

## Managing Educational Policy in Nigerian Higher Education: Implications for Effective Practices

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### ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the strategies for managing educational policy in Nigerian Higher Education: Implications for effective practices. This adopted a descriptive survey research design and conducted in Enugu State. The population for the study constitutes 201 lectures of selected tertiary institutions in Enugu State (University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State University of Science and Technology and Godfrey Okoye University) with the purposive sample sizes of 97, 76 and 28 respondents respectively. Two research questions guided the study in line with two null hypotheses. Data pertinent to the study were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled "Managing Educational Policy in Nigerian Higher Education Questionnaire (MEPNHEQ)". The questionnaire was validated by three research experts and the reliability index of the 0.77 was established using Cronbach Alpha. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while hypotheses were tested using t-test at .05 level of significance and appropriate degree of freedom. The findings of the study revealed among others that insufficient fund has implications on managing education policy in Higher Education as it affects standard of classroom available, provision of health care services, extra-curricular activities like quizzes, equipment of laboratories, provision of teaching aids, equipment of library, the provision of electricity, funding of sports facilities, among others. It was thereafter recommended among others that adequate fund should be provided by the government for managing educational policy in Nigerian Higher Education and, teaching-learning resources should be provided by the government and other concerned individuals to ensure easy policy implementation process in Nigerian Higher Education.

**Keywords:** Managing Educational Policy; Nigerian Higher Education; Effective Practices.

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### INTRODUCTION

Education involves the processes by which an individual is made to understand the difference between good and evil [1, 2, 3, 4]. It is defined as a laid-down system through which the character of an individual is moderated and sharpened for socio-cultural relevance. Education has been defined by different authors. Thus, [1] defined education as a formal process of inculcating certain desirable knowledge, values, norms, habits, altitudes and other attributes in the individual to enable them understand humanity and become agent of social change. Education in Nigerian system is given at the primary, secondary

and tertiary (higher) levels. Tertiary (higher) education can be defined herein as the last phase of the teaching and learning process an individual receives [5, 6, 7, 8]. At this level, the individual is prepared for contribution in social, economic and political system. The Federal Republic of Nigeria in its National Policy on Education (2014) [9] defined tertiary education as the education given after secondary education in Universities, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics, Mono-technics, as well as those institutions offering correspondence courses. National Policy on Education

(2014) [9] identified the goals of tertiary institutions in Nigeria to aim at: (a) Acquisition, development and inculcation of the proper value orientation for the survival of the individual and society; (b) the development of the intellectual capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate their environments; (c) the acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals develop into useful members of the community; and (d) the acquisition of an objective view of the local and external environments. These goals are achievable when favorable policies are enacted and implemented appreciate agencies established by the government to ensure quality education for national development. [10, 11, 12].

In view of the agencies established for the smooth running of education in Nigeria, [13, 14] identified the National Universities Commission (NUC) for Universities supervision, while colleges of education are supervised by the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) and; The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) oversees Technical Education. These commissions are responsible for policy decisions affecting institutions under their supervision, maintenance of standards through a system of periodic accreditation of courses, distribution and monitoring of government funding, appointment of members of governing councils, and the day-to-day running of the institutions. Thus, the attainment of the goals of higher education is dependent on the policy implementation. Policy can simply be defined as a laid-down rule, enacted to govern the activities of an establishment. A policy when enacted to govern the activities of the educational sector becomes "educational policy". According to Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [15], education policies cover a wide range of issues such as those targeting equity, the overall quality of learning outcomes and school and learning environments, the capacity of the system to prepare students for the future, funding, effective

governance or evaluation and assessment mechanisms, among others. These policies are made to ensure the actualization of the general goals of education especially at the higher level. According to [12] educational policy consists of the principles and government policies in the educational sphere and the collection of laws and rules that govern the operation of education systems. [4, 9], defined educational policy of Nigeria as a general statement containing principles, regulations and rules that govern many of the decision, on how to educate the citizens.

