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CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES TO EDUCATIONAL PLANNING: IMPLICATIONS FOR YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The Nigerian educational system is full of crises. The reason is not far-fetched. Since the return to civil rule in 1999, Nigeria has witnessed a lot of sporadic and ad hoc planning without adherence to long term planning. Again, there is no systematic planning framework for the country that ensures that adequate data and research, good information system, monitoring and evaluation and tracking of results. The end result is abandonment of projects, poor plan implementation and poor service delivery. Many researchers have identified poor planning of education as a major factor among other factors responsible for the challenges.

Introduction

The Nigerian educational system has undoubtedly encountered a number of significant impediments in the last few decades and it continue to struggle with the implementation and assurance of educational and teaching quality because of lack of effective planning. A shortage of accurate statistical data, financial inadequacy, unqualified planners, poor national economic performance, unsuitable governing structures, political interference, and general instability have all contributed to low quality educational planning. This paper looks at the meaning of educational planning and the challenge facing it. The paper concludes that in spite of the increasing complexity of schools created by rising enrollments and problems of research, programs of study must be tailored to the ever-more complex needs of the society. Schools are established for the improvement of society and thus, socio-economic planners and educational planners need to cooperate in planning for the benefit of both the school and society.

Definition of Educational Planning

The term, "educational planning" in the words of Coombs (1972) and Ololube (2009), in its broadest generic sense is the application of rational, systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aim of making education more effective and efficient in responding to the needs and

goals of its students and society. The principal focus of educational planning in this definition is to make education more result-oriented for the development of the individual and the larger society. As Adesina (1981), Okaforcha, (2021), Adinna and Onyekwelu, (2021) and Anthony (2014) pointed out that educational planning is the process of applying scientific or rational procedures to the process of educational growth and development so as to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the educational system through a planning mechanism. In the planning mechanism, once feasibility of the proposed service had been established a number of specific actions were necessary in order to ensure that an operational service could become a reality (Ucheagwu-Okoye, 2025).

From the afore definitions, it is important to know that whatever educational planning may be or do, it is all the procedures, techniques and resources put together to achieve the aim of education in Nigeria to foster national unity and for national development.

Educational Planning Process in Nigeria

According to Okechukwu, (2025) educational planning is seen as involving a consideration of unforeseen obstacles and making provision for possible ways of overcoming them. This implies that educational planning calls for a constant evaluation and modification. Ofozoba, (2020), Ibe, (2019), Anushiem, (2017), Ekwesianya, (2022) averred that educational planning focuses on the needs, aspirations and prospects of the students and the society. Onyekwelu, and Adinna, (2022), Anthony, (2019) and Anushiem and Anushiem, (2023) posited that educational planning focuses the mind of educational planner or Administrator on major issues such as those related to the type of Schools required in the society, the level of education that needs to be given priority, courses to be offered, student enrolment and other issues on human, material and financial resources of the educational system.

There are different processes of planning education in different countries across the world. In Nigeria, According to Onyekwelu, (2024), Ofozoba and Ofozoba, (2023), Abonyi, (2023), Osegbue, (2021), Enwezor and Chukwunonye, (2022), Ekwesianya, (2025) and Ezeaku and Okoye, (2025) educational planning in Nigeria is undertaken as a part of the overall national planning. This implies that the planning units in the Ministries of Education are expected to work closely with the Ministry of National Planning that is charged with the responsibility of producing overall economic development plans for the country. Therefore, educational planning in Nigeria is done within the framework of

the national goals. According to Onyekwelu, (2021), Azubuike, (2025), Ucheagwu-Okoye, (2021), Okoye, (2025), Nwakoby, (2025), Nwakoby and Iloka, (2025) and Enwezor and Obi, (2022) the process of educational planning in the country starts with the formulation of national policies and goals. Such policies that are related to education are initiated by the policy makers or the ruling political body, often in line with the ideology of the government in power.

Directives related to such policies are handed down to the Federal (or State) Ministry of Education for necessary action (Abonyi, 2021). The officials in the Ministry of Education then examine such policies and restructure them so that they can constitute operational objectives within the context of education. According to Enwezor, and Chukwunonye, (2021), Ugwaka and Igbokwe (2023), Okaforcha and Okeke, (2019), Ojimba, (2020) and Iloka and Nwakoby, (2025), plans are programs that could help to attain these policies are then worked out essentially in the planning units of the Ministries of Education. Enwezor, (2021), Okeke, (2022), Okeke and Okaforcha, (2025), Anushiem, (2023), Azubuike, (2024), Okeke, Okaforcha and Ekwesianya, (2019), argued that the implications of such plans in terms of the required resources for their implementation are also stated. The proposals drawn up in the Ministry of Education are then sent back to the appropriate body such as the National or the State's Executive Council for their consideration and approval (Ekwesianya, Okaforcha & Okeke, 2020, Enwezor, 2021, Ojimba, 2024). This means that the plans are finally approved by the government and appropriate legislation is passed on them in terms of edicts or decrees.

In the words of Iloka, (2025), Ethelmary, Izuchukwu, Ugwaka, Arazu and Ezechi, (2023), Nwankwo and Aroh, (2019) and Ezeaku (2019) once the educational plan is approved by government, the Ministry of Education is confronted with the task of implementation. With long-term plans for instance, the ten-year development plan progress reports are often given periodically. Ezeamama, Ofozoba (2023) and Ibe, (2022), Okoye, and Ezeaku, (2025) argued that such reports are expected to reflect the extent to which the targets of the plan have been attained. Nwankwo, (2022), Obumse, (2022), Nonyem and Chimaa, (2020) averred that the Ministries of Education in the States develop their educational plans as is done in the Federal Ministry of Education. It is

then expected that educational planning in the States will reflect the overall national goals and objectives of education. It is for this reason that the Federal Ministry of Education sometime coordinates the educational plans of the States to arrive at the National Educational Plans (Noun, 2009).

Purpose of Educational Planning

Nwabachili, Iloka and Ucheagwu-Okoye, (2022) and Abonyi, (2020), who broadly put them as two, they are to:

(i) Ensure that the educational system is effectively and efficiently planned and operated.

(ii) Ensure that education serves the needs and aspirations of the society in general and the students in particular. Noun (2012) specifically, listed the following as the reasons for education planning:

(a) Educational planning enables the education managers gain economic insights in the use of resources, which are in most cases limited, educational planning ensures rational allocation of resources to various education programs, projects and among the levels of education.

(b) Because educational planning processes data and information on education through in-depth analysis, it ensures rational and adequate facilities and equipment provision and distribution in the educational institution.

(c) Education is planned to ensure internal efficiency of the school system. That is, to reduce or eliminate wastage in the system.

(d) Educational planning ensures the harmonization of the interests of the various stakeholders in education business. That is, the interests of the students, parents and the society.

(e) Education planning gives direction to actions and facilitates the control of education resources, and provides basis for monitoring and evaluation of the standards, benchmarks and guidelines.

(f) Educational planning integrates various knowledge areas, such as mathematics, statistics, computer science, economics, sociology etc., to operationalize the planning of education.

(g) Education is planned to ensure relevance to societal values and aspirations.

