain conditions in order to have access to Federal Grants on UBE. These include the passage of UBE law at state level, establishment of a state UBE Board and lodgment of 50% of project funds to Central Bank of Nigeria as matching funds. Failure of some states to access UBE grants from UBEC is a major obstacle to achieving UBE objectives nation wide. Guardian Newspaper of November 4, 2010 reported an update on state access through matching grants. The Executive Secretary of UBEC, Ahmed Mohammed was reported to have disclosed the state of performance of certain states, declaring that of 36 states only 29 had accessed the current quarter grant by October 2010. Edo and Borno states were reported to be the worst culprits as they are yet to access any fund since 2006. "We have un-accessed matching grants by states of N34 billion from 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008. In 2008 nine states failed to access any of the funds. They are Borno, Cross River, Ebonyin, Edo, Kano, Lagos, Nassarawa, Ogun and Plateau states.Benue has not accessed the second quarter funds for 2008, Delta State has not accessed its fourth quarter funds for 2008." (Mohammed, A., 2010)

An objective analysis of education sector financing is hindered by the lack of comprehensive data. While data on executed budgets are produced annually by the Federal, State and Local Governments, these are not collated into comprehensive Government accounts to present a breakdown of national expenditure. The situation is further complicated by grants from various bodies and agencies to schools, which are not reflected in government budgets. Even less information is available about the spending by the non-governmental sector and by households. As a result, it is impossible to make any global calculations on the share of education in Government expenditure or in gross national expenditure, and on the distribution of expenditure between the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, or to derive the unit costs of education at these different tiers of the education system. The obvious threat in this bleak situation is possible duplication of effects or a loophole for corrupt officials to write off funds on projects that were actually undertaken by other organs or agencies. A study on education financing, to overcome this important data gap, is one of the key components of the ESA. (ESA/UNICEF, 2001).

Table 13 : Federal Government Budget Estimates from 1995 -2005.

Year	Total Federal Budget	Education as 26% of Federal Budget	Total Education Budget	% of Total Budget Size
1995	111,457,534,760.00	28,978,959,037.60	8,111,747,710.00	7.28
1996	124,221,968,083.00	32,297,711,701.58	12,721,194,285.00	10.24
1997	191,430,755,469.00	49,771,996,421.94	16,440,162,803.00	8.59
1998	259,751,082,409.00	67,535,281,426.34	21,304,527,480.00	8.20
1999	315,219,252,837.00	81,957,005,737.62	52,857,546,613.00	16.77
2000	537,569,135,062.00	139,767,975,116.12	52,857,546,613.00	9.83

2001	851,754,887,883.00	221,456,270,849.58	34,780,076,406.00	4.08
2002	840,853,787,128.00	218,621,984,653.28	65,940,995,000.00	7.84
2003	765,132,027,979.00	198,934,327,274.54	60,899,738,239.00	7.96
2004	918,295,494,202.00	238,756,828,492.52	93,767,886,839.00	10.21
2005	1,617,629,111,161.62	420,583,568,902.02	135,886,829,011.00	8.40
<i>Source: Federal Government Budget Estimates, Federal Ministry of Finance, Abuja</i>				

Generally, budgetary allocations to education have been less than 10% of the total federal budget from 1995 to 2006 as indicated by data in Table 13. Nigerian Education sector allocation is at variance with the UNESCO recommendation of 26% allocation for developing countries. For instance, of the 4.07 trillion Naira Nigeria Budgeted for year 2010, only 249.08 billion Naira was allocated to the education sector representing a mere 6.1%. There is need to increase funding to the sector as much of what is presently allocated is used for payment of salaries, leaving nothing for physical resource development at service points.

6.1 Partnership / External Aid / Private Sector / CSO

a.) ActionAid International and Actionaid Nigeria : Country Framework On Education

AAIN has, since 1999, has championed the cause of disadvantaged groups with respect to access to quality education, has supported action research and related efforts that have deepened public understanding of education and related issues. The 'Enhancing Girls' Basic Education in Northern Nigeria' (EGBENN) a star project of AAIN and AAN, was a three-year project funded by Oxfam–Novib and was implemented by ActionAid International Nigeria (AAIN) in partnership with six Civil Society Organizations in three states in North Western Nigeria. The States are Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States. The Goal of the project was to support and strengthen current initiatives by civil society on accelerating girls' access to basic quality education through advocacy and the establishment and support to School Management Committees (SMC).