Policies according to [15] are considered as tools used to solve problems, provide general guidance and activities, ensure focus and provide control mechanism. Policies can be understood as political, managerial, financial and administrative mechanisms arranged to reach explicit goals. Hence, policy issues in the administration of higher educational institutions in Nigeria are embedded in the National policy on Education, which are geared towards the attainment of the goals of higher educational institutions. Within the National Policy on Education, the roles and responsibilities of individuals in management, targets for units, departments and faculties are defined in order to improve teaching and learning activities. In the educational sector, according to [1, 6], all policies are therefore formulated to direct activities of the institutions towards the betterment of the lives of the citizens. Eru, Ogi and Ikpe maintained that educational policy seeks to answer questions about the purpose of education, the objectives that it is designed for, the methods for attaining them and the tools for measuring their success or failure. Hence, the resources inputted in policy designing would amount to zero if not implemented. Implementation is defined as an act of putting to action or work. [9], defined implementation as the ability to put law or policy into work. Nweke also perceived implementation as a tool or means of making something that has been officially decided to start to happen or be used. [10], observed that formulating a policy or

designing a plan is meaningless, except it is implemented. Implementation is the transformation of education plan or policy into action. According to [11], implementation means putting into use or practicing the government or organization's policy as applicable. [14], stated that no policy can succeed if the implementation does not bear any relationship with the intentions of the policy makers.

[6], summarized the functions of educational policies as policy decisions made by the society itself through its elected representatives which determine the direction of educational system of a Local, State or Federal Government. The implication of the above in the university environment is that all the different types of policies are formulated and implemented at different times to help management achieve different goals at different times in various areas of tertiary education management. It is on the above premise that several educational policies have been formulated over the years. The tertiary institutions are managed through the formulation and implementation of appropriate policies by the authorized bodies and commissions. According to [3], the Federal Government through the National Universities Commission implements appropriate policies for the Universities. It is in the same vein that the Federal Government ensures the infrastructural development of Tertiary

#### **Statement of the Problem**

In higher education system in Nigeria today, the gaps between policy formulation and implementation has awoken the interest of scholars and other educational stakeholders to identify factors that constrain the effective implementation of educational policies in Nigeria and its implications, thereby proffering solutions to the problem. Thus, the problem of policy implementation in Nigeria is attributable to the planning stage, which comes immediately after policy formulation. However, every good planning will ensure effective implementation and positive outcomes. Good planning that can facilitate effective

Institutions through the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund). These bodies formulate and implement policies but over the years, educational policy implementation had suffered backdrops. These backdrops include inadequate teaching staff, lack of funding, inadequate facilities, among others.

Accordingly, [8] identified inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate lecturers, institutional corruption, and lack of political will, insecurity challenge, political instability, poor policy formulation and strike actions as the challenges preventing effective implementation of universities education policies in Nigeria. [5] maintained that a significant constraint to attaining academic excellence in Nigerian universities is financial constraints, making many academics and non-academics work under challenging circumstances. Many tertiary education institutions in Nigeria could not build lecture halls or equip laboratories and students' hostels. Due to numerous challenge identified earlier, developing countries including Nigeria have not been able to articulate and implement this policy strategies. Hence, the need to determine the strategies for managing educational policy in Nigerian Higher Education: Implications for effective practices.

implementation should consider factors such as the planning environment, political environment, social environment, financial and statistical problems. The plan must consider the needs of the society; the political, socio-cultural, economic, military, scientific, and technological realities of the environments that are also fundamental to its survival. Consequently, despite the creditable objectives and structure of education in Nigeria, all indications point to the fact that the Nigerian system of education failures is on a yearly increase and has been majorly attributed to problems of policy implementation, resulting from

inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate lecturers, institutional corruption, lack of political will, insecurity challenge, political instability, among others. These factors has grossly affected the policy implementation and in turn affected the attainment of educational goals, which contributes to the slow pace of

development in Nigeria as the system has over-time birthed ill-trained graduates who constitutes nuisance in the society today. On this note, the study is set to determine the strategies for managing educational policy in Nigerian Higher Education and its implications for effective practices.

**Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to determine the strategies for managing educational policy in Nigerian Higher Education: Implications for effective practices. Specifically, the study sought to determine the implication of:

1. Insufficient fund in managing education policy in Higher Education.
2. Inadequate facilities in managing education policy in Higher Education.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the implication of insufficient fund in managing education policy in Higher Education?

2. What is the implication of inadequate facilities in managing education policy in Higher Education

**Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study:

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** A significant difference does not exist in the mean ratings between male and female lecturers regarding implication of insufficient fund in managing

education policy in Higher Education.

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings between male and female lecturers regarding implication of inadequate facilities in managing education policy in Higher Education.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design and was carried out in Enugu State. The population for the study constitutes 201 (88 male and 113 female) lectures of selected tertiary institutions in Enugu State (University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State University of Science and Technology and Godfrey Okoye University) with the purposive sample sizes of 97, 76 and 28 respondents respectively. The instrument for data collection was a structured four point scale and weighted questionnaire with a 24-items statement developed by the researcher titled "Managing Educational Policy in Nigerian Higher Education Questionnaire (MEPNHEQ)". The questionnaire had two sections, namely: A and B. Part A comprised the respondents; data while B had the questionnaire items with response

options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) assigned numerical values of 4, 3, 2 & 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three research experts with the reliability index of 0.77 established using Cronbach Alpha. In analyzing the data collected, mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while t-test was used for the null hypotheses. In decision making, items with mean scores of 2.50 and above were regarded as Agree while those with mean scores below 2.50 are regarded as Disagree. For the hypotheses, when the significant value is more than the level of significance, the hypothesis was not accepted, while the null hypothesis was not rejected when the significant value is less than the level of significance.

**RESULTS**

The results in-line with the research questions and corresponding null hypotheses that guided the study are presented in tables below.

**Research Question 1**

What is the implication of insufficient fund in managing education policy in Higher Education?

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Respondents Regarding the Implication of Insufficient Fund in Managing Education Policy in Higher Education.**

S/N	Insufficient fund has implication in managing education policy as it affects;	Male Lecturers N = 88		Female Lecturers N = 113		Overall N = 201		Overall Decision
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$\bar{x}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	$\bar{x}$	SD	
1	staff capacity development.	3.25	0.75	3.35	0.62	3.30	0.69	Agree
2	standard of classroom available	3.57	0.75	3.35	0.59	3.46	0.67	Agree
3	provision of teaching aids.	3.32	0.99	3.25	0.93	3.26	0.96	Agree
4	equipment of library.	3.26	0.76	3.32	0.73	3.29	0.67	Agree
5	provision of health care services.	3.48	0.62	3.22	0.86	3.35	0.74	Agree
6	the provision of electricity.	3.02	0.84	3.40	0.70	3.21	0.77	Agree
7	extra-curricular activities like quizzes.	3.40	0.63	3.22	0.68	3.31	0.66	Agree
8	provision of ict facilities.	3.09	0.65	3.09	0.92	3.09	0.79	Agree
9	equipment of staff offices.	3.28	0.78	3.26	0.78	3.27	0.78	Agree
10	funding of sports facilities.	2.45	1.19	2.11	0.93	2.32	1.11	Disagree
11	remuneration of teachers.	2.44	1.19	2.20	1.15	2.30	1.16	Disagree
12	equipment of laboratories	3.26	0.73	3.38	0.61	3.32	0.67	Agree
13	payment of salaries	3.12	0.76	3.20	0.81	3.16	0.79	Agree
<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>		<b>3.15</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>0.79</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Data presented in Table 1 shows that the overall mean score range of 3.09 to 3.46 are obtained for both male and female lecturers on items number 1 to 9, 12 and 13 of research question one, denoting agree responses by the respondents. Also, the overall mean scores of 2.32 and 2.30 are obtained on items number 10 and 11 shows disagree responses respectively.

However, the cluster mean score of 3.13 obtained for all the items under research question one depicts that insufficient fund have greater implication in managing education policy in Higher Education. Thus, the cluster standard deviation score of 0.80 obtained shows homogeneity in the opinions of the respondents.

**Hypothesis 1**

A significant difference does not exist in the mean ratings between male and female lecturers regarding implication of

insufficient fund in managing education policy in Higher Education

**Table 2: t-test analysis on the Mean Ratings between Male and Female Lecturers regarding Implication of Insufficient Fund in Managing Education Policy in Higher Education.**

Respondents (Lecturers)	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	t-value	Df	Sig. (2tailed)	Decision
Male	88	3.15	0.82	0.637	199	0.209	Not Significant
Female	113	3.10	0.79				

**NB: NS (Not Significant), SD (Standard Deviation), Df (Degree of freedom)**

Table 2 shows that the t-value of 0.637 is obtained at 0.05 level of significance with the significant value of 0.209 at 199 degree of freedom. However, the calculated significance value is more than the level of significance and thus, the null hypothesis is statistically insignificant and hence, not

rejected for these items. This implies that a significant difference does not exist in the mean ratings between male and female lecturers regarding implication of insufficient fund in managing education policy in Higher Education.

**Research Question 2**

What is the implication of inadequate facilities in managing education policy in Higher Education?

**Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of respondents regarding the Implication of Inadequate Facilities in Managing Education Policy in Higher Education.**

S/N	Inadequate facilities has implication on managing education policy as it affects;	Male Lecturers N = 88		Female Lecturers N = 113		Overall N = 201		Overall Decision
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD <sub>1</sub>	$\bar{x}_2$	SD <sub>2</sub>	$\bar{x}$	SD	
13	illustrate concept	2.92	0.79	3.05	0.84	3.04	0.83	Agree
14	better school administration and organization	2.07	0.81	2.49	1.21	2.28	1.01	Disagree
15	opportunity for the first-hand experience	2.93	0.79	2.98	0.82	2.97	0.81	Agree
16	diversity of thoughts.	3.00	0.74	3.01	0.76	3.01	0.76	Agree
17	scientific investigation.	2.92	0.79	3.01	0.75	3.00	0.75	Agree
18	Experimentation	3.00	0.74	3.03	0.72	3.03	0.72	Agree
19	teachers' morale	3.17	0.72	3.01	0.76	3.03	0.76	Agree
20	all -round development of the personality of the students	3.00	0.74	3.00	0.74	3.00	0.74	Agree
21	Comfort	3.00	0.85	2.98	0.82	2.98	0.82	Agree
22	safety in school.	3.00	0.74	2.95	0.75	2.96	0.75	Agree
23	enthusiasm in both students and teachers	3.00	0.74	2.98	0.82	2.98	0.81	Agree
24	beauty of the environment which encourages enrollment of wards	2.56	1.04	2.21	1.06	2.34	1.05	Disagree
<b>Grand Mean/SD</b>		<b>2.88</b>	<b>0.79</b>	<b>2.89</b>	<b>0.84</b>	<b>2.89</b>	<b>0.82</b>	<b>Agree</b>

Data as presented in Table 3 shows that the overall mean score range of 2.96 to 3.04 are obtained for the respondents on items number 13, 15 to 23 of research question two. This depicts agree responses by the respondents. Similarly, the mean scores of 2.82 and 1.05 are obtained on items number 13 and 24, indicating disagree responses by the same respondents.

Hence, the cluster mean score of 2.89 obtained for all the items under research question two depicts that inadequate facilities affects the management of education policy in Higher Education, while the cluster standard deviation score of 0.82 obtained for all the items denotes that respondents' opinions didn't differ remarkably.

