

Factors Responsible for the Falling Standard of Education in Tertiary Institutions in Borno State, Nigeria (A Case Study of Maiduguri Metropolitan Council)

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Abstract: *This study investigates the factors contributing to the declining standards of education in tertiary institutions within Borno State. Five objectives and corresponding research questions were formulated to guide the study, including identifying the factors responsible for the declining educational standards. The research employed a field survey design, focusing on lecturers and students from tertiary institutions in Maiduguri. A purposive sampling technique was utilized to select 100 students and 30 lecturers, forming a sample size of 130 participants. A questionnaire comprising 15 questions was developed by the researcher to collect relevant information. Data analysis involved using percentages to analyze the responses. The findings revealed that unqualified teachers and inadequate facilities, equipment, and related resources are significant contributors to the declining standards of education in tertiary institutions. Recommendations from the study include the employment of well-trained and qualified lecturers and the provision of adequately equipped instructional materials to enhance the learning environment in tertiary institutions across Borno State*

Keywords: *Education Standards, Tertiary Institutions, Factors Contributing and Teacher Qualifications.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The history of higher education in Nigeria traces back to 1932 when Mr. C.R.J. Hussey, the Director of Education, proposed significant reforms. Yaba College was formally opened in 1934 during Hussey's tenure as Director of Education, following his comprehensive review of the education system aimed at improving standards gradually. Hussey emphasized the necessity of aligning the educational system with British colonial government recommendations outlined in a 1926 memorandum. This proposal advocated for a complete educational system encompassing primary and secondary education, technical schools, and universities offering subjects like teacher education, medicine, and agriculture to advance community education. In contemporary times, the decline of educational standards in tertiary institutions across Borno State, Nigeria, poses a critical challenge with profound socio-economic implications for the region. This decline results from a

convergence of factors adversely impacting education quality. Borno State, situated in northeastern Nigeria, has endured prolonged security challenges due to activities by insurgent groups like Boko Haram. This insecurity has led to school closures, student and educator displacement, infrastructure destruction, and disruption of academic activities, severely compromising access to quality education (Adams & Smith, 2019). Moreover, financial constraints and underfunding significantly impede maintaining educational quality in Borno State's tertiary institutions. Inadequate budgetary allocations hinder institutions' ability to acquire essential resources, upgrade facilities, and attract qualified faculty members (Ibrahim & Ahmed, 2020). This resource scarcity creates a substandard learning environment, undermining the overall educational experience. Additionally, the phenomenon of brain drain exacerbated by insecurity has further exacerbated the decline in educational standards. Skilled professionals, including educators and researchers, seek safer environments elsewhere, leading to a talent exodus within the academic sector (Ibrahim & Ahmed, 2020). This brain drain results in a shortage of experienced teaching staff, impacting the delivery of quality education and academic mentorship. Furthermore, socio-economic factors like poverty and entrenched cultural norms influence educational outcomes and access to tertiary education. Economic challenges faced by many families in Borno State hinder students' ability to pursue higher education due to financial constraints (Ibrahim & Ahmed, 2020). Additionally, cultural beliefs and gender disparities restrict education access for certain demographic groups, contributing to educational inequalities. Addressing these complex challenges requires concerted efforts to revitalize and enhance educational standards in Borno State's tertiary institutions. This entails strategic investments in education, policies to improve security and infrastructure, curriculum reforms aligned with industry needs, and initiatives promoting inclusivity and diversity within the educational system. This study aims to delve deeper into specific factors contributing to the decline in educational standards, drawing insights from empirical research and stakeholder perspectives to formulate evidence-based interventions aimed at revitalizing higher education in the state

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Study Design

This study employs survey research methodology, which involves collecting and analyzing data from a select group of individuals. The design of the study outlines the plan for conducting the research, focusing on specific individuals, objects, events, or situations of interest, such as within a local government, state, or country.

2.2 Study Population

The study population comprises both staff and students of Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri. The polytechnic has approximately 700 lecturers and 15,900 students. For practical reasons, a sample of 130 respondents was selected, consisting of 100 students and 30 lecturers.

