

# **CRITICAL ISSUES IN NIGERIAN EDUCATION TODAY: PERSPECTIVES AND PROJECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

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## **Introduction**

In different fora or settings when critical Issues of Education are being discussed; certain statements are often made *inter alia*, Education is the pivot upon which development revolves; No nation can rise above the nature or quality of her educational system; education is the best legacy to bequeath to citizens and the like; yet it seems probable that both government, parents and the public do not match these statements with serious efforts to manifest the ideals of the aforesaid. There is hue and cries that the standard of education had falling, is falling or still falling and the products or outputs of our educational system fall short of expectation and to what some critiques would say, a far cry from international standard. We hear and read of these every time and everyday yet concerted efforts are not being made to address this challenge.

The United Nations' Copenhagen Declaration of 1996 and Dakar Conference of 2000 emphasized the need of government to spend money to facilitate human capital development to enhance overall development. Yet, as Anyanwu and Erhijakpor (2007) observed, education in developing countries (Nigeria inclusive) is greatly under resourced or underfunded. Meanwhile "Politicians especially idle Senators and Members of the House of Representatives that are leeches "Sucking blood" of the nation; earn more than teachers" the implementers of the educational policies and programmes ( Culley, 2019).

Government had ever shown lip services to the funding of education. Even with the harsh condition of services, teachers still tried, and trying their bests and the benefactors strive to make meanings out of whatever education provided; but still, at the end there is no job for the graduates; no wonder then; many youths term education as a scam in Nigeria.

No matter the situation; education is by far the most important means of raising quality manpower for development. UNICEF/NYHQ 2010 maintained that "education and learning are crucial for the ability of present and future leaders and citizens to create solutions and find new paths to a better future: *IPSO facto*; for this to be worthwhile; Critical Issues in Nigerian Education need to be X-rayed and better pathways for improvement for the future proffered.

## **Critical Issues in Nigerian Education**

There is no gainsaying the fact that education is development's rudder or propeller. It is the catalyst for a nation's development. This can be gleaned from the works of Dung-Gwom 2014, Ihugba, Ukwunna and Obiukwu, 2019; Obi Ekesiobi: Dimnwobi and Mgbemena, 2016; Okebukola 2013; Okuma, Ochedikwu and Deke, 2013; Adebisi, 2006,

Dike, 2006; Ezekwesili, 2006; etc. Specially Dung-Gwom (2014) while analyzing vision 20:2020 on Education in the nation's development plan of between 2009 and 2012: opined that *inter alia*; education ensures a nation's human resource endowment is knowledgeable, skilled, productive and healthy to enable optimal exploitation and utilization of other resources to foster growth and development. Dike (2006) observed that "no nation can remain which does not recognize the importance of education". We now at this point look at the Critical issues in some aspects of Education seriatim.

### **Critical Issues in Educational Planning**

Educational Planning is a critical issue in Nigerian Education. Ololube, 2013; Agi and Adiele, 2009; Adeniyi, 2001; etc, stated in their respective work that educational planning is a major crisis and problem facing Nigerian education. Problem of educational planning revolves around providing policy blue print on education which include prescribing nature and structure of education; patterning objectives of education, human resources development, funding and a host of others.

The essence of educational planning is to ensure effectiveness of the educational system. However, Educational planning in Nigeria is bedevilled with problems of inaccurate data, inadequate skilled personnel, technological inadequacies political arrangement issue, economic circumstances and inadequate planning (Ololube, 2013).

UNESCO Lagos Office (1998) revealed that it is difficult in Nigeria to collect quantitative and qualitative data on costs and benefits of Nigerian education and such makes drawing of conclusions on what to be done difficult. That the Planning and Management of Education in Nigeria depend very much on funds. Thus, one dare say that the success and failures of Educational System depend on planning of which the latter is dependent on funding. It had been observed that funding of Nigerian Education System had all the time low.

### **Educational Assessment**

Educational assessment is the chief determinant of the effectiveness or otherwise of an educational process. The prime objective of educational assessment is to ascertain what the beneficiaries of the educational system have attained which will culminate in certification. The anallary object again is to use the outcome to assess the entire educational system that could further lead to curriculum change or reformation and innovation and the like. Educational assessment in Nigeria is still so much paper and pencil based. It is still very much on the testing of the cognitive domain. This had made recipients to employ different means of succeeding.

Over the years educational assessment had been plagued with the issue of examination malpractices (Oniyama and Asamaigo, 2007, Ogbuagu, 2007, Mokwunyei, 2007; Aibiyi and Fenemigho, 2009). This problem had among other factors be linked with; defective curriculum, overcrowded schools; laziness on the part of learners, paper qualification syndrome, corruption on the part of the teachers and officials of the examining bodies, poor societal values, moral decadence and poor funding of education. The effects

of examination malpractice cannot be fully ascertained because, they are myriad; to say the least is that “fake products” are made out of our educational system.

A lot of measures had been taken to curb this; ranging from proscription of punishment through the legal process to introduction of computer based examination but being octopus in nature; the problem seems intractable. It had led to the poor valuation of our certificates in other nations.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

An effective Curriculum is a precursor to a functional education. The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2011) encapsulates the content of Education in Nigeria. However, high rate of school drop outs cum repetition in the primary level of education viz a viz high rate of failure in the secondary and tertiary levels of education is an indication of failure of the Curriculum (Mbakwe, 2006).

The Curriculum operation in Nigeria for some time was defective; for it failed to include new ideas and not tailored to the needs of the recipients. There is therefore the need to develop high quality curriculum that will take into cognizance needs, goals, values, etc. of the people to which it is designed. Efforts at addressing this seemed to compound existing problem. It is observed that the curriculum for primary and secondary levels of education appears to be overloaded while that of the tertiary level is bereft of standard and needs of the people or recipients.

Aside the aforesaid, the conventional way of instructions have failed and is failing to address wide range of new ideas, expression and understanding of different disciplines relating to the processes of learning (Mbakwe, 2006). Besides, the current conventional system of education is poorly equipped and fails to take cognizance of challenges and opportunities of today. It does not reflect global trends and thus fail to equip its products to be fully functional in the global community.

### **Educational Administration**

Educational Administration in Nigeria belonged to both the exclusive and concurrent list of legislation. The national policy on education is handled by the federal government and its implementation by both federal and state governments; in essence one can say that the planning, organisation and execution of Nigerian Education is by both federal, state and local governments. The administration of education in Nigeria had not fared well. As education is the key index of development (Olibie, Eziuzo & Enueme, 2013); stakeholders need initiative, zeal, forthrightness, forth sightedness and hard work. But this is far from being so. From the formulation of the National Policy on education to the design of curriculum and its implementation; the actors had been to a greater extent not educationists. Key actors of Education Administration from the formulation to implementation are not educational experts. This had negatively affected the effectiveness of Nigerian Education. Besides, funding is another big issue in educational administration, poor funding is the bane of educational administration in Nigeria.

## **Educational Psychology and Counselling**

Education Psychology is an aspect of General Psychology that applies the general principles, generalization, laws and practices of psychology to make teaching and learning effective (Oniyama; 2004, Oniyama and Asite). Counselling on the other hand is a learning process wherein the counsellee learns about himself, interpersonal relationship and behaviours that lead to personal development (Shertzer and Stone, 1986; Oniyama; 2017). These two disciplines stem from the field of psychology; *Ipsa facto* applied psychology.

Both educational psychology and counselling have the potentials of creating and recreating the behaviour of learners and their recipients. According to Osborne and Mollette (2010); educational psychology has the potential of improving the life of almost every individual. Counselling had proved efficacious in changing the behaviour of individuals (Oniyama 2004; Modo, Akpabio & Archibong, 2014; Egbo, 2014...).

As effective as these two fields of study could be in shaping and re-shaping individuals, pride of place are not accorded them in and out of schools. The application of Educational psychology is close to being non-existent in school and the general society. Apart from it being taught in higher institutions and application of its subsidiary test, testing, measurement and evaluation in schools, other areas where it can be employed like work places; little emphasis is placed on it. Counselling had remained mere school services and had hardly being utilized. Cases of violence; bullying, sexual harassment, cultism, examination malpractice, segregation of girls from formal education and on the other hand some school subjects and discipline which counselling can resolve, still stare us sternly at the face. We need to harness the field of educational psychology and counselling to the benefit of the society.