Contemporary Challenges of Educational Planning in Nigeria

On the problems of educational planning in Nigeria, it's good to note that in every organization and sectors, there are different challenges and problem from one thing or the other facing them. No sector or

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body has ever gotten to the peak of their dream or destination they are meant to be without picking up challenges that come their way as a stepping stone. Likewise, in Nigeria, just like we have challenges in every ministry, parastatals of the government, the educational system which deals with planning and other related matters are faced with challenges too. We will be looking at all these changes one after the other and we will be discussing the possible way out of these challenges. Some of the challenges include:

- Inaccurate Statistical Data
- Poor Funding
- Politicization of Education
- Corruption
- Poor Governance
- Inadequate Skilled Personnel
- Technological Problem
- Inadequate Planning
- Lack of Responsibility And Control
- Lack of Infrastructure

1. Inaccurate statistical Data

One of the most difficult challenges that educational planners face is the issues of inaccurate statistical data. The quality of technical planning is in most cases inhibited by statistical deficiencies and inaccurate data. Nigerian education systems has failed to effectively plan because of lack of accurate data, which is because of the use of mediocre to prepare data for use in the planning and forecasting processes.

2. Poor funding

The budgetary allocations that are available for educational planning in Nigeria is nothing to write home about. Funds provide for education planning is too small for proper planning to take place. The condition of the sector remains a thing of concern. Under-funding and systemic corruption makes the matter worse. The insufficient funding of the education planning sector stands as one of the major factors working against effective planning and implementation of education programmes. Ucheagwu-Okoye, (2025) and Nneka Anthonia Obumse and Uju Egenti (2021)argued that many and other financial support are focused on other sectors in Nigeria, some good feed with financial aid so as to see the sector thrives and strike well for the purpose of the ministry or sector. But in the case of education, the reverse is the case. This can be clearly seen in the national budgets that are been passed through the national assembly every year, the amount of money and percent allocated to the educational sector is not what is actually encouraging. As an arm of the education that sees to the technocratic developments of her citizens, the fund diverted to this sector is very poor.

3. Politicization of Education

This is another cankerworm in the body, instead of putting a round peg in a round hole, some government officials put a round peg in a square hole. This illustration is applicable where the head of the minister of education should be someone who is vast

in the area of education and has a technocratic idea about the profession, but due to politics most people play, they can put someone who studied agricultural science in ministry of education which is a no to no idea in national development. According to Ucheagwu-Okoye, (2025), Onyekwelu, (2024) Osegbue, and Nnubia, (2020) the existing political arrangement has influenced the control over educational planning in Nigeria. Political instability has had its toll on educational programmes. Planning process started by one administration is brutally interrupted by the next and the differences between federal and state government education policies are quite challenging. The inability of the Nigerian political structure does not allow for education planners to be accountable for their wrong doings.

5. Corruption

Just as this act is witnessed in every arm of the government, likewise it is experienced in the educational sector. In case of boycotting normal standards just to see little stipend as a form of settling their pocket in course of discharging their duties. Take for instance, after a regulation has been given that no secondary school should absorb teachers who are not certified in the subject they are to take, and in course of monitoring and supervision by the government bodies to see if this is being complied with, and they caught a school especially private schools that still err to this order, instead of sanctioning and giving appropriate fine to the deafening school, they collect bribe for personal self and let the school go scot free. Also, some schools are not even penalized at all because they are owned by top government officials even one of the supervising body, all these contribute to the problem of educational planning.

6. Poor Governance

Not just poor governance but the poor governing body also. Governance here can be in two directions, in the first direction is the government of the nation or state while the second one is the one that dealt with the educational sector in the nation. Abonyi, (2022); Onyekwelu, (2024), Obumse and Chinwe, (2021)observed that due to lack of technical know-how and importance of education to economic development, the most government never take a look at what is happening at the educational sector neither do they give orders that can help the arm grow to achieve the implementation and planning body. And in terms of the educational governance, most of the officials did not know their responsibilities and some that do know never put it into practice.

7. Inadequate Skilled Personnel

Most educational planners in Nigerian do not have complete competence in planning. Qualified planners are the single most significant resource that can lead to greater and efficient planning productivity and performance. In planning, what is needed is the effective utilisation resources by connecting the totality knowledge, skills and talents to achieve planning objectives. The

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quality of planners should not be nothing les than the basic acceptable standards worldwide.

8. **Technological Problem**

Another serious problem in the planning of education in Nigeria is the lack of attention paid to emerging technological innovations planning mechanisms. Okaforcha and Iloka, (2025), Nwankwo and Okoye, (2022) and Osegbue, (2022) averred that the success of Nigerian education planners depends upon their ability to identify and respond to technological changes in other to elevate their planning output. Over the years, a number of technological changes have taken place that involves the introduction of modern advancements into the planning process and approaches, and understanding emerging issues related to educational planning and development.

9. **Inadequate Planning**

There is a popular saying that "he or she who has failed to plan has planned to fail". Education planning in Nigeria has always been inadequate in line with the enormous problems facing our educational system. The lack of effective planning poses a significant obstacle to the advancement of education across the country. The success of any educational system hinges on proper planning. Planning of human and material resources has evolved to guide the allocation and utilisation of educational resources in the school systems. Such planning is required to arrest areas of wasted resources and to make educational production more successful. Consequently, for any educational system to truly develop effective planning is indispensable as education and planning are essential characteristics for effective education (Ololube, 2013).

10. Lack of Responsibility and Control

Another problem besieging this sector is, the body that is assigned to take responsibilities of the planning, implementation and see to the total operations of the plans lack control some did not even take responsibilities rather they resolve to look into matters that matter to personal life and not to the sector they are paid to be committed to.

11. Lack of Infrastructure

This is predominant in Nigeria; most schools lack the materials and infrastructure that is needed to see to full planning and implementation of educational plans.

12. Poor Capacity Development Programme: Poor capacity development programme of educational planners in the various ministries and department of education is another major factor slowing down the planning of education in Nigeria. Majorities of educational planners working in the ministries and agencies of government in in charge of planning are not constantly been exposed to training and retraining programme. Okaforcha and Okeke, (2020) and Nwankwo, and Ezeibe, (2021) did a study with the purpose of assessing the

political officeholder attitudes towards planning of education in FCT. The results revealed that there was significant relationship between the attitudes of political officeholders and poor planning of education in FCT. The finding revealed that the majorities of the respondents disagreed that political officeholders have positive attitude toward educational planning, majorities of the respondents disagreed that adequately funding are provided for educational planning. Okechukwu, (2025), Enwezor, and Obi, (2022), Ezeaku, (2025) also discovered that majorities of the respondents disagreed that political officeholders are support the capacity development of educational planners and 100% of the respondents disagreed that political officeholders are providing necessary planning tools for educational planner to plan education. The government should appoint people with passion for educational development and political officeholders should develop positive attitude toward educational planning in FCT by allocating adequate funds for educational planning.

Conclusion

The need to plan for quality education reform in any nation cannot be over-emphasized. When reform is adequately planned, it accelerates structural integration of a plural society by equalizing economic, social and political opportunities. Thus, educational planning is concerned with the problems of how to make the best use of limited resources allocated to education in view of the priorities given to different stages of education or different sector of education and the need of the economy.

Implications for Youth Entrepreneurship in Nigeria

Entrepreneurial business can be started with little or no training. People do not need special degrees to start, though, they may need to spend some time learning about intricacies of the business. Top innovative business ideas which educational planners can integrate into the school curriculum for youth entrepreneurial development are:

Flour Milling: You can start your own flour milling business and start converting grains like wheat, corns, millet and cassava into flour. Wheat flour is a product that is in high demand in the baking industry. Flour milling is something you can do from the convenience of your home if you have a small space and that you can mark out for it. You can easily get wheat, corns, millet or cassava from local farmers;

Fruit juice or Jam Production: As young entrepreneur you can start making your own fruit juice or jam and supply them to supermarkets and food stores around you. There is a huge demand for natural fruit juice now as more people are learning how to eat healthy and avoid artificial and overly preserved foods and162 drinks. Fruits are also available from local farmers. One can make his /her own natural healthy fruit juice at home;

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Groundnut Processing: Groundnut is a popular snack that is loved by many people. Take trip to a nearby supermarket and you will see bottled groundnuts branded and packaged in a fanciful way. It can also be done from the comfort of one's home.

