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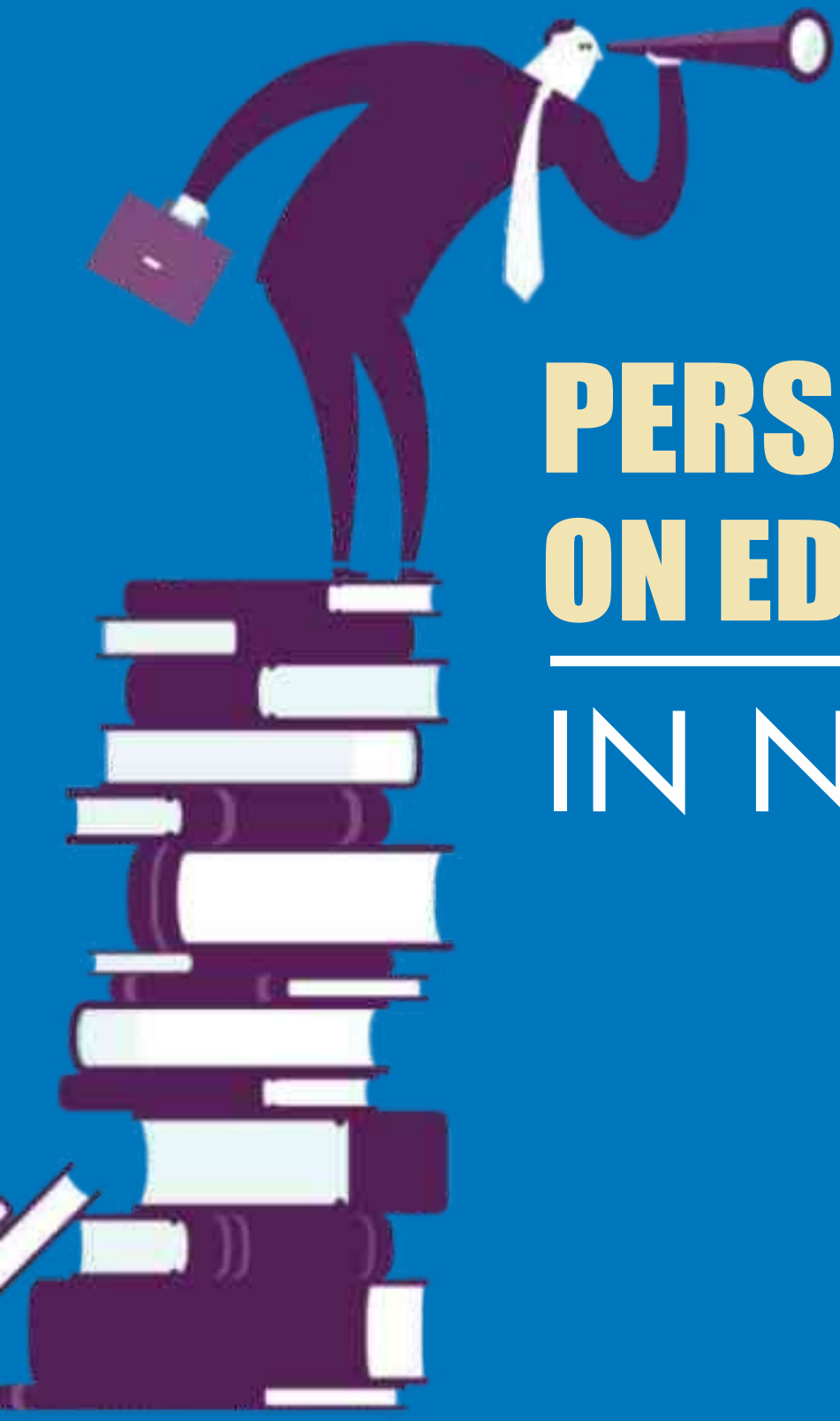

PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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CHAPTER SEVEN

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

BY

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1.0 Introduction

Education remains the cornerstone of national development, and effective management of the education sector is essential for achieving quality learning outcomes and sustainable socio-economic growth. Educational management refers to the process of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling educational resources and activities to achieve desired educational goals. It involves the coordination of human, financial, and material resources to ensure the smooth functioning of educational institutions at all levels. In Nigeria, educational management plays a crucial role in promoting efficiency, accountability, and innovation in the nation's education system.

However, despite its significance, educational management in Nigeria faces numerous challenges that hinder the attainment of its objectives. The system continues to grapple with inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, shortage of qualified personnel, weak policy implementation, corruption, and frequent policy changes. These challenges have contributed to declining educational standards, low productivity, and poor global competitiveness of Nigerian institutions (Ogunode, 2021; Okebukola, 2015). Additionally, issues such as political interference, weak

leadership, and insufficient use of data in educational planning further compound the problems confronting educational administrators and policymakers.

Addressing these challenges requires a holistic and strategic approach that focuses on reform, accountability, and innovation in the management of education. Effective leadership, stakeholder collaboration, capacity building, and transparent use of resources are vital components of sustainable educational management in Nigeria. Moreover, the adoption of modern management practices such as data-driven decision-making, digital administration, and participatory governance can enhance the efficiency and quality of education delivery.

This chapter therefore examines the concept of educational management in Nigeria**,** identifying its major challenges and proposing practical solutions to strengthen the system. It aims to provide insights that will help policymakers, administrators, and education stakeholders understand the complexities of managing education in a developing context and offer pathways toward achieving a more effective and sustainable educational system in Nigeria.

2.0 Conceptual Terms

2.1 Educational Management

Educational management is a crucial aspect of the education system concerned with the effective organization, administration, and supervision of educational institutions and processes to achieve desired goals. Different scholars and organizations have provided various definitions that highlight its scope, purpose, and functions. Below are six reviewed definitions with appropriate references: Educational management is the process of designing, developing, and effecting educational objectives through efficient and effective utilization of human and material resources (Okumbe, 1998). This definition emphasizes goal achievement **and** the efficient use of resources**,** suggesting that management in education is both a process and a practice aimed at realizing institutional objectives. Educational management involves planning, organizing, coordinating, and evaluating human and material resources within the education system to achieve predetermined objectives (Peretomode 2001). Peretomode's definition highlights the systematic nature of management functions and their interdependence in ensuring the success of educational institutions. Educational management is the art and science of mobilizing both human and material resources in an educational institution to achieve effective teaching and learning. This definition underscores that educational management combines both scientific principles (data, structure, strategy) and artistic skills (leadership, communication, motivation) (Adekola 2012).

Educational management is the application of management principles in designing, developing, and implementing educational policies and programs (Nwankwo 1982). Nwankwo's definition

reflects the policy and implementation dimension of educational management, which connects administrative activities with educational reforms and development. According to UNESCO (2009), "Educational management refers to the field concerned with the operation of educational organizations, including the formulation of policies, supervision, and evaluation of teaching and learning." This definition adopts a global perspective**,** emphasizing policy formulation, supervision, and quality assurance**,** which are central to managing education effectively. Ogbonnaya (2010) defines educational management is a process concerned with planning, organizing, directing, and controlling educational activities with the aim of achieving educational goals efficiently." Ogbonnaya's definition aligns with the classical management functions planning, organizing, leading, and controlling and applies them within the education context to ensure effective institutional performance.

3.0 Problems Facing Educational Management in Nigeria

Educational management in Nigeria faces numerous challenges that hinder the effective operation, coordination, and growth of the education sector. These problems affect policy implementation, resource allocation, quality assurance, and institutional effectiveness. Below are seven major problems facing educational management in Nigeria:

1. Inadequate Funding

One of the most critical challenges of educational management in Nigeria is chronic underfunding. The education sector consistently receives less than the **UNESCO-recommended 15–20%** of the national budget (UNESCO, 2021). This lack of sufficient financial support affects infrastructural development, teacher training, curriculum implementation, and research output. Consequently, managers of educational institutions struggle to provide quality education due to limited resources (Ogunode, & Onyekachi, 2023). Inadequate funding according to Ebehikhalu N, O & Dawam P, (2017) is a major problem facing educational management in Nigeria. This issue impacts every aspect of the education system, from infrastructure and resources to teacher salaries and student learning outcomes. The lack of proper funding has resulted in a wide range of challenges, including overcrowded classrooms, outdated textbooks and materials, and a shortage of qualified teachers. One of the main consequences of inadequate funding in educational management is the poor state of school infrastructure (Ajemba, Ahmed, Ogunode, & Olatunde-Aiyedun, 2021). Many schools in Nigeria lack basic amenities such as classrooms, toilets, and safe drinking water. This not only affects the learning environment but also poses health risks to students and teachers. Insufficient funding has also led to a shortage of resources and materials in schools. Outdated textbooks, limited access to technology, and inadequate supplies make it difficult for students to receive a quality education. This ultimately hinders their academic progress and future prospects. Inadequate

funding has resulted in low salaries for teachers, which has led to a high turnover rate and a shortage of qualified educators (Abubakar, Ogunseye, & Ogunode, 2021). This, in turn, affects the quality of education that students receive and perpetuates the cycle of inadequate funding. Inadequate funding poses a significant challenge to educational management in Nigeria, hindering the ability of schools to provide quality education and prepare students for the future. It is crucial for the government and other stakeholders to address this issue and allocate more resources towards improving the education system in Nigeria (Adolphus, 2019).

2. Shortage Infrastructure and Learning Facilities

Many schools and tertiary institutions in Nigeria operate with inadequate infrastructure such as dilapidated classrooms, overcrowded lecture halls, and insufficient laboratories. This situation affects the management of teaching and learning processes, reduces students' motivation, and hampers productivity (Ebehikhalu, & Dawam 2016; Fagbohunka 2017).. Poor infrastructure also reflects weak institutional planning and maintenance culture. Some of the major problems facing educational management in Nigeria include a shortage of infrastructure and learning facilities (Oyewole, Arogundade & Sadiku 2019). This issue has been a major concern for educators and policy makers in Nigeria, as it greatly impacts the quality of education provided to students and the overall effectiveness of the education system (Ogunode, & Agwor 021).. Without proper infrastructure and learning facilities, students are unable to access a conducive learning environment, leading to subpar academic performance and hindering their ability to reach their full potential (Ogunode & Ibrahim., 2024). This also poses challenges for educators, who struggle to provide quality education without the necessary resources (Fogaça, Rêgo, Melo & Armond, 2018; Ogunode, & Akpakwu, 2023)).

3. Inadequate of Qualified Personnel

There is a significant shortage of qualified teachers, administrators, and educational planners in Nigeria. The few available professionals are often overburdened, leading to inefficiency in school administration (Ndayebom, & Olamoyegun, 2022; Ogunode, Ahmed Gregory, & Abubakar, 020).. The problem is aggravated by poor motivation, brain drain, and limited opportunities for professional development. Without adequate and skilled personnel, effective management of educational institutions becomes difficult. The inadequate number of qualified personnel is a problem that has been facing educational management in Nigeria (Akinola, 2018; Ogunode & Paul 2021). As a result, there is a shortage of skilled professionals to lead and manage educational institutions effectively. This can lead to a lack of direction and proper implementation of policies and initiatives, resulting in a decline in the quality of education. The consequences of this issue can include a decrease in student enrollment and retention, decreased budget allocation for the

education sector, and a drop in overall academic performance. Additionally, inadequate personnel also leads to a lack of mentorship and guidance for the next generation of education leaders, hindering the development of the education system in Nigeria (Peretomode, 2001; Ogunode, Richard, & Musa, 2021)

4. Political Interference in Educational Administration

Political influence in the appointment of school administrators, university vice-chancellors, and education board members has compromised merit and professionalism. Decisions are often based on political considerations rather than competence, leading to mismanagement, corruption, and policy instability (Okoli, Ogbondah, & Ewor, 2016). This undermines effective educational planning and the autonomy of institutions. Political interference in educational administration is a major problem facing educational management in Nigeria. This is because political interference can often lead to decisions being made based on personal or political motives rather than what is best for the education system (Olayinka, 2018; Ogunode & Musa,2022). This can result in policies and initiatives that are not effective or beneficial for schools, teachers, and students. Furthermore, political interference can cause instability and inconsistency in educational policies and practices, which can hinder the progress and success of the education system. In Nigeria, political interference has been a longstanding issue that has impeded the growth and development of the education sector. It has caused conflicts and power struggles among various political groups, resulting in disruptions and delays in implementing necessary changes and improvements (Osuji, 2015). Additionally, political interference can also lead to corruption and unethical practices in educational administration, which further compounds the problems facing educational management in Nigeria (Pinga, Ivase, & Nomayu, n.d; Ogunode, Atobauka, & Ayoko, 2023).

5. Corruption and Mismanagement of Resources

Corruption remains a pervasive problem in Nigeria's education system. Funds meant for infrastructure, research, or training are often diverted or misused. Mismanagement of educational resources at both the institutional and ministerial levels results in poor accountability and transparency (Ogunode & Stephen, 2021). This erodes public confidence and affects long-term educational development. Corruption and mismanagement of resources are major problems facing educational management in Nigeria. The widespread prevalence of these issues has resulted in a significant decline in the quality of education in the country. Corruption refers to the misuse of public funds or resources for personal gain, while mismanagement refers to the inefficient and ineffective use of resources (Ololube, 2016). In the context of education, corruption and mismanagement have led to a lack of adequate resources and infrastructure in schools, which has negatively affected the quality of education. Many schools in Nigeria lack basic amenities such as

classrooms, desks, textbooks, and teaching materials, which hinders the learning experience of students (Kanibin, 2019; Ogunode & Josiah, & Ajape, 2021)). Corruption and mismanagement have also affected the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers. Bribery and nepotism in the hiring process have resulted in the employment of unqualified and incompetent teachers, which, in turn, affects the quality of education. Furthermore, due to the mismanagement of resources, teachers are often not paid their salaries on time, leading to demotivation and low morale. Another major impact of corruption and mismanagement in educational management is the diversion of funds meant for improving the education system ()Kadir, 2018; Ogunode, & Johnson, 2021).. This not only deprives students of better learning opportunities but also breeds a culture of corruption and impunity. The prevalence of corruption and mismanagement in educational management has also resulted in a lack of accountability. School administrators and officials responsible for managing resources are often not held accountable for their actions, which perpetuates the cycle of corruption and mismanagement (Madaki, 2019)..

6. Frequent Policy Changes and Poor Implementation

Nigeria's education policies are often inconsistent and poorly implemented. Frequent changes in curriculum, admission policies, and administrative structures create confusion and instability. The lack of continuity in educational policy implementation reflects weak coordination and poor long-term planning by education managers and government officials. Frequent policy changes and poor implementation are significant challenges facing educational management in Nigeria (Ogunode & Akimki, 2023). These issues make it difficult for schools and educational institutions to establish a consistent and effective system for managing education. The constant changes in policies can cause confusion and create a lack of stability within the education system. In turn, this can lead to a lack of trust and confidence in the education system from students, parents, and other stakeholders. The poor implementation of policies also hinders the progress of educational management in Nigeria (Odukoya, Bowale, & Okunlola, 2018; Ogunode, & Samuel 2020). The lack of proper execution and enforcement of policies can result in inefficiency and mismanagement, leading to a negative impact on the quality of education provided. It can also create a sense of frustration among educators and students, as policies that are not effectively implemented can lead to a lack of resources and support for educational institutions. Furthermore, frequent policy changes and poor implementation can lead to a disconnect between the goals and objectives of the education system and the actual outcomes. This can ultimately impact the overall development and progress of the education sector in Nigeria. It can also create a cycle of constant change and instability, making it difficult for educational institutions to establish effective long-term strategies for improving the quality of education (Christine & Hayatu 2014; Ogunode, Jegede, & Solomon, 2021).