The EGBENN project made significant impact on communities and state governments. Communities were able to mobilize for increased girls' enrolment and attendance, and there is increased participation of community members in school affairs. Communities have also been able to secure improvements for their schools that create better learning environments for children especially girls. Girls enrolment rose from 25% to 44% in 2007 in project states. Schools became functional once again as against the background before EGBENN when some schools were virtually shut down for non /low enrolment.

b.) Commonwealth Education Fund and CSO Coalition Building

The Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) was launched in April 2002 to mark the Golden Jubilee of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth of England. The fund seeks access to, and completion of good quality primary education by 2015, for all children in Commonwealth countries. In addition, the fund seeks to ensure that the gender target set out in the Dakar framework of action (April 2000) and the MDG are all met. Nigeria is one of the beneficiaries of the 17 developing commonwealth countries who got 10,000,000

GBP for programme work between 2002 – 2005. Nigeria share of this amount was 750,000 GBP. In achieving its aim, CEF works to strengthen the capacity of civil society to push their country's government to meet the CEF goal, three strategic objectives were identified, namely : 1.) Strengthening Civil Society participation in the design and implementation of national and local education plans and frameworks, 2.) Enabling local communities to monitor government spending on education, both at the national and local levels, and 3.) Supporting innovative ways for civil society to ensure that all children, especially girls and the most vulnerable and disadvantaged are able to access quality education.

CEF has made remarkable impact on the Nigeria education sector, particularly from the angle of strengthening the demand side of education delivery. In the course of four years CEF built the capacity of CSOs towards contributing to policy making and implementation, and built the capacity of local communities to monitor and track educational budget at local and national levels. Best practice/ innovative approaches evolved by local CBOs to get children with special needs into schools to acquire quality basic education. Three lead agencies- ActionAid, Oxfarm Great Britain and Save the Children were responsible for the implementation of CEF.

A steering Committee was put in place to ensure high standards of management of relevant resources and oversee projects and project implementers regularly. Some of the key achievements of CEF while it lasted include: Sustaining the Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All (CSACEFA), the development of a National EFA plan promotion of School Based Management Committees (SBMCs) to strengthen governance of primary and secondary schools in Nigeria and demystification of the budget document as critical mass of local community members now have their eyes opened on resources committed to education in their domain.

CSACEFA celebrates such achievements as engaging decision makers at Federal level on Policy issues during the Global Action Week since 2003; raised strong voice against the privatization of Unity Schools which policy has since been reversed to Public Private Partnership as against outright purchase by individuals; assisting the OSSAP on MDG to monitor the Debt Relief Gain funded Projects at the South South; NERDC and UBE - Introduction of SBMCs to school Management at community level which concept was accepted by NCE.

CEF also achieved a lot with respect to objective 2 : *Enabling local communities to monitor government spending on education, both at the national and local levels.* Using such NGOs as CIRDDC and ANEEJ under this objective, partners were to mobilize community members to link budget with physical development. Budget document became demystified. Public discussion on budget issues were heard freely in the media.

CEF Objective 3 : Supporting innovative ways for civil society to ensure that all children, especially girls and the most vulnerable and disadvantaged are able to access quality education. CEF supported innovative approaches which have proved effective in extending education to marginalized groups of children as noted earlier.