Cashew Nut Processing: Cashew nut processing and packaging is similar to groundnut processing;

Livestock Feed Production: A lot of people are going into livestock farming, pig farming, poultry farming. As a young investor you can start producing feed for their animals. To start this business one will need a grinding machine, mixing machine, weighing machine customized packing bags and raw materials for production;

Quail egg Farming: Recently a lot of people have come to discover the amazing health benefits of quail egg and a lot of people are now going into quail egg farming;

Mushroom Farming: Mushroom farming is similar to quail farming and many people know that this business can bring about 500% profit. Mushrooms can be sold to hotels, exporters and pharmaceutical companies in the next 21 days;

Snail Farming: Snail farming meat is a healthy alternative for meat. People who are on diet or suffering from a healthy condition, that prevents consumption of too much cholesterol usually turn to snail meat instead of meat;

Soya Beans Processing: Soya bean milk is a healthy and nutritious drink that is in high demand by health-conscious people. Agricultural Equipment Leasing With the increase in people going into the agricultural business. Money can be made from hiring out equipment like tractors, ploughs, sprayers, harvesters, and irrigation machine to farmer;

Spices Production: Spices used to make food like curry, thyme, cayenne pepper to mention a few, are usually in high demand at food stores and supermarkets;

Dairy Products: You can start making your own dairy products like milk, cheese, and butter for sale;

Poultry and meat production and packaging. There is the general belief that manually packaged meat or poultry are not too hygienic because of the way they might have been handled. A lot of people are now making good money from machine processed and packaged meat;

Medicinal and Herbal plant cultivation: Medicinal plants and herbs are in great demand both locally and for export;

Vegetable farming: Vegetables are one of the highly consumed food items in the world. Starting a vegetable farm is one of the

simplest and easiest businesses in the world with a high profit of about 500%;

Agricultural export: You can also make money form packaging and exporting agricultural produce such as cassava, millet and maize for sale;

Aqua farming; Catfish farming: Tilapia farming and crayfish farming are very good businesses for young people who are interested in agriculture;

Agriculture Brokerage and Consulting: You can start business in agricultural brokerage by linking sellers of agricultural produce with buyers and get commission for it. You can also become a consultant and offer expert advice or organise trainings and seminars;

Hatchery: Another good business for young entrepreneurs is starting hatchery for eggs and selling day-old chicks to poultry farmers;

Florist: Fresh flowers are generally used for home decorations or event decorations and you can make money from growing flowers for sale.

Recommendations

For education to be able to meet the need of the society, it planning and policy implementation are imperative. Unfortunately, these educational management activities are constrained hence the limited success in education service delivery.

- Educational data bank should be established at all level of government to void the traditional practice of educational planning and implementation without data in Nigeria.
- At the management level in education, this study calls for policies to ensure balanced investments in, and increased funding for, education planning that will allow for the effective use, integration and diffusion of educational planning services and methods in the teaching and learning processes.
- There should be strict adherence to educational ordinances devoid of politic.
- Favoritism, nepotism and all form of corrupt practices should be avoided.
- Professionally trained educational planners and administrators equipped with modern technique of educational management and accountability should be in charge.
- To void crisis, there should be collaborative effort by all concerned in education business toward the planning and implementation with genuine commitment in conducive socio-economic and political setting.
- There is the need for introduction of modern technologies into the planning process and approaches, and understanding emerging issues

related to educational planning and development.

- Infrastructure for education should be given much attention because the development of the citizen has a role to play in the development of the nation.
- As with other theoretical studies, the observation in this study should not be regarded as definitive but as offering students, faculty, educators, researchers, planners and administrators a view of the reality on the use of educational planning in a developing economy.

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