

## EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION THROUGH RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA

BY

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### **Abstract**

The call for a sustainable national transformation in Nigeria has grown in importance in recent years, as the country's educational sector faces resource management and development challenges. As a result, effective planning is critical for achieving long-term national transformation. Unfortunately, annual allocations to Nigeria's educational sector fall short of UNESCO's recommended benchmark of 26% of the national budget, resulting in issues such as inadequate infrastructure, a shortage of qualified teachers, and low enrollment rates. Despite this, with effective educational planning, Nigeria can work towards long-term national transformation by prioritising investments to maximise available resources. Given the current challenges, it is timely to assess how educational planning can contribute to Nigeria's long-term national transformation. By effectively managing resources and aligning educational goals with national needs, we can ensure long-term development and progress for future generations. As is frequently stated, failing to plan is planning to fail. Today, the educational sector is at a critical juncture that requires immediate action to address the existing challenges. A sustainable national transformation requires planning for the future of education in Nigeria to ensure that every child has access to quality education (sustainability goal number four), as well as ensure that it meets the needs of a rapidly evolving society. As a result, I suggest that urgent action is required to reform Nigeria's education system, with a focus on improving infrastructure, teacher training, and increasing enrollment rates. By prioritizing effective planning now, Nigeria can secure a brighter future for its citizens and contribute to overall national development. Without proactive measures, the education sector risks falling behind and failing to adequately prepare students for the demands of the modern world.

**Keywords:** Effective, Educational Planning, Sustainable, National Transformation, Resource Management.

## **1. Introduction**

In the 21st century, nations need to produce young people who are not only knowledgeable but also problem solvers and critical thinkers with a disposition to collaborate, communicate, and participate effectively in groups. Achievement in student learning constitutes a fundamental element of this ambition. According to Akinyemi and Mohammed (2023), educational planners, policymakers, and scholars stress the more efficient utilization and management of resources as a means for expanding educational attainments in the country. Educational planning in resource management needs to address financial and human resources. However, this does not demean the issue of non-financial management such as time, space, materials, and technology. In addition, both governance and leadership cross-cut all forms of resources (Sachs, et al., 2021). The issue of a crisis in educational development in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized, as the need for a country with diverse and flexible skills, a broad knowledge base, advanced and less advanced research and innovative capabilities in an approach to motivating teachers, students, and parents is very important.

The relevance of educational planning for all levels of education, from basic to tertiary education, in the provision of job opportunities and appreciable income generation, as well as national development, will be fully recognized when those who possess knowledge of its operations and who are capable of implementing appropriate recommendations are involved. Most successful human activity must have had some elements of planning or must have been planned ahead of time (Olaniyonu & Gbenu, 2016). Qualified and competent educational planners who work in educational institutions can contribute to effective educational planning if school administrators can create high levels of satisfaction in their work situations. Quality education for economic development means increased productivity. The process linking education and economic development is crucial to analyze the relationship between education and individual contributions to the economic and social development of the country.

Given the need to meet the goals and objectives, implement strategies and action plans to achieve the aspirations of the society and the capabilities needed for policymaking, implementation, supervision, monitoring, and evaluation, effective educational planning supports private sector participation in education through public-private collaborations, technical and vocational education, economic diversification, and prioritization towards the

relevant demand of the economy. Resources are made more effective through inclusive, transparent, and accountable management, and educational provision is improved through mass equity and quality in curriculum content and delivery through improved teacher and non-teaching staff welfare. In realizing the importance of educational planning to Nigerian society as encapsulated in the National Policy on Education, both state and federal governments have made appreciable efforts in this regard (Akinyemi et al., 2022).

The process of determining ahead of time what has to be done, how to do it, for whom it should be done, and who should do it is called planning. Planning, it seems, is a wise way to get ready for what lies ahead and to close the distance between where we are and where we want to be. Accordingly, education is viewed as a lifelong process that starts at birth and ends with death (Olaniyonu & Gbenu, 2016). Effective educational planning is essential for the overall development of a nation's economy, science and technology, culture, and socio-political empowerment. It is critical for the sustainable development and transformation of an economy as it provides a rational and coherent framework for making specific decisions about future investments in education. The National Policy on Education (FGN, 2014) underpins the importance of educational planning. It states that Nigeria's philosophy of education is based on the building of a great and dynamic economy, a just and humane society, a strong and self-reliant nation, and the provision of equal educational opportunities for all citizens at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system.

In Nigeria, the effective management of resources within the educational system is key to building a skilled workforce, promoting social and economic development, and achieving sustainable national transformation. Based on the foregoing, this study investigated the impact of resource management on educational planning in Nigeria and identified strategies to enhance the effectiveness of educational planning for sustainable national transformation.