7.1 An Overview of Challenges of the Education System in Nigeria

Nigeria's education system, one of the largest in the world, faces enormous challenges, capable of undermining its capacity to effectively contribute to the ambitious national

development goals the country aspires to achieve, (UNESCO 2010). From the trend analysis of progress and gaps in the system presented thus far, one can summarize the challenges facing education in Nigeria to include a.) huge and persistent data gaps; b.) a huge burden of out-of-school children; and c.) Quality deficiency in available resources particularly teacher and infrastructure and, d.) Indiscipline, corruption and poor political will, (moral issues).

a.) Huge and persistent data gaps

A debilitating challenge plaguing the education system is the **absence of reliable data bank**, which directly hinders effective planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of achievements in the sector. With regards to data collection and storage, the last time Nigeria sent education data to UIS was in 2005. Data gathered after 2005 have been so riddled with errors, gaps and contradictions that it was impossible to forward it to UIS. This was particularly evident in the data concerning teachers. To address this challenge, the Federal Ministry of Education has recently developed and adopted a new policy that calls for a decentralized, systemic and professional approach to Education Management Information System (EMIS) to build the Education Data Bank. There is also the Education Situation Analysis Project regularly undertaken with assistance from UNICEF, UNESCO and allied agencies. Another attempt to ease access to education information by all users is the establishment of Visual Library Project. However, the solution to the problems of returns on accurate data from primary sources is still a mirage. (UNESCO 2010)

b.) A huge burden of out-of-school children;

In addition to the above, Nigeria is burdened by the largest number of **out-of-school-children** in any single country estimated at 8.6 million and nearly 50 million illiterate adults, (UNESCO, 2010). Access to basic education is hampered at all levels, especially at public institutions as a result of poverty, socio-cultural beliefs and practices, insufficient provision of educational facilities to meet the needs of the fast growing sector accentuated by rapid population growth and poor commitment to policy and management. Those excluded are the disadvantaged groups in the population such as: women and girls; children with special needs; HIV/AIDS victims; children of nomads, migrant fishermen and farmers; and those located in difficult terrains. Degree of access is also observed to differ between rural and urban locations, between north and south at all levels of education.

How can we afford to be complacent with the future of our children? One can imagine what the country is missing by not investing rightly in this very critical mass of the population. What will be the future for these children who cannot get access to education because they are poor? There is a compelling reason for us to revisit the free education blueprint today. The country has the funds and material, but what we lack is the will and commitment of the leaders, Chief Lateef Jakande, Guardian January 21, 2010

I enjoyed free education and the standard then was amazing, Everyone was committed to the success of the policy, both the government and the citizenry. We had inspectors who actually did their job. It's unfortunate that defense and other issues took priority over education in the national budget and things have never been the same again. Majority of Nigerians still believe free education is possible. The country is capable of sustaining free education at all levels. All we need is commitment from all levels. Nigeria today can fund education much better because

the country is economically more viable today than in the past Daughter and founding member of the Obafemi Awolowo Foundation, Dr. Tokunbo Awolowo- Dosunmu Guardian jan21,2010

Mr Ugechukwu student , UNN, lamenting the skin-tight competition fought by 450,000 student now enrolled in Nigeria Universities, with many more hanging outside campus gates with low scores, below cut-off marks and beyond quota mark per geopolitical zone opined thus: "Our federal universities are the only places where students from poor and middle class families can be equipped with a fighting chance,"

It is interesting to note that at the tertiary levels, it has become so limited that parents (well to do) now send their children to universities in Ghana, Benin Republic, Togo and other West African countries. Universities from Europe and America have since 1999 paid frequent recruitment visit to Nigeria, practically admitting, offshore, qualified students to all courses available in their institutions at exorbitant fees. These fees ranging from N2m – N5m are beyond the reach of students from low socio-economic background, further exposing the lack of socio-justice and equity in the system. Students from poor socio-economic background suffer double disadvantages as they miss opportunity to attend standard schools in their environment therefore being ill prepared to face the tough competition at campus gates with cut off marks, quota ratios and costly Post University Matriculation Examination (UME) screening procedures and tests they have repeatedly made to take as they were the disadvantaged children that attended the poorest schools. All Nigerians don't have equal opportunity to a good education.

c.) Quality deficiency in available resources particularly teacher and infrastructure.

Quality in our education system is consequent upon status of financing. Resources committed to education at all levels are not commensurate with quantum of educational facilities and services needed by the generality of the population. The minimum standard of educational service is not yet available to those needing formal education in the population. Schools in both rural and urban even in FCT are dilapidated, with unsafe infrastructure, insufficient desk and chairs/benches, lacking toilet facilities, libraries, water and electricity. Opportunities given to private agencies to participate in the system has been abused by some proprietors who run substandard schools. Approval is given to schools without playgrounds, libraries and sanitary facilities.

It is important that as we push for universal basic education, we should equally address the problem of tertiary education for as some scholars have averred, "turning out a large number of people with high expectations and low skills can be dangerous not only to the economy but may also affect political stability."

The brain drain from tertiary institutions is affecting the quality of graduates being produced. There is an urgent need to address the issues of remuneration, research, university autonomy and academic freedom in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Concrete programmes are required to tap into the resources, networks and opportunities that can be created by those who have left the country, to turn the brain drain to brain gain.

London Financial Times September 30, 2010, in a special edition to mark Nigeria 50th anniversary, had a chat with some students of University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN) which also clocked 50. Ukazu Ugechukwu Bethel, a third year biochemistry student, UNN complained about outdated facilities. "Some of our lab equipment are older than I am," says the 22 year old. "There is constant

overcrowding. Many classes have between 50 and 100 students to one lecturer. Sometimes we have to do classes on Sundays.”

Ndu Tobenna, Electrical Engineering Student, UNN is worried that there is too much redundant theory being taught, worried that he will graduate without ever handling any equipment. “We only did three courses last semester that were lab-oriented,” he says. Lecturers too have their say:

“The situation in Nigerian universities is worrisome,” says Prof Daman Opata of the UNN’s English department. “One could say that the visions of the founding fathers of many Nigerian universities are not being met. To date, most disciplines in Nigeria are studies from the frames of the North Atlantic region. No theories are emerging from the Nigerian university system. The usual blame is on poor funding, but poor critical thinking is a scourge within our system.”

d.) Indiscipline, corruption and poor political will, (moral issues).

The state of education in Nigeria today is a reflection of the society. Strong values once respected have been eroded with increasing crave for quick-wealth mentality, compromise of the truth and honest service. To redeem this systemic failure we all- parents , students teachers and policy makers and implementers- need to own up to our faults; undertake a collective resolve to revive the system. A new system must emerge with a new mind set. A system with the right values, true democracy and strong political will; a system where leaders will be sincere, committed and willing to serve with integrity; knowledgeable enough to adopt inclusive strategic and pragmatic methods in addressing the myriad of challenges. The 2011 election must produce such leaders. The Civil Service, not just education MDAs, must be prepared to defend the cause of all Nigerians, insisting on standards against the negative pressures of way- farer politicians.

The former Minister of Education, late Prof. Babs Fafunwa, while responding to press interview from Vanguard News paper reporters, said that our educational system need to be reviewed and that two things he said must first be looked into. These are “discipline and anti-corruption which should be enthroned in the system and imbibed by all the people managing the affairs of education in the country”. Discipline and anti-corruption attitude are needed urgently at all levels of our educational system, from MDAs and school systems- primary, secondary and tertiary. The trend of socio-political events in Nigeria recently portends that a new Nigeria is possible.

9.1 Conclusion

The disposition of this paper had been to x-ray the progress made so far and the challenges of the education system in Nigeria from independence to date. From the avalanche of literature, one is confident to say some progress has been made relatively, especially in attempting to expand access to basic education. However the nation’s education system is far from meeting the goals set for 2015. This paper concludes that 50 years after, the dreams of our founding fathers are far from being realized. The goals and aspirations of the National Policy on Education after 30 years have also not been achieved. With over 8 million children missing an education; 60 million illiterates in the total population; funding size below 20%, the gap is wide. The need to strengthen the weak nodes of the system cannot be overemphasized. It is about time that the present administration declared a state of emergency on the education sector and be prepared to fight all the monsters currently bedeviling the system. It will take the collective resolve of all who have stakes in the sector : parents, students, teachers, government, collaborating agencies, and the private sector.