2.3 Sampling Technique

Random sampling was utilized for selecting the sample. This technique ensures that every member of the population has an equal chance of being included in the study.

2.4 Research Instrumentation

A questionnaire was developed to gather data pertinent to the study's objectives. The questionnaire may be closed or open-ended, with respondents providing written responses, marking 'Yes' or 'No,' or selecting from a list of options.

2.5 Validation of Instrument

The questionnaire used in this study was personally crafted by the researcher and validated through review and approval by the supervisor.

2.6 Data Collection Procedure

Questionnaires were distributed randomly to students and lecturers for self-completion. The researcher personally administered and collected the completed questionnaires.

2.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis is crucial in research, involving the process of summarizing large datasets for interpretation. The percentage of responses was calculated using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Number of responses}}{\text{Total number of respondents}} \times 100$$

3.0 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of data obtained by taking the number of percentage of the responses given to each item at the questionnaire one-hundred and thirty (130) copies of the questionnaire were administered to both the lecturers and students of tertiary institutions in Maiduguri. Below is the analysis of the data obtained.

3.2 Research Question one: Does inconsistency of government policy on education contributes to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution?

TABLE 1: Responses on inconsistency of government policy on education

| S/N | Item | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|------------|---|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | Does inconsistency of government policy on education contribute to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution? | 100 (77%) | 30 (23%) |
| 2. | Frequent industrial action (strike) by lecturers is a factor in low-level of education. | 90 (69%) | 40 (31%) |
| 3. | The change in the standard of education is also a factor that contributes to the low level of education. | 110 (85%) | 20 (15%) |
| | Total | 300 (78.7%) | 81 (21.3%) |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

By examining the statements in table 4.1 above, item one which says did inconsistency of government policy on education contributes to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution. 77% of the respondent agreed, while 23% disagreed with the statement, in item two, frequent industrial action (strike) by lecturers is a factor that contributes to the low level of education, almost 85% of the respondent agreed while 15% of the respondents disagreed.

3.3 Research Question two: Does inadequate funding of education by government helps in bringing down the equality of education in tertiary institution?

TABLE 2: Responses on inadequate funding of education by government

| S/N | Item | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|--------------|--|------------------|-----------------|
| 4. | Does inadequate funding of education by government helps in bringing down the quality of education on tertiary institutions? | 95 (73%) | 35 (27%) |
| 5. | Societal attitude toward wealth at the expenses of education is also a factor in falling standard of education. | 100 (77%) | 30 (23%) |
| 6. | Attitude of student toward examination malpractice contribute to the falling standard of education | 120 (92%) | 10 (8%) |
| Total | | 315 (81%) | 75 (19%) |

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

The statement in table 4.2 appears to be true. From item 4, did adequate funding of education by government helps in bring down the quality of education in tertiary institution? About 95 (73%) of the respondent agreed with the statement and 27% disagreed with the statement. In item 5, societal attitude toward wealth at the expense of education is also a factor in falling standard of education, 77% of the respondent agreed with the statement and 23% of the respondent disagreed with the statement. Also, in item 6, attitude of students toward examination malpractice contribute to the falling standard of education. 92% agreed with the statement while 8% disagreed.

3.4 Research Question three: Does inadequate facilities, equipment and related input at the various fields of education contribute greatly to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution?

Table 3: The response on inadequate facilities, equipment and related input at the various field of education

| S/N | Item | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|--------------|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| 7. | Inadequate facilities, equipment and related input at the various fields of education contribute greatly to the falling standard of education in tertiary institutions. | 90 (69%) | 40 (31%) |
| 8. | Proliferation of tertiary institution has an impact on the falling standard of education | 100 (77%) | 30 (23%) |
| 9. | Population explosion in school contributes to the falling standard of education | 70 (54%) | 60 (46%) |
| Total | | 260 (66.7%) | 130 (33.3%) |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

By critically examining the statements above, almost all the respondent agreed with the statement. In item seven, inadequate facilities, equipment and related input at the various field of education contributes greatly to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution, 69% of the respondents agreed with the statement while 31% of the respondent disagreed with the statement. In item eight, proliferation of tertiary institution has an impact on the falling standard of education, about 77% of the respondent agreed with the statement and 23% of the respondent disagreed with the statement. Also, in item nine, population explosion in school contributes to the falling standard of education, about 54% of the respondents agreed with the statement and 46% disagreed with the statement.

3.5 Research Question Four: Does socio-economic background of the student also contribute to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution?

TABLE 4: Response on socio-economic background of the students to falling standard of education

| S/N | Item | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|--------------|---|------------------|-----------------|
| 10. | Socio-economic background of the students is also a factor that contributes to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution. | 110 (85%) | 20 (15%) |
| 11. | Wrong choice of courses by the student has an effect on the standard of education. | 100 (77%) | 30 (23%) |
| 12. | Socio-economic background of parent has an impact on the falling standard of education in tertiary institution. | 105 (81%) | 25 (19%) |
| Total | | 315 (81%) | 75 (19%) |

Source: Field Survey, 2023

By observing the statements in the table 4.4 above, item ten which says socio-economic background of the students is also a factor that contributes to the falling standard of education, 85% of the respondent agreed with the statement and only 15% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Also on the statement that said wrong choice of courses by student has an effect on the standard of education, 77% of the respondents agreed with the statement, and 23% disagreed with the statements. The statement that said socio-economic background of parent has an impact on the falling standard of education in tertiary institution, 81% of the respondents agreed with the statement and 19% of the respondent disagreed with the statement.

3.6 Research Question 5: Does inadequate qualified teachers contribute to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution?

TABLE 5: Response on inadequate qualified teachers toward falling standard of education

| S/N | Item | Agree (%) | Disagree (%) |
|--------------|---|--------------------|-------------------|
| 13. | Does inadequate qualified teachers contribute to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution? | 120 (92%) | 10 (8%) |
| 14. | Poor condition of services of teachers has a role in falling standard of education | 100 (77%) | 30 (23%) |
| 15. | Regionalism, ethnicity and quota system result in falling standard of education in tertiary institution. | 95 (73%) | 35 (27%) |
| Total | | 315 (81.1%) | 55 (14.9%) |

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

By critically observing the statements above, almost all the respondent seems to agree with the statement, which means that the statement is correct. In item thirteen, did inadequate qualified teachers contribute to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution? About 92% of the respondent agreed and only 8% disagreed with the statement. In item fourteen, poor condition of service of teacher has a role in falling standard of education, about 77% of the respondent agreed with the statement and 23% of the respondent disagreed with the statement. Also, in item fifteen, regionalization, ethnicity and quota system results in falling standard of education in tertiary institution, about 73% of the respondent agreed with the statement and 27% of the respondent disagreed with the statements.

3.7 Findings of the Study

1. Inconsistently of government policy on education contributes to the falling standard of education.
2. Inadequate funding of education by government helps in bringing down the quality of education in tertiary institution.
3. Inadequate facilities, equipment’s and related inputs at the various fields of education contribute greatly to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution.
4. Socio-economic background of the student also contributes to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution.

5. Inadequate qualified teachers contribute to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution.
6. Poor condition of services of lecturers has a role in the fallen standard of education in tertiary institution.

3.8 Discussion and findings of the result

Based on the assumption of this research, the data collected has proven that the following factors are responsible for the falling standard of education in tertiary institution in this state.

Thus, inconsistency of government policy on education contributes to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution in Borno State. Table 4.1 answers this statement. The result obtained in the table has shown that the statement really affected the standard of education in the state. In agreement with this statement, Nwagu (2007) say “unfortunately the political survival does not permit any Nigerian government either to have adhere to priorities”. So also, Nwasu (2009) emphasized that “a country that is suffering from unstable and ineffective leadership and a country that is confronted with mass exodus of her skilled manpower and any country whose economy is the bedlam must subject her political, quality of leadership and most importantly about standard of education”. On the statement that says: inadequate funding of education by the government is determinate in the low level of education in tertiary institution. Table 4.2 has made it clear that there is inadequate funding of education by the government. This indicated that the funds for execution of various project and the purchase of instructional materials by the higher institutions is lacking on, not adequate given by the government. Ajayi (2002) is of this view when he stated inadequate funding of education may lead to financial sacrifice, a country is willing to make has a good schools and good teachers for an increasing numbers of students. Also in support of this, Ogu (2002) states that “A country with the highest expenditure on education is inevitably the country with the best educational programmes and the highest standard of living”. When the government cannot provide adequate fund in the education, the quality of education is going to fall. On the statement that says: inadequate facilities, equipment and related inputs at the various fields of education contributes to the falling standard of education. Table 4.3 has made it clear For effective learning to take place, learners must have access to necessary information, materials and resources (like the library). Robertson (2005) defines library as an institution that manages the intellectual products that individual can gain access to readily use. And, in an academic environment, attention is basically focused on academic and non-academic staff, students, researchers and other factors such as lack of interest among students, poor economic background, cultural behavior, religious doctrines, intellectual ability, influence of poor society, etc.

Moreover, the statement that says: socio-economic background of the student is also a factor that contributes to the falling standard of education. Table 4.4 is in support of this statement. Therefore, one is right to say that parents economic profile strongly has effect on the education of their children, some children for the fact that they get adequate financial support from their parents, can perform better while others perform below average or badly due to the inability of their parent to sponsor their education properly, Nwagu (2007) back up this statement by saying there is abundant evidence that money makes enormous different in the quality of education result. Unqualified teachers contribute greatly to the falling standard of education. Table 4.5 has taken care of this statement. It is at a glance from the table that the presence of unqualified teachers in

the educational system has great negative effect on educational standard in our tertiary institutions today. The National Educational Standard in our tertiary institutions today. The National Educational Research Council (1998) remarked the educational system is now serviced by a large number of unqualified teachers, inadequately trained teachers (crash programme) trained but unqualified and trained but obsolete teachers”.

4.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Summary

In summary of the research work, education is an important element in nation development, it is believed that with better education, it is possible to have better food, better housing, better job as well as better standard of living. Education is the passport to a better life and the key to success. One of the major roles of tertiary institution in Borno State like in most developing countries is the supply of trained manpower.

This research started by tracing brief history of tertiary institutions in (Borno state), the research also explains the concept of the falling standard of education in tertiary institution. Based on the topic, the research formulated some assumptions which were tested using the administered questionnaire. Related literature of the topic was also used to serve as the sources of data. The researcher went further to examine the factors contributing to the falling standard of education in tertiary institution in Borno State.

4.2 Conclusion

Based on the analysis carried out in chapter four of this research, it can be observed and concluded that many factors have contributed in a small measure to the falling standard of education in tertiary institutions in Borno State today. The blame for the falling standard of education in tertiary institutions based on my assumption and everybody in the society, after analyzing and explaining the relevant concept that the research contains, obviously standard of education has fallen where the education acquired during the colonial are in measured against the past colonial era. Borno State should not begin to watch at this deadly and monstrous evil called “falling standard of education” in the face we must crush it and stamp it out, if we continue to allow it in its antic stages then, we have created a path for the fall of all sectors of the economy.

This is because education is the important instrument and progress of all societies. In the light of the above, therefore, we ought to be collectively responsible in maintaining the standard of the education.

4.3 Recommendation

Based on the studies, a number of recommendations proposed to lift the standard of education in tertiary institutions in Borno State, are enumerated below:

1. Admission should be strictly being on merit and not on ethnicity quarter system of social background.
2. All revenues of obtaining money from education should explored by the institutions instead of sole dependence on government for grants.

3. Conditions of service of lecturer should be improved to bring about their improvement, commitment and dedication to their work.
4. Some of the institutions offering some courses which are related should be merged in order to point out excellence instead of introducing new courses.
5. Primary and post primary school should be seriously improved for better standard of its product.
6. Authentic data of the educational programmed should be provided and documented in the libraries for educational planners to work on.
7. A concrete and convincing measure should be taken against those practicing a cultism, drug addictions, alcoholism and smoking in the campus.
8. Well trained and qualified lectures should be employed
9. Equipment/instructional material should be well provided to enhance adequate learning.

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