### **Effective Education Planning**

The early 1960s saw a critical need for educational planning in newly independent countries like Nigeria to effectively develop their human resources. Initially, the Ministry of Education planning units heavily relied on outside experts (Olaniyonu & Gbenu, 2016). However, in the

wake of a crisis in the 1980s, educational planning in Nigeria underwent a significant transformation, becoming more participative, flexible, less technocratic, and diversified. The focus shifted from infrastructure planning and increasing access and efficiency to addressing key issues such as quality, inequality, and factors influencing the demand for schooling more strategically (Caillods, 2015). To improve education's effectiveness and efficiency in meeting the needs and objectives of both students and society, Olaniyonu and Gbenu (2016) define educational planning as, "the application of rational, systematic analysis to the process of educational development." According to the explanation provided by these writers, staff planning, facility planning, and educational institution planning are all included in educational planning. According to Caillods (2015), educational planning is the process that enables public authorities to prioritise interventions and orient educational development.

The level and calibre of a nation depend significantly on the educational standards and educational styles employed by it. A nation that respects its past and appreciates its present with a clear vision of its future designs challenging goals and objectives in the field of education. It develops schools and colleges that foster academic excellence, leading to an enlightened, humane, just, and equitable society. The educational goals, curricular programs, teaching strategies, and evaluation techniques provide vital clues to the educational values and commitments of a nation. They reveal the concerns of society and judgment from the extent to which they reflect societal goals for education. After all, education is the mirror of society reflecting the values, goals, and concerns of each. Each nation reflects in the education that it offers, and the ideologies and aspirations of the society governed by it.

Education is widely regarded as the most potent vehicle for change that one can think of. Young lives are full of stories, limitless possibilities, a variety of choices, and a significant potential for fulfillment (Akinyemi & Mohammed, 2023). Effective education planning, done with great care and love, can facilitate the unfolding of the lives of the young ones in the most promising manner. Suitable education and career planning are essential to bring forth appropriate and effective educational experiences. It can meet the varying needs and potential that young lives command (Akinyemi et al., 2022). Quite often, the success and happiness that adults achieve in their lives depend on the inconspicuous care and adjustments of education planning that wise individuals may have provided during their years in school

and college. Therefore, parents, guardians, and teachers need to focus on education planning with a great amount of affection and maturity.

### **Major Concerns of Educational Planning in Nigeria for Sustainable National Transformation**

Educational planning is highly concerned about the following, which essentially form its components, according to Olaniyonu and Gbenu (2016). These include:

1. **Reliable and up-to-date educational statistics:** This will help policymakers make informed decisions and allocate resources effectively to address the specific needs of the education sector. ii. Collaborative efforts between government, educators, and stakeholders: By working together, sustainable national transformation can be achieved through innovative educational strategies and programs that cater to the diverse needs of students and society as a whole.
2. **Supply and demand for teachers (both in quality and quantity):** For educational planning to enhance sustainable national transformation in Nigeria, there needs to be a focus on ensuring a sufficient supply of well-trained and qualified teachers to meet the demand. Additionally, efforts should be made to improve the quality of education provided by teachers through continuous professional development and support.
3. **Adequate financing of the education system:** Adequate financing of the education system is crucial for ensuring that schools have the resources necessary to provide quality education and support student learning. This includes funding for infrastructure, teacher training, and educational materials, all of which are essential for creating a conducive learning environment that can drive sustainable national transformation in Nigeria.
4. **School buildings (good designs, construction, equipment and adequate maintenance programmes):** Educational planning that prioritizes sustainable national transformation in Nigeria involves ensuring school buildings are well-designed, constructed, equipped, and maintained. This creates a conducive learning environment that fosters academic success and overall development of students, ultimately contributing to the progress of the nation as a whole.

5. **Curriculum development aligned with the needs of the students and society):** Curriculum development that aligns with the needs and aspirations of both students and society can lead to a more engaged and productive workforce, ultimately contributing to sustainable national transformation. By ensuring that educational planning is relevant and responsive to the demands of the current job market and societal challenges, Nigeria can cultivate a generation of skilled individuals who are equipped to drive economic growth and social progress.
6. **Educational materials, in sufficient quantity while not neglecting quality:** Ensuring that students have access to a wide range of educational resources will not only improve their academic performance but also equip them with the necessary skills to contribute to the country's development. Additionally, fostering a culture of lifelong learning and adaptability through education planning can lead to a more innovative and competitive workforce, ultimately driving sustainable national transformation in Nigeria.
7. **An expansion model is to be used in particular for projection:** This model involves considering the current state of education in Nigeria and identifying areas for improvement that can lead to long-term sustainable development. By focusing on enhancing educational planning, the country can better prepare its youth for the challenges and opportunities of the future, ultimately contributing to a more prosperous nation.
8. **The system's educational relevance to the country's political, economic, social, and cultural values:** Educational planning that is tailored to align with Nigeria's specific needs and values can contribute to sustainable national transformation by producing well-rounded individuals who are equipped to address the country's challenges and contribute positively to its development. Integrating relevant skills, knowledge, and values into the education system, can help cultivate a workforce that is capable of driving innovation, economic growth, and social progress in Nigeria.
9. **An integrated implementation (requiring public support):** It means that education planning should not only focus on academic achievement but also on developing critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and emotional intelligence. By incorporating these elements into the curriculum, students will be better equipped to contribute positively to society and drive sustainable national transformation in

Nigeria. This integrated approach requires collaboration between government, educators, parents, and the community to ensure that all aspects of a student's development are nurtured and supported.

10. **The legal framework for educational planning:** The legal framework for educational planning in Nigeria plays a crucial role in ensuring that policies and strategies are implemented effectively. By aligning educational planning with sustainable national transformation goals, the education system can better prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of the future, ultimately contributing to the overall development of the country.

### **Sustainable National Transformation**

A sustainable national transformation requires planning for the future of education in Nigeria to ensure that every child has access to quality education (sustainability goal number four), as well as ensure that it meets the needs of a rapidly evolving society. There are various perspectives on the sustainability of improvement in an economy like Nigeria. According to Abari (2019), the phrase 'sustainable national transformation', which emphasizes longevity and positive change at the national level, as distinct from haphazard short-term or partial change, seems appropriate for an emerging economy like Nigeria. Also, according to the Society for International Development (2021), sustainable development in Nigeria should prioritize inclusive growth, environmental protection, and social equity to address the country's complex challenges effectively. This holistic approach will not only benefit the current population but also future generations by creating a more stable and prosperous society.

According to Bawa (2019), sustainable national transformation requires a long-term vision and strategic planning that takes into account the needs of all stakeholders. By incorporating these elements, Nigeria can achieve sustainable development that is resilient to external shocks and capable of fostering long-term growth and prosperity for its citizens. However, conceptually, there appears to be no generally agreed definition which emphasizes the simultaneous need for both national transformation and 'sustainability' in an emerging economy like Nigeria's.

Sustainable national transformation involves not only economic growth but also improvements in social welfare, environmental sustainability, and governance. It requires a holistic approach that considers the interconnectedness of various factors in achieving long-term prosperity for all citizens (Sarma, 2018). The United Nations Organization (UNO) outlined determinates for national development which gave birth to 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, adopted in 2015. The agenda introduced the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs serve as a universal call to action for all countries to work collaboratively towards eradicating poverty, protect the planet, and ensuring prosperity for all by 2030.

### **Key Strategies for Sustainable National Transformation**

1. **Economic Diversification:** This involves broadening the range of economic activities to reduce reliance on a single sector. However, Uduak (2016), stated that education is highly valued and considered as a social service and tool for change and growth, and it acts as a steering engine for national consciousness and economic development in every society. This implies that without education, a country may struggle to effectively implement economic diversification and achieve sustainable national transformation. Additionally, investing in education can lead to a more skilled workforce, increased innovation, and overall economic growth. There are many reasons for economic growth. Economic growth is important because it serves as the foundation for society's future (Ngige, 2014). It can also contribute to advancement in fields, resulting in positive outcomes and solving many economic problems. Another reason for growth, according to Baker (2003), is to keep society moving in a positive and productive direction. This means that as we grow, our society improves. New advances in technology and industry have brought society a long way and will continue to grow and change as time passes.

2. **Investment in Human Capital:** This strategy focuses on enhancing the skills, knowledge, and well-being of the population through education, healthcare, and other social services. Investing in human capital can lead to a more productive workforce and overall societal improvement. Education is a critical component of human capital because it provides individuals with the knowledge and skills they require to be responsible and self-sufficient (Akinyemi et al., 2022). It is critical to economic growth and development, improved welfare,

and economic transformation. Education not only contributes to economic growth but also plays a crucial role in reducing poverty and inequality. Access to quality education is essential for breaking the cycle of poverty and empowering individuals to reach their full potential. According to Sachs, et al. (2021), education is a fundamental human right that should be accessible to all individuals regardless of their background or circumstances. It is through education that individuals can acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to participate fully in society and contribute to its overall development.

**3. Infrastructure Development:** This strategy involves the construction of essential physical and organizational structures such as transportation networks, energy systems, and communication facilities. Strong infrastructure is fundamental for economic growth and enhancing the overall quality of life for citizens. According to Akinyemi et al. (2023), infrastructure development can lead to increased productivity, improved connectivity, and attract foreign investment. Infrastructure in the Nigerian educational system is particularly crucial for providing students with access to quality education and training opportunities. Without proper infrastructure, schools may struggle to deliver effective learning experiences and support the development of a skilled workforce. However, Abari (2019) reported that there is poor maintenance of existing infrastructure in Nigerian schools, leading to deteriorating conditions and hindering the learning environment. This highlights the need for increased investment and prioritization of infrastructure development in the education sector to ensure students have access to quality learning facilities.

These strategies, when pursued effectively, can contribute to sustainable national transformation by fostering economic stability, human development, and overall progress in the country. By addressing infrastructure challenges in schools, the government can better equip students with the tools they need to succeed and thrive in an increasingly competitive global economy. Strong infrastructure is fundamental for economic growth and enhancing the overall quality of life for citizens. Investing in education infrastructure also helps to bridge the gap between urban and rural areas, ensuring that all students have equal opportunities for success.

### **Resource Management in Nigeria**

In a study conducted by Odigwe and Owan (2019) to examine the trend of federal government budgetary allocations to the education sector in Nigeria between 2009 and 2019, the findings revealed that allocations were generally low and far below the UNESCO-recommended benchmark. This suggests that the Nigerian federal government failed to provide adequate funding for the development of the educational sector during the study period. Furthermore, the International Monetary Fund's 2020 technical assistance report (2020) stated that Nigeria's relatively low educational resources are grossly insufficient to provide quality education to all (Soto et al., 2020). Consequently, the need to manage the available resources efficiently and effectively to improve educational outcomes becomes even more critical. This highlights the importance of strategic planning and budget allocation in ensuring that limited resources are maximized to benefit the education sector in Nigeria. The resources that are critical to the educational sector, such as infrastructure, qualified teachers, and learning materials to improve enrolment, must be allocated strategically to address the existing gaps and encourage overall educational quality in the country.

**Improving infrastructure:** Resource management in Nigeria is crucial for sustainable development. Infrastructures like classrooms, libraries, and laboratories are essential for creating conducive learning environments and enhancing the overall educational experience for students (Verraki, 2021). Proper allocation of resources towards infrastructure development will not only improve access to education but also contribute to the quality of learning outcomes in Nigeria. According to Oweh (2013), the education sector in Nigeria continues to face the issue of insufficient funding, despite UNESCO's recommendation that all member countries devote at least 26% of their annual budget to education alone. This underfunding has resulted in a lack of adequate facilities and resources, limiting students' ability to fully participate in their studies. Without proper infrastructure investment, Nigeria's educational system will continue to struggle to meet the needs of its students and society at large.

**Teacher training:** Teacher training is also a critical aspect that needs to be addressed to improve the quality of education in Nigeria. Investing in professional development for educators can help enhance teaching methods and ultimately improve student outcomes.

According to Elujekwute et al. (2021), training can help teachers better understand how to effectively engage students and create a more conducive learning environment. Without training it will be difficult to address the diverse learning needs of students and foster a culture of continuous improvement in schools. Nnorom and Gaius-Oke (2013) recognised training as a minimum requirement for educators to keep up with the changing dynamics of education and ensure that they are equipped with the necessary skills to meet the needs of students in a rapidly evolving world.

**Increasing enrollment rates:** The rate of dropout in schools must also be addressed to ensure that the increased enrollment rates are sustainable and lead to improved educational outcomes. One way to address this issue is by ensuring that available resources are used efficiently and effectively to support students who may be at risk of dropping out, such as providing mentorship programs or additional academic support. Effective planning and implementation of targeted interventions are crucial in ensuring that the efforts to increase enrollment rates are successful and sustainable in the long run. Ndubueze et al. (2022) reported that some of the ways of increasing enrollment rates in Nigerian schools include improving infrastructure, providing scholarships, and implementing community outreach programs to raise awareness about the importance of education.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, effective educational planning is essential for sustainable national transformation through resource management in Nigeria. By adopting strategies like economic diversification, investment in human capital, and infrastructure development, Nigeria can ensure long-term growth and stability. These efforts will not only improve the quality of education but also contribute to overall economic development and social progress in the country. By investing in quality education, proper allocation of resources, and strategic planning, Nigeria can pave the way for a brighter and more prosperous future. Education should be seen as a vital tool for fostering innovation, empowering communities, and driving economic growth. Through collaborative efforts and a commitment to continuous improvement, Nigeria can harness the power of education to build a more sustainable and prosperous nation for generations to come.

## Suggestions

By implementing the following suggestions, Nigeria can ensure that its education system is effectively contributing to national development and social progress, to ensure sustainable national transformation:

1. By prioritizing effective planning now, Nigeria can secure a brighter future for its citizens and contribute to overall national development.
2. Without proactive measures, the education sector risks falling behind and failing to adequately prepare students for the demands of the modern world.
3. Investing in teacher training and professional development to ensure educators are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver quality education.

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