

TRENDS IN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BUDGETARY ALLOCATION TO THE EDUCATION SECTOR FROM 2017-2020 AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES IN NORTH CENTRAL STATES OF NIGERIA

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Abstract: The study examined the federal government budgetary allocations to the education sector from 2017–2020 and ascertained the influence of federal Government budgetary allocations to the education sector from 2017–2020 on the management of Federal Universities in the North Central States. A descriptive survey was adopted. The purposive sampling technique was used to sample the entire population of 68 management staff of 8 federal universities in the North Central States. Trends in Federal Government Budgetary Allocation to Education Sector Observation Schedule (TFGBAESOS) and Federal University Allocation Management Questionnaire (FUAMQ) were employed as instruments. Data were analyzed using simple percentages and mean and standard deviation where the benchmark for ascertaining the adequacy of budgetary allocation to the education sector within 2017-2020 and its implications for the management of Federal universities in the North Central States was put at 26% for RQ1 and 2.5 for RQ 2. The null hypothesis was tested using ANOVA at a 0.05 significance level. The descriptive analysis revealed RQ1 as 7.41%, 7.14%, 7.02%, and 6.48% for 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020. RQ2 revealed among other things that the implications for the management of Federal universities in the areas are the prevalence of incessant strikes, poor execution of projects, and difficulty in staff retention. The study concluded that the Federal Government budgetary allocations to the education sector within 2017-2020 were far below the recommendation made by UNESCO. This poor allocation significantly affected the smooth running of Federal universities in Nigeria.

Keywords: Trends; Federal government; Budgetary allocation; Management; Federal universities; North Central states

1 INTRODUCTION

Budget allocation refers to certain amounts of money set aside to manage an organization's expenses. It sets the highest amount of funding an organization is willing to spend on a given item or program and is the standard that staff authorized to calculate costs for an organization must not exceed [1]. Higher education is a capital-intensive project requiring investment of at least 15% of GDP or 40% of the total education budget [2]. But observation shows that this is not happening in Nigeria.

The decline in funding for Nigerian universities began in 1975/76 when they first had their claims reduced by 20%. Since then, the annual budgetary allocation for higher education in Nigeria has decreased [3]. These researchers revealed that the funding challenges of Nigerian universities are a disastrous consequence of the expansion of the system to meet the growing demand for higher education and the active needs of the modern knowledge economy without a corresponding proportional increase in resources. Regarding the effect of underfunding of educational institution in Nigeria, Halidu argues that the challenge of funding public universities in Nigeria has resulted in poor working conditions and a persistent lack of research and learning facilities for teaching staff and students[4]. staff, as well as a lack of teaching staff due to brain drain. The decline in funding is a result of inadequate budgetary allocation to the education sector and has also led to the fundamental decline of the university system in Nigeria socially, infrastructurally, and intellectually[5]. Accordingly, Olaniyi and Adam argue that financial allocation should aims to improve welfare or quality of life in an appropriate way[6], such as education, health, agriculture, and services. The government allocates an annual budget to Nigeria's academic institutions through the education sector to improve the welfare of higher education in Nigeria. Unfortunately, in Nigeria, our budget for the education sector is falling below documented international standards, and this apparent funding shortfall is causing ineffective management. The performance of public universities in Nigeria has become extremely difficult.

Concerning the difficulty in the operation of higher institution, Ayoko et al argue that African universities are underfunded[7], which has affected the necessary facilities, infrastructure, and human resources needed to create a conducive learning atmosphere. Furthermore, Anyanwu reported that lack of adequate funding in Nigerian universities has resulted in about a 15 to 30% reduction in regular use and maintenance of equipment and most Books in stock at universities are outdated leading to failure to achieve educational goals in Nigeria[8]. Akindojutimi, Adewale, and Omotayo conducted an in-depth study on the impact of federal government intervention in Nigerian universities and found

that since all public universities in Nigeria are dependent on the government for at least 90% of their survival funds[9], the economic recession of the 1980s to significantly impact on university operation. These researchers further revealed that these impacts are due to inadequate infrastructure, staff recruitment, conferences, and research, affecting the overall development of higher education in Nigeria. This has also led public universities in Nigeria to seek funