



---

## INFLUENCE OF MICRO-POLITICAL DIMENSIONS AND INTEREST GROUPS ON EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN NIGERA

PROF. ABDULGANIYYI OLAJIDE FAGBEMI; \*\*Dr. YAKUBU SANI; & \*\*ASSOC. PROF. MUHAMMAD MAINOMA HAUWA'U

*\*Department of Education, Bayero University, Kano. \*\*Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria*

---

### ***Abstract***

*This paper examined influence of micro-political dimensions and interest groups on educational management. The paper in its theoretical framework discussed politics and education during the second republic (1979-1983) in Nigeria, educational provision in the 1979 constitution. The effects of politics on educational programmes, education and the economy during the second republic, the political group, the bureaucrats, contractors within party members parents and other associations. It also highlighted suggestions for the next millennium. The paper concluded that most of the current problems affecting the nation's education system have their roots anchored in the second republic administration system. Based on this conclusion, the paper suggested that the current republic should study the second republic procedures and procedures of its administration and the politicians attitude and learn from the for better management approach towards the next millennium.*

***Keywords:*** *Macro-politics, Interest groups, Educational management, Party Ideology, Economy and Technology Equipment.*

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

This paper examine the interplay between the social forces and politics, political programmes and interest groups in the management of education

between 1979 and 1983 when the military intervened again in the political affairs of the country.

An attempt is made to highlight the effects of these forces on the education system. Attention is focused on the constitutional provisions on education and political parties approach to education as stated in their manifestos and expressed in practical terms through official party programmes and policies. It also focused attention on the deplorable state of the economy and its direct or indirect effects on government policies and programmes on education. One notes the financial crunch the economy brought about due to the fall in oil prices during the period. It surveys the roles played by various interest groups either directly or indirectly on the educational policies and programmes of the civilian administration.

Finally, a number of suggestions are proffered on how these variables can be integrated toward effective or result-oriented educational management for technological in the millennium.

## **POLITICS AND EDUCATION DURING THE SECOND REPUBLIC (1979-1983) IN NIGERIA**

### **Return to Civilian Rule**

On first October, 1979, Nigeria returned to civilian rule after fourteen years of military administration. Preparation for the return to a democratically elected government began in 1975 when the military government undertook a reform of local government structure to bring uniformity" and standardization" to the country.

The 1979 constitution recommended for a United State of America model of presidential system of government which brought about two legislative arms at the federal level; the senate and the federal house of representative. At the state level, there was the governor as the chief executive and a state legislative house. A three tier government was operated; the federal, state and local levels.

### **EDUCATION PROVISION IN THE 1979 CONSTITUTION**

Between October 1979 to August 1983, the country was governed under the provisions of 1979 Constitution. The constitution made several provisions with respect to education.

Section 18, sub-section 1, 2 and 3 of the Nigerian constitutions spelt out the nation's educational objectives as follows:

1. Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that, there are equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels.
2. Government shall promote science and technology.
3. Government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy; and to this end, government shall and when practicable provide:
  - a) Free, compulsory and universal primary education;
  - b) Free secondary education;
  - c) Free university education, and
  - d) Free adult literacy programme (constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979:10).

#### **PARTY IDEOLOGY AND EDUCATION**

The Federal military government lifted ban on politics in September, 1978. By November, 50 political associations applied for registration and by 18h December, 5 of them were registered by FEDECO to contest elections at different levels and regions.

They were the GNPP, NPP, NPN, PRP and UPN.

GNPP and NPP were said to have identical ideologies and similar manifestos. Both political parties agreed to work together towards providing a high quality education at all levels. The PRP is known for its "mass" orientation and redemption principles ass spelt out in its manifestos.

The UPN in its manifesto and practical approach to education in the 5 states it won election emphasized free' education. The idea was to remove all forms of fees, to provide free textbooks, free furniture and compulsory enrolment for all children of primary School age.

In respect of education, the NPN which won the presidential election and seven of the 19 states with almost majority in the 2 Federal legislative houses maintained as its educational citizens.

In its manifesto, part 2; section 6, Orji (1982:113) listed 6 items which the party pursued as its educational ideolog9y. These are as follows:

- a) To work towards providing free and qualitative primary, secondary and university education in accordance with the provision of the constitution.
- b) Improve the standard of educational at all levels. As part of this, an NPN administration will pay attention to the improvement of the moral content of education and to African indigenous values by involving parents in the formulation of school policies.
- c) Promoting the cultural awareness of the citizens.
- d) Ensure the provision and adequate supply of all necessary educational infrastructure such as well trained teachers, well equipped classrooms, laboratories and other supporting services.
- e) An NPN government shall encourage private schools to exist side by side with state schools, under carefully designed laws and regulations to curb possible exploitation by any private school owners.
- f) To ensure and maintain the dignity of and autonomy of universities and institutions of higher learning.