7. Inadequate Use of Data and Technology in Management

Educational management in Nigeria still relies heavily on manual and outdated administrative systems. Many schools lack reliable data on student performance, teacher quality, and resource utilization (Ogunode 2021; Zafar, Mohammad, & Yasir. 2011)). The absence of data-driven decision-making limits the ability of administrators to plan effectively, allocate resources, and evaluate performance. The inadequate use of data and technology in management is a major problem facing educational management in Nigeria. This issue significantly hinders the effectiveness and efficiency of educational management in the country (Ogunode, 2021; Udeme, 2017)). One of the main challenges related to inadequate use of data and technology in management is the lack of accurate and up-to-date information. Without proper data and technology, it becomes difficult for educational managers to make informed decisions and devise effective strategies for improving education in the country. This leads to a lack of progress and development in the education sector. Another issue is the limited access to technology and data tools (Ogunode, & Ahaotu 2020; Quartzafrica 2020.). Many educational institutions in Nigeria do not have the necessary resources or infrastructure to utilize data and technology effectively. This results in a significant technological gap between schools and hinders their ability to implement modern management practices. The lack of digital literacy among educational managers is a major hindrance to the incorporation of technology in management. In Nigeria, there is a significant lack of training and knowledge on how to use data and technology to enhance educational management. This poses a challenge to the effective adoption and implementation of technology in the education sector (Thompson & ObinnaNonso.2019). The high cost of acquiring and maintaining technology tools is a major barrier for educational institutions in Nigeria. As a result, many schools are unable to afford the necessary technology and tools, further exacerbating the problem of inadequate use of data and technology in management Ogunode, Gregory & Abubakar, 2020).

4.0 Solutions to the Problems Facing Educational Management in Nigeria

Effective educational management is essential for the success and sustainability of Nigeria's education system. To overcome the challenges of underfunding, poor infrastructure, corruption, weak policy implementation, and inadequate personnel, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Increase and Ensure Sustainable Funding for Education

The government should allocate a higher percentage of the national budget at least 15–20% as recommended by UNESCO (2021) to education. Adequate funding will enhance infrastructure development, staff training, research activities, and the provision of instructional materials.

Transparent mechanisms for fund disbursement and monitoring should also be established to ensure accountability and efficient resource utilization.

2. Improve Infrastructure and Learning Facilities

Federal and state governments, in collaboration with agencies such as TETFund, should invest in modern educational infrastructure, including classrooms, laboratories, libraries, ICT facilities, and staff offices. Proper maintenance policies should be enforced to ensure sustainability. Quality learning environments motivate both teachers and students and enhance institutional performance.

3. Strengthen Capacity Building and Professional Development

Educational managers, administrators, and teachers should undergo regular training in leadership, technology use, and modern management techniques. Continuous professional development programmes organized by the National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) and other bodies will improve competence and performance.

4. Minimize Political Interference in Educational Administration

Appointments of educational leaders such as vice-chancellors, provosts, and principals should be based on merit, experience, and competence rather than political influence. Granting greater autonomy to educational institutions will promote accountability, stability, and professionalism in educational leadership.

5. Promote Transparency and Accountability in Resource Management

To curb corruption and financial mismanagement, educational institutions should adopt transparent budgeting systems and regular financial audits. Anti-corruption mechanisms such as internal control units and performance-based funding should be strengthened. This will restore public confidence and ensure that resources are used efficiently.

6. Ensure Policy Continuity and Effective Implementation

Education policies should be consistent, evidence-based, and aligned with long-term national development goals. Successive governments must ensure continuity of sound educational programmes and avoid abrupt policy reversals. Effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks should be instituted to assess policy impact.

7. Embrace Data-Driven and Technology-Based Management Systems

Educational institutions should adopt modern ICT tools and management information systems (EMIS) to improve planning, record-keeping, and decision-making. Reliable data collection and

analysis will enable managers to allocate resources more efficiently, monitor progress, and evaluate outcomes effectively.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the effectiveness of educational management in Nigeria is hindered by underfunding, poor infrastructure, lack of skilled personnel, political interference, corruption, unstable policies, and weak use of data and technology. To overcome these challenges, there is a need for greater accountability, stable funding, capacity building, and modernization of management systems**.** Strengthening educational leadership and institutional governance will be crucial for improving the overall quality and efficiency of education in Nigeria.

Addressing the challenges facing educational management in Nigeria requires a holistic and multi-stakeholder approach**.** Adequate funding, strong institutional leadership, professional development, policy stability, and the use of technology will significantly enhance the efficiency and quality of educational administration. Implementing these recommendations will contribute to a more effective, transparent, and sustainable educational management system in Nigeria.

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