## **Childhood Education**

Early childhood education is educational provision for children of ages 3 – 5; sometimes in some climes 2 to 5 years. This education if well administered is capable of stimulating early learning in the children and fosters cognitive development.

This type of education is provided formally and informally by private organizations, NGOs and Communities. It has existed for long but government had not paid particular attention to it. What seems to be government efforts is provision of rules for proprietors and prescription of methods of teaching but funding is left for those who cared to provide it. It is on record that up to 22.7 million children of ages 1 – 5 years were in Nigeria as at the 1991 census (UNESCO, Lagos Office, 1998) and of these, only 4.7% of them are enrolled in school. Since the programme requires payment of fees children from poor parents are denied such opportunity.

In Jamaica 2% of annual budget of education goes for the pre-school education, Mexico 5% while Nigeria no budget (UNESCO, Lagos, 1998). To say the least, early Childhood Education in Nigeria is underfunded. There is no formal policy at present for government to contribute by law to early childhood education (UNESCO Lagos, 1998); maybe the trend would have changed.

## **Special Education**

Special education is educational provision meant for children and adults alike who sufficiently or significantly deviate from the normal, positively and or negatively that normal education cannot or may not efficiently and successfully educate them. (Oniyama & Asamaigo (2019) defined the concept as education for children who deviate from the normal to the degree that they will require special services, facilities, curriculum instructional materials or educational procedures and special teaching competencies. The objectives of special education are contained in the National Policy on Education (FGN; 2012 and National Policy on Special Needs Education FGN, 2015). The sum of the objectives is to educate special needs children for full integration into the society.

The critical issues in special education include among others; underfunding of the education by government. Besides there is short supply of special educators and even the few ones are not employed. Again, the poor rating of special educators propels the few ones in the field to quit the job too soon. Arising from this; some teachers in the special educator sector are unqualified. Closely related to this, is stigmatization of special children. This few that have been educated are not employed. What is trending is the debate as to what process of Special Education be adopted.

### **Art Education**

Art Education is educational programme geared towards producing children with creative minds and making into realities mental conceptions. Art education is an age long education that attracted people in the time past. From close observation; the field is not attracting patronage in recent times. This could be due to poor encouragement arising from unemployment and inability of its recipients to get start-up fund to begin on their own. Again, since more people are not encouraged into the field, there is shortage of manpower; thus it becomes difficult to see Art teachers to teach the subject in school.

Closely related to the above is the fact that many Nigerian youths are not interested in such subjects, for their minds tuned to high sounding subjects and disciplines. Besides, parents discourage their children to follow such discipline.

### **Primary and Secondary Education in Nigeria**

Primary education is for children between the ages of 5 to 11 years, it is perhaps the first official level of education in Nigeria as indicated in the National Policy on Education. The main objective among others is “the inculcation of permanent literacy and numeracy and the ability to communicate effectively” (UNESCO Lagos, 1998).

Secondary education is the second level of education that seeks to prepare youths for useful life in the society and for higher education (UNESCO, Lagos, 1998). Primary and Secondary education in Nigeria suffer similar problems. Among the problems of these two streams of education *inter alia* including; congestion in schools, shortage of books and other materials, unqualified teachers, lack of guidance counsellors, ineffectiveness of continuous assessment, poor administration, poor preparation of teachers (UNESCO, Lagos 1998; Okoh and Uko-Aviomoh; 2005) poor funding, examination malpractices, cultism and a host of others.

Today, in many classrooms in urban centres; over 100 students study in one classroom a class ought to have been for maybe 40 pupils according to UNESCO Standard. Most pupils and students go to school without books and other materials. To worsen the situation; pupils and students are sometimes taught by unqualified and poorly prepared teachers respectively. Besides, there is paucity of guidance counsellors in schools who ought to shape the behaviours of the learners and help in the implementation of continuous assessment. These issues tend to frustrate the achievement of the objectives of education of these levels.