Ajayi (1983) observed that, every national education system is subject to internal trends in politics and economy adding that, in Nigeria, political survival does not permit many Nigerian governments system or to0 select and adhere to priorities.

Educational programmes of the second republic therefore were subjected to political and economic trends between the periods 1979 and 1983. These have made for reaching effects on the nations educational programmes (Ajayi, 1983).

## **THE EFFECTS OF POLITICS ON EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES**

During the period in question, political leadership introduced a number of policies and programmes in the nation's education sector with the aim of fulfilling their electoral campaign promises in accordance with their manifestos. Consequently, a number of policies and programmes were introduced, some of which were not given adequate thoughts.

### **General Expansion of the Education Sector**

The period witnessed the general expansion of education at all levels- primary, secondary and tertiary. New schools were built and old ones were

expanded. Enrolment at all levels increased in line with the expansion. McCaskle (1988) reported that enrolment in primary schools in 1981 was 14,285,137, in 1982 it was 14,654,798 and 14,383,487 in 1983. In the same period, there were 2,880,280 and 3,393,186 as well as 3,561,207 students in various secondary schools in the country respectively.

The number of primary schools in 1982 were 37,345 and 50,030 secondary schools. Morison et al (1989) reported that in 1983, there were 260 Teacher Training Colleges in the country with a population of 303,737 students. This shows an increase of 219,472 students over 1979 population of 84,265 students in 1979 (Uche, 1986). He lamented further that by 1980, about 99,752 grade II teachers have been produced in the country which shows an increase of 18.37 percent. He further noted that enrolment in Universities have increased from 57,772 in 1979/80 to 70,000 in 1983 with a corresponding increase of universities from 13 to 24 respectively. By 1983, there were 30 polytechnic and about 40 colleges of education. Some of these are state controlled.

The expansion witnessed during the second republic was a response to political programmes embarked upon by the political leadership. The UPN introduced a UPE programme in the 5 states under the jurisdiction and embarked on massive expansion of primary and secondary schools. State universities were also established in fulfillment of their campaign promises. Though the other political parties did not formally launch a UPE programme, they invariably undertook massive expansion of education particularly the NPN which controlled the centre. The NPN established five new Universities of Science and Technology, Federal Polytechnics and Colleges of Education as well as unity federal government colleges across the country.

### **The Current Education Policy**

In 1978, a new education policy was introduced by the military government. The 6-3-3-4 system was revised by the civilian government to suit the party's ideology of functional qualitative education. This system replaced the former 6-5-3 structure. It put more emphasis on functionality

and Comprehensive method of evaluation by the use of continuous assessment.

It was a 2-tier secondary education structure of 3-3 years duration. Academic subjects were combine with vocational Subjects but vocational education was only emphasized in its first 3 years. The NPN intended to tailor the system in accordance with its party ideology and principles of self-sufficiency and rapid industrial development. The implementation of the policy however faced political storm which made people to doubt governments intension to implement the policy especially the functional aspect. For example, Orji (1982) mentioned among other reasons why people expressed doubt on the success of the policy as the negative attitudes of Nigerian towards labour and manual jobs. According to him, ordinary Nigerians ascribed low-status to vocational occupation Compacted to academic achievement.

### **Poor Planning**

Politicians in the second republic made haste in taking decision on educational matters without due consideration to the state of the country's economy. Decisions were made on politics grounds rather than national priorities.

The UPE, the new policy implementation as well as the establishment of tertiary institutions were pursued more on political considerations than national interest. The consequence was discontinuity of the programmes all over the country

### **Mass Importation of Introductory Technology Equipment**

The new policy demanded that the first three years of secondary education be vocationally oriented and thus many junior secondary schools were required and needed to be equipped with workshop and adequate equipment. The federal government embarked on building workshops and importation of equipment for teaching introductory technology from overseas especially from Bulgaria and China. Many of these equipment arrived but could not even De installed, because provisions were not made for their workshops up to the time these equipment arrived the country.

There were equally no trained teachers to operate them, eventually, these equipment were either abandoned, stolen or destroyed by fire.

### **EDUCATION AND THE ECONOMY DURING THE SECOND REPUBLIC**

By mid 1970s (McCakle, 1987) reported that revenue from petroleum export has accounted for 85 percent of the nation's foreign exchange earnings. Between 1979 to 1980, the GDP grew at the rate of 6-7 percent. The economy was buoyant because of the rise in oil prices. However, the situation was to change in 1978 with the fall in world oil prices. By 1982, (Kwanoshie, 1988) observed that the country cannot meet the growing import bills to finance major development projects. He added that accumulation of trade debts and import shortages became noticeable and for the first time the economy began to suffer unprecedented inflation. By 1981, the GDP has declined to about 8.3 percent with a 20 percent rise in consumer prices.

By 1982, it became clear that the economy has become problematic. This situation, it appeared was the major cause of social unrest, widespread corruption, unemployment, indiscipline, crimes and other social vices. Deficit became the feature of annual budgets due to trade debt and other shortages. Consequently, governments could not fulfill the promises they made to the electorates during their electoral campaign.

Education was one of the social sectors which suffered as a result of the gloomy economy of the second republic. The effects which the economy has on the nation's education programmes include the following:

#### **Reduction of Government Expenditure on Education**

In spite of the huge financial requirement needed to adequately fund the various educational programmes embarked upon by government, government had to cut the amount of money it committed to educational sector because of the dwindling oil revenue. There was also competition from other equally important social services like health, water and electricity supply and so on.

### **Problems of Payment of Teachers' Salaries and Others**

Economic difficulties accounted for the under-funding of education sector which adversely affected wages, salaries and other allowances of teachers. Recurrent expenditure generally accounted for over 70 percent of education expenditure. Teachers' emolument consumed the highest percentage. This situation results to non-payment of salaries for many months.

The economic crises brought massive mismanagement of the available education expenditure through misappropriation of funds, kick-back and contract inflation. Fund usually allocated to education were redirected to other areas of little priority (Fagbemi, 1998).

### **Unemployment of the Products of the System**

The education sector is the industry where the responsibility of which the nation's manpower squarely rests for the development of the nation and its economy. There has been symbiotic kind of relationship between education and the national economy. Thus, the problems which the economy faced between 1979 1983 reflected on the country's education system by the way of the government's inability to absolve the products of the education system. There were mass retrenchment of workers in all sectors and a total freeze on new employment in the country. This has necessitated the civilian government to embark on publicity campaign to encourage people to return to farming or to find some other means of self-

For example, bureaucrats, religious associations and even contractors were physically involved in the groups, women execution of educational programmes and policies especially in such areas as school discipline, school site and educational financing

### **The Political Group**

The political group determined most educational policies as observed during the second republic. These policies were based on now to attract political support not minding national priorities or economic viability which resulted to complexities in the execution of such programmes. The



U.P.E. programme of the UPN and 'qualitative educational programme of N.P.N., for example suffered from the rate of expressed interest of the political group. Educational expansion witnessed during the second republic and the haphazard implementation processes of the 6-3-3-4 system, in addition to the establishment of various state universities were all policies made to score political support during the second republic

### **The Bureaucrats**

The officials who managed the education programme during the second republic were appointed by political leaders on the base of party loyalty rather than on merit.

The result was that, those that were so appointed collaborated with the political leaders to formulate policies and make decisions to satisfy the political party leadership rather than to effect a realistic management of education sector. This was the reason why educational sector was associated with mismanagement frauds inform of 'kick back', inflated contracts and abandoned projects. There was also gross misplacement of priorities and disregard for national objectives.

### **Contractors within Party Members**

Government awarded many contracts for the building of new schools, the expansion of old ones, Supply of exercise books, chalks, textbooks and other instructional materials to individuals and groups. A number of these works done were usually below standard and not to approved specifications. There were also cases of inflated contracts and reviews which were only to be abandoned later. Supplies too were not done on the greed quantity while in so cases they were not even supplied. All these fraudulent practices contributed to the chaotic state of the education sector during the second republic and as such there were not any significant return from Such huge investment on education

### **Parents and Other Associations**

Parents have not been completely silent about the state of education during the second republic. They were known to exert their representative on policies and programmes through their representative unions as it affected them. In many cases, they succeeded in changing policies or modifying them. Example of Such policies include tuition, funding, feeding and so on.

Parents, on many Occasions expressed their opinions through the media on government decisions and policies on education so as to draw government attention to certain flaws or problems and to offer suggestions for improvement.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NEXT MILLENNIUM**

Education is the foundation upon which all other social sectors are built. Any country that neglects the education sector will hardly achieve its desired national objectives. The five national objectives of this country formed part of the nation's educational philosophy viz:

1. A free and democratic society
2. A just and egalitarian society;
3. A united, strong and self-reliant nation;
4. A great and dynamic economy
5. A land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens (NPE, 1981: P7).

To achieve these objectives, the education sector must be adequately catered for. This demand that the management of the nations education must be realistic and effective. To achieve these therefore, the political leadership of the next republic must ensure political commitment towards educational provision, well planned policies and programmes, prudent management through collaborative approach. It must also give adequate remuneration to teachers and find means of sourcing instructional materials locally which should be properly utilized.

### **Political commitment**

The political leadership must be committed to the provision of education to all citizens as their fundamental right irrespective of political patronage, ethnicity or religion. Such commitment should be on priority selection of national objectives. It will also mean providing adequate fund, facilities, equipment for the purpose of improving the quality of education as well as equalization of educational opportunities in the next millennium. Teachers remuneration and their welfare should be given attention. A frustrated teacher may not produce excellent students who would take the country into the promised land by the next millennium. In this regard, political loyalty as was the case during the second republic should not be

considered for appointment at the expense of quantity and dedicated professionals.

### **Systematic Planning and Prudent Management**

Education policies and programmes should be mapped on national needs and priorities. It is the opinion of this writer that collaborative approach to policy formulation and programme implementation involving all interest groups will ensure fair judgement, priorities and objectives. Before decisions are made, economic situation of the country must be evaluated to determine the level of a nation's economy. For example, Kwanashie (1988) stated that most of the expenditure claimed to be spent on education during that period was mostly "misappropriated". To ensure an effective and realistic management in the next republic, a new approach to the process of accounting and budgeting of educational finances should be devised. Such a system should for instance be self-accounting, autonomous and collaborative. The system should ensure proper checks and balances of annual expenditures. Each school should be encouraged to make its annual budget according to its needs.

### **Adequate Welfare for Teachers**

Between 1979- 1983, teachers were among the occupational groups whose remuneration was not given in accordance with established procedures. In some states, teachers salaries were not paid for up to 6 months. Allowances and other fringe benefits due to them were not paid either. This resulted to strikes, protests and low morale. It is said that the quality of any education system depend on the quality of its teachers This, therefore, holds that when teachers are adequately remunerated, it may ensure efficiency and effectiveness and they are likely to stay longer with the teaching. The standard of education in the country will therefore improve.

### **Local Production and Proper Utilization of Instructional Material**

The second republic witnessed massive importation instructional equipment especially in the areas of science and technological education. This is because, much equipment and materials were not locally produced in the country. The result was that many of these equipment and materials were not suitable for the environment. Apart from draining the scarce foreign resources materials so imported remained unutilized because of

shortage of technical expertise, problem of electricity supply and environmental unsuitability for such materials.

Until the next millennium, the government should devise ways of sourcing science and technical equipment locally. Enough funds and technical expertise should be made available to parastatals and institutions concerned with educational technology. Where such parastatals are not existing, government should establish one. The private sector should also be encouraged to participate in the production of educational technology equipment. Also, research in these areas should be encouraged.

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

Most of the current problems affecting the nation's education system have their roots anchored in the second republic administration system. It is the interplay between the political group and their poor management of the economy on the one hand, and the fall in oil prices in the world market on the other hand. Since the late 70s, oil prices in the world market has not been stable and the public has continued to reach to the deplorable state of our education system. The current republic should study the second republic procedures and processes of its administration and the politicians' attitudes and learn from them for better management approach towards the next millennium.

### **REFERENCES**

- Ajayi, K. (1983): *The 1979 Constitution and the Nigerian Education - Trends and Issues*, Adesina et al, eds, University of Ife Press, Benin City, pp. 42 - 88.
- Fagbemi (1988): "The Effects of Interest Groups on the Implementation of Educational Programmes in Nigeria", *International Journal of Educational Management*, Vol. XVII, No. Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1979 Constitution; P. 10.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria, National Policy on Education (1981):
- Kwanashie, N. (1988): *Foreign Debt and Economic Development in Nigeria*; *Nigerian Journal of Public Affairs*, Vol. X11, June 1993; Institute of Administration, ABU, PP. 56-67.
- Morrison, D. G., Mitchel, R. C., Paden, J. N. (1989): *Black Africa A Comparative Handbook*; New York, PP. 56 -67.
- McCaskle, T. C. (1988): *Nigeria - Recent History in Africa South of the Sahara*, 1988, Eureka Publications Limited, 1987; England; PP. 754 794.
- Orji, M. K. (1982): *The Nigerian Ethical Revolution, 1981 2000*, Selected source documents; PP. 113 149.
- Uche, U. W. (1986): *Sociology of Nigerian Education*, New Africa Holdings, Owerri; PP. 102- 150.