10.1 Recommendations on the way forward.

Specifically the following recommendations are made to give focus on some way forward on improving access, equity and quality of education in Nigeria.

Basic Education

- Poverty alleviation programmes in the country should prioritize increasing access to quality education to all children irrespective of their gender, location or socio-economic status.
- Government at all levels should commit sufficient funds to ease access to basic education to all Nigerian Children. Efforts should be intensified to ensure discipline, blocking all avenues of fiscal leakages in the system, making basic education fully functional and accessible to Nigerian children, born and yet unborn. More classrooms and schools should be built to accommodate the increase in population of school aged children, ensure 100% transition from primary to junior secondary and increase retention in JSS.
- Attention of state legislatures, traditional institutions and general citizens in UBE non-performing states should be drawn to the failures of their government, on the need to commit their governments to prioritize UBE.
- Government at all levels should be more transparent and accountable, by publishing not only the sharing formula and budget estimates annually but detailed expenditure. Auditing generally is a rare feature in the system.
- **Every school (both rural and urban)** should be provided with electricity, portable water, separate toilets for boys and girls, and Libraries. Laboratories in secondary and tertiary institutions should be equipped with up to date facilities for learning of science subjects and disciplines. Make Learning materials including textbooks available at all levels. This is key because the quality and availability of learning materials affect what teachers and students can achieve in a lesson period.
- **Support from the international development partners:** Nigeria requires additional external financing averaging about US \$6.4 billion annually. Meanwhile, Nigeria is seriously under aided. Nigeria receives only US \$2 per capita in ODA compared to the average for Africa of US \$28 per capita. Apart from this, foreign agencies should take up parallel establishment and management of some schools based on the nation's education policy with a greater percentage of indigenous teachers directly paid by them as models as their genuine contribution to the education system and manpower development of the country. External Aids should be sourced to meet specific needs and gaps and should be closely monitored as well to ensure maximum utilization for the benefit of all Nigerians.

- **Government should embark on training and posting of Career Guidance Counsellors** to ensure that every school is served by at least one Guidance Counsellor to 500 students /pupil. Transition to next level of education should be based on informed decision by the child in collaboration with parents and significant others in the child's immediate environment. Parents want to participate in the process of guiding their children on choice of careers at school level, even when they don't have to dictate to the children. Students should be guided to consult widely before making career choices particularly with the choice of subject offering at final classes.
- **Promotions in the school system should be earned.** Automatic promotion practices should be abolished to inject more seriousness in teaching and learning and improve quality of performance in final examinations among learners in schools. Teachers and Managers should be encouraged to perform better with better working conditions and welfare packages. They should also be promoted on the basis of their productivity. In service training for teachers, Inspectors and planners in the system should be more regular.
- **Mass education and sensitization of the public** on the right perception of technical education should be embarked upon as recommended by May 2010 JCCE Meeting. This will encourage more demand for other non-university tertiary institutions and reduce the number that gets frustrated with failed dreams on admissions to university programmes.
- Government should intensify efforts at **registering all births** to enhance strategic educational planning for all ages of children in Nigeria. Community and religious leaders should help to enforce compulsory registration of all births by using local initiatives, e.g. forbidding naming ceremonies for families whose new birth has not been registered.

Tertiary Education

- Each University should be taken as a specific project for quality reformation. Infrastructural decay and redundancy of equipment and tools for learning should be addressed. Each university should be worked up to world class status.
- Enhance social relevance of universities by instituting community service to general studies curriculum for "freshers" and insist that graduates take a community project related to their studies to encourage proactive engagement with their social and ecological environment, creativity, critical thinking of national issues and reflective reasoning of their share of national burden (not the cake).
- Family Life Health Education, life skills should be infused into the general studies curriculum to ensure that graduates from all tertiary institutions are versed in survival skills, parenting skills, gender and gender sensitivity and concern for the good of all. More universities should offer courses in Project management, Monitoring and Evaluation, Socio-Economic issues of Environment and Climate Change.

- Increase motivation for request for teacher education to students seeking tertiary education, by providing grants (Teachers' bursaries), in service part-time courses in Guidance and Counselling.

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