### **Science and Technology Education**

A nation's scientific and technological development is dependent on science and technology education. Science and technology education is a catalyst to a nation's development. Besides, this education prepares the child to live effectively in the new world order of science and technology. This is the reason government placed and places premium on this education; hence the National Policy on Education harped on it.

In spite of the importance of science and technology education, it is poorly funded. Enrolment of students to this type of education is very low especially female students. There is also dearth or reduction in supply of qualified science and technology teachers. Again, science and technology laboratories are limited and the few ones lack basic equipment. Moreso, laboratory technicians are in short supply. Poor supply of electricity to power available equipment for practicals is a bane of science and technology. These issues could be the reasons for poor performance of students.

### **Language Education**

Nigeria do not have well defined national policy on language but English language is the official language of instruction in schools. However, we have local languages as second languages of communication, in and out of school.

French and classical Arabic languages as still being studied. English language teaching had been a problem in Nigeria. First, there are not enough qualified English teachers. Secondly, instructional materials especially those required to teach Oral English are in short supply and the thinking in local languages before translating to English language by learners lead to failures in the language.

Local languages are contemplated by the National Policy on education to be used to teach in primary schools. Observation reveals that majority of primary schools especially in urban areas do not use it. In most cases, the children are not even taught local languages as subjects (UNESCO Lagos, 1998). A study by Afiesimama (1991) revealed that in Rivers State about 34% of children in the primary schools cannot speak their local languages and this could be so with other states of the country. In respect of the study of foreign language, Nigeria has only three language schools.

### **Technical Education**

Technical education is the aspect of education geared towards making recipients acquire practical and applied skills including scientific knowledge (FGN, 1982). It is aimed at providing trained manpower in areas of applied science, technology and commerce as sub-professional grade (FGN, 1981). Effective technical and vocational education is important in National development.

Despite the importance technical education could be for national development, reduction of unemployment and so on; sadly enough, this level of education is plagued by several problems. Abdullahi and Danjuma (2004) catalogues the followings among others as problems of technical education;

- i. Lack of skilled technical teachers
- ii. Poor skilled technical teachers
- iii. Lack of laboratories and workshops
- iv. Lack of equipment
- v. The curriculum designed for vocational technical education is poor
- vi. Poor salary for technical teachers
- vii. Poor funding....
- viii. Lack of motivation for technical teacher
- ix. Lack of employment of technical graduates and
- x. Uncompromising attitude of industrial sectors.

Though this revelation seems long but careful observation would support that such problems still exist today. This may be counting for the reason why youths are unwilling to enroll in technical subjects in schools today.

### **Vocational Education**

Vocational Education is the aspect of education intended to equip recipients with entrepreneurial or employable skills that could lead to self-employment. Government proposed that in the 3 – 3 streams of secondary education, after the Junior Secondary School, as students' progress to the Senior Secondary School, those who are not capable or who do not want to prepare for tertiary level, go vocational. The intention is to provide them with productive skills that could make them independent or self-employed.

Unemployment has reached an alarming proportion. The National Bureau of Statistics (2004) revealed that about 5.3 million Nigerian youths are unemployed and about 1.8 million graduates enter the labour market yearly. The unemployment rate in Nigeria is on the rise, it was 19.7% in 2009, 21.1% in 2010 and by 2011 it was 23.9% (National Bureau of Statistics, 2012; Adeyemi, 2014). The figure would have soared by 2019.

Much as Vocational Education would have helped reduce unemployment much emphasis is not placed on it by government. Thus, underfunding, short supply of vocational teachers, decay infrastructure, poor motivation of teachers, poor motivation of students, unemployment of those with vocational skills, wrong perception of vocational education and so on become evident in vocational education. Ineffective vocational education becomes the status of the aforesaid today.

### **Library and Information Technology Education**

Information is key to learning. The teaching and learning situation is information based. Library is central to the generation of information. Teachers or educators consult with the library to acquire information to disseminate to the deserving. Information technology the science of information generating and disseminating is important in the process of teaching and learning.

Library and information technology is central to teaching and learning process. But the state of the duo, is in despicable position. Okyi (2004) stated that school library development in Nigeria is deplorable; that the role of libraries in learning had not been fully appreciated in Nigeria. Earlier on Ayemi and Oyesangi (1997) observed that school libraries are non-functional, ineffective due to poor funding and neglect. Information and technology education had not been embraced and poor funding staring at it leading to its none embrace by teacher and educators.

### **Polytechnic Education**

Polytechnic education is the sum of vocational and technical education at the tertiary level though progression can be made to the university. According to Sanni (2009), Polytechnic education is that which provide training of professionals devoted to practical and manipulative skills in broad areas. With polytechnic education, middle level manpower are produced in the vocational and technical sector of the economy. Polytechnic education helps the recipient to acquire skills and training for entrepreneurship.

In the 4-year strategic plan for the development of education sector; 2011 – 2015; the Federal Ministry of Education placed emphasis on technical education through polytechnic education (Dung-Gwom, 2014). However, sadly enough the body equally bemoan the inattention given to Technical and Vocational Education and Training. Meanwhile as observed by Dung-Gwom, (2014), “80% of what people do globally requires technical and vocational skills. He noted that to unlock the nation’s future, Technical, Vocational Education and training is needed. The critical issues in polytechnic education like every other education is inclusive of poor quality; gross underfunding, decayed infrastructure. The Federal Ministry of Education (2009) revealed that poor quality staff and students, lack of equipment, worsening unemployment of its graduates and inept and poor leadership (Dung-Gwom 20014). To underscore the poor quality of products of polytechnic education, Mrs Okonjo Iweala once noted that 60% of Nigerian graduates are unemployable (Dung-Gwom, 2004). In terms of funding; UNESCO recommended 26% of annual budget for education; but unfortunately, in 2012, 8.4% was budgeted for education while in 2018 it was 7.04%. The picture of how polytechnic education can fare is best imagined. In 2011, the unemployment level was 42.7% (National Bureau of Statistics, 2011), how then will youths be encouraged to espoused polytechnic education. Besides, there is ardence of obsolete and decayed infrastructure if youths decided to enroll; getting the best of the education becomes a problem, this is even aside; short supply of qualified teachers. All these are issues needed to be addressed for polytechnic education to stand tall in educational system in Nigeria.

### **University Education**

University Education, the highest level of education; post-secondary education had come a long way. It is the level of education meant to produce high level manpower for national development. Once upon a time; universities had been referred to as Ivory towers; one wonders whether such allusions can be accorded to this level of education in Nigeria today.

University education had been under serious attack. It has been besotted with many critical issues. Chief among the issues is poor funding UNESCO suggested or prescribed 26% as what should be annual budget for education but in the last five years, Nigeria had not even attain 5% of it. The table below speaks of the obvious.

**Table 1: Government Annual Budgeting Allocation to Education 1999-2018**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Allocation (Billion)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1999	23	11.2
2000	44.2	8.3
2001	39.9	7
2002	100.2	5.1
2003	64.8	11.8
2004	72.2	7.8
2005	92.6	8.3
2006	166.6	8.7
2007	137.5	6.1
2008	210	13
2009	183.4	7.2
2010	249.1	6.4
2011	356.49	7.5
2012	-	8.4
2013	426.53	8.7
2014	-	10.7
2015	-	9.0
2016	-	6.00
2017	-	6.00
2018	-	7.04

**Sources:** Adapted from Ebisine, (2014). Quality Education in Nigeria; and Ezenaya, (2015); Igoni (2017).

It is regrettable that among some African countries, Nigeria is one of the countries with very low budget for education as can be seen below

**Table 2: Spending on Education (%GNP) for Some African Countries in Comparison to Nigeria**

Country	% GNP	Ratio in Nigeria
Angola	4.90	7.00
Cote D'Ivoire	5.00	7.14
Ghana	4.20	6.00
Kenya	6.50	9.29
Malawi	5.40	7.71
South Africa	7.90	11.29
Tanzania	3.40	4.86
Uganda	2.60	3.71
Mozambique	0.76	5.86
Nigeria	4.10	1.00

**Source:** The African Debt Report by Jubilee 2000 in Ede (2010)

Apart from poor funding other critical issues include decayed infrastructure. About 15-30% of books, facilities, materials and equipment are outdated. Earlier on Okobukola (2008) reported that the general school environment, laboratory and the lecture rooms of all public universities are far below standard... Okoli (2015) is of the view that public universities are without adequate teaching learning facilities and that the ones provided are dilapidated and improvised. In addition to these, inadequate staffing/lecturers, brain drain, out modelled curricula, over population, poor maintenance culture, poor quality students, politicization of education, poor teachers' qualities, corruption, policy of carrying capacity, poor attitude of government to education, federal character policy, difficult access to universities and a host of others. These militate against effective university education in Nigeria.

### **Teacher Education**

Teacher Education is meant to produce qualified teaching manpower to the educational system. It is often said that "no education can rise above the quality of teachers". Teachers are the most important resource in quality education.

Teacher education had witnessed a lot of setbacks. First and perhaps foremost is the problem of attracting candidates into the institution of learning leading to production of teachers. Many candidates are not interested in the teaching profession maybe because of the poor image of teachers. More worrisome is difficulty in recruiting and retaining competent teachers in the teaching profession; this is even a global problem (Ukeje, 1991).

Other critical issues confronting teacher education *inter alia*, include; poor funding, low teachers motivation and morale; poor salary and emolument or remuneration, pedagogy problem, length of training, quality of teaching by teacher education, corruption, examination malpractices, practicum issue and so on. This has impinged negatively on the production of teachers and had affect negatively the educational industry.

### **Private Educational Provision**

Education is a shared enterprise in Nigeria. Private education provision started with the establishment of “Nursery of the infant Church” by Mr and Mrs Williams de Graft in Badagry in 1843 (Ugbechie, 2009). Since then there had been establishment of private schools in Nigeria and had contributed to educational development.

Private schools are operated side by side with public schools. To a large extent the Nation’s policy on education that is operated by Public Schools equally affect private schools. Private Schools in Nigeria providing private education is expected to be well equipped and well managed in good conducive environment, but it is regrettable that like public educational institutions they suffer administrative malpractice, examination malpractice, poor infrastructure, teacher malpractice, profit maximization and so on (Ugbechie, 2009). Some of them run different curriculum from the National Policy on Education. Again, poor quality staffing is the bane of private education provision.

### **Projections on Critical Issues in Nigerian Education for the Future**

A tour de horizon of the perspectives of critical issues in Nigerian Education done previously has a tall tales of woes of Nigerian education. Certain denominators run across various aspects of Nigerian education. Just to mention a few; poor funding, shortage of manpower, poor planning, poor remuneration, low morale and the like are linked to almost all the aspects of Nigerian education, however all hopes, not lost.

One way of addressing pitfalls in Nigerian education is careful planning. Experts in Educational planning should be charged with the responsibility of planning Nigerian Education. In the process of planning, past trend in education should be looked at so as to project to the future (Sanubi & Akpotu, 2015). In any of the developmental plan(s) of Nigeria and vision statement educational growth rate should be clearly articulated. The needs of the country for a particular period should be envisioned and integrated in the plan. In the administration of Nigerian Education; unity of purpose be adopted by Federal, State and Local governments. A synergy be built in planning administration, funding monitoring of education by the three tiers of government.

Educational assessment had been plagued with irregularities. There should be due emphasis on paper qualification. Assessment should be more of practicality than theoretical. There should be drastic move from paper and pencil testing. Stiffer penalties should be prescribed for examination malpractices.

The curriculum of primary and secondary school had failed to address the needs of the society (Mbakwe, 2006). The type of curriculum for the future should capture the needs of the society and the basic essence of education. The mode of instruction should shift from teacher centred to learners centred. The traditional chalk and talk method of teaching should be changed to practicality while, discovering learning should be emphasized.

Educational psychology and counselling is meant to build the behaviour of individuals. It shapes and reshape behaviour and helps in process of career choice. It had remained mere service in schools. It should go beyond school service. Educational psychology and counselling should have a place in school time table. Guidance counsellors be employed and posted to every school. Where the population of a school is so large more than one counsellor be employed, the ratio one counsellor to three hundred students be

emphasized psychological testing of children be done to understand them for proper counselling; this should be across all levels of education.

There is need for government to be involved in early childhood education. To allow only NGOs, individuals, communities with religious bodies to handle this level of education, is to allow certain section of the population to lag behind in educational development. Just as government budget for primary to University education, early childhood education should be inclusive. Mere monitoring of this level of education be done by government.

Government intention is to care for every child educationally, this can be attested by the National Policy on Education and the Nigerian Constitution if this is to be special children should be catered for adequately. Their education should be meaningfully funded; special teachers recruited and well remunerated; with special pay and allowances. All benefactor/beneficiaries of special education should be gainfully employed. There should be discrimination against them.

To drive entrepreneurship and reduce unemployment of youths; art education should be re-invigorated. Youths should be sensitized and encourage to enroll into art education. Special fund should be dedicated to art education. Art education graduate should be employed and those who want to be self-employed should be given start up fund to do so.

Primary and secondary education is central to the entire education. They are the foundations of higher education. With permanent literacy and numeracy in the primary school and acquisition of life skills for life at the secondary school; any Nigerian that had gone through can stand on his/her own. These levels of education should be well planned; the curriculum should encapsulates the needs of the people and the society. Effective teaching and supervision should be made of the education and this level. Enough funds should be ejected into this education. More schools should be built and more qualified teachers should be employed and well remunerated. The examination procedure should be well guided to reduce examination malpractice, besides, effective and functional guidance and counselling should be part of these levels of education.

Technical, vocational, science and technology education are germane to national development. They need to be well planned. Manpower needs for a particular period should be projected into the planning of this education. The inference that can be deduced from Dung-Gwom (2014) is that these education are not well funded; thus they should be adequately funded. Adequate resources, human and materials should be deployed to this level of education. Teaching and learning here should be more practical than theoretical.

There should be a clear departure from the traditional teaching methods of the teacher being a reservoir of knowledge that dishes same to learners. Examination of this level should be more practical than theoretical. Besides, opportunities should be made available for students industrial training or attachment. Students on industrial attachment need to be motivated with stipends. The dichotomy between polytechnic graduates and degree holders in further education and employment needs to be addressed permanently. This will reduce academic and vocational drifts (Doer, 2008). Above all, products of these schooling be gainfully employed and assisted to be entrepreneurs.

University education in Nigeria is suffering from brain drain, defective curriculum, decayed infrastructure and the like. The projection here is that government should fund this sector adequately. There should be measure to up the budgetary allocation to meet the 26% budget recommended by World Bank and UNESCO. Qualified lecturers should be employed and well remunerated. Both infrastructure, equipment, laboratories, libraries should be made to meet world standard. The University teaching should be practically oriented products that can be made to be self-sufficient after school. The various vices; cultism, examination malpractices, corruption of all types be reduced or wiped out. University administrators should be made to be much more accountable.

Teacher education shares in almost all the critical issues in Nigeria to have a better teacher education in Nigeria; the poor image of teachers due to poor remuneration should be tackled. Teachers should be well paid. This is to sensitize the young ones to enroll in teacher education programmes. Besides, teacher education should be well funded and what it takes to produce efficient, resourceful, inspirational teachers that meets world standard or best practices be done. Teaching practice programme be taken seriously. There should be long time and form planning for teacher production in Nigeria.

Government should develop keen interest in private educational provision. Government activities should go beyond formulation policy but see to the implementation. Some private school owners are more interested in revenue derived from the investment. The over bloated curriculum of some of the schools should be checked.

Library and information technology helps facilitate education. The state of libraries in Nigerian institutions is deplorable. Our libraries should be rejuvenated. A lot of fund should be committed to them to get 21<sup>st</sup> century standard. Libraries should be well equipped. Teachers and students should be educated on the use of information and communication technologies. The state of the art information and technology facilities should be provided in schools.

Nigeria should have a definite policy on language education. Efforts should be geared towards improving local language education; more language schools should be built in Nigeria.

## **Conclusion**

There are various critical issues confronting education in Nigeria. The issues range from underfunding, ineffective curriculum, shortage of manpower and equipment / materials, unemployment etc. to remedy all these; education should be well funded; human and material resources should be sourced adequately. Graduates in all the levels of education be given employment to encourage others.

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