**Hypothesis 2**

A significant difference does not exist in the mean ratings between male and female lecturers regarding implication of

inadequate facilities in managing education policy in Higher Education.

**Table 4: t-test analysis on the Mean Ratings between Male and Female Lecturers regarding Implication of Inadequate Facilities in Managing Education Policy in Higher Education.**

Respondents (Lecturers)	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	t-value	Df	Sig. (2tailed)	Decision
Male	88	2.88	0.79	0.513	199	0.433	Not
Female	113	2.89	0.84				Significant

**NB: NS (Not Significant), SD (Standard Deviation), Df (Degree of freedom)**

Table 4 shows that the t-value of 0.513 is obtained at 0.05 level of significance with the significant value of 0.433 at 199 degree of freedom. Thus, the calculated significance value is more than the level of significance and thus, the null hypothesis is statistically insignificant and hence, not

rejected for these items. This implies that a significant difference does not exist in the mean ratings between male and female lecturers regarding implication of inadequate facilities in managing education policy in Higher Education.

#### Discussion of Findings

Regarding the implication of insufficient fund in managing education policy in Higher Education, the study revealed that standard of classroom available, provision of health care services, extra-curricular activities like quizzes, equipment of laboratories, provision of teaching aids, equipment of library, the provision of electricity, funding of sports facilities, among others are affected by insufficient fund. By this view, it is note-worthy that adequate funding is a necessity for the effective management of higher education. Thus, adequate fund is highly required in managing education policy in Higher Education. Additionally, the hypothesis test of no significant difference regarding the implication of insufficient fund in managing education policy in Higher Education yielded a result of no significant difference. Here, the significant value obtained is more than the level of significance set for the study. Thus, the null hypothesis is not rejected. These findings agrees with the findings of Asiyai (2013) who stated that a significant constraint to attaining academic excellence in Nigerian Universities is financial constraints, making many academics and non-academics work under challenging circumstances. Asiyai stressed that many tertiary education institutions in Nigeria could not build lecture halls or equip laboratories and students' hostels. With respect to the implication of

inadequate facilities in managing education policy in Higher Education, the study unveiled that insufficient funds have implication on managing education policy as it affects illustration of concept, experimentation, teachers' morale, all - round development of the personality of the students, scientific investigation, opportunity for the first-hand experience, enthusiasm in both students and teachers, safety in school and many more. However, material availability in higher education constitutes a major part of the learning process as it ensures the learning process and its objectives are achieved. Thus, the corresponding null hypothesis showed that a significant difference does not exist in the mean ratings between male and female lecturers regarding the implication of inadequate facilities in managing education policy in Higher Education. This is evident as the significance value obtained is more than the level of significance set for the study. Hence, this finding tallied with the findings of Ogunode, Ajape and Jegede (2020) who identified inadequate funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inadequate lecturers, institutional corruption, and lack of political will, insecurity challenge, political instability, poor policy formulation and strike actions as the challenges preventing effective implementation of universities education policies in Nigeria.

### CONCLUSION

In line with the findings of this study, it could be stated that managing educational policy in Nigerian Higher Education is dependent on the availability of resources. This includes provision of adequate fund and facilities which its inadequacies have implications for effective practices. The availability of fund and other resources could be evident in number of standard of classroom available, provision of health

care services, extra-curricular activities like quizzes, equipment of laboratories, provision of teaching aids, equipment of library, the provision of electricity, funding of sports facilities. On this note, it becomes pertinent to ensure the provision of adequate fund and facilities for effective practices in managing educational policy in Nigerian Higher Education.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made: Adequate fund should be provided by the government for managing educational policy in Nigerian Higher Education. Teaching-learning resources should be provided by the government and other

concerned individuals to ensure easy policy implementation process in Nigerian Higher Education. Educational policy implementation process in Nigerian Higher Education should follow a systematic approach for its effective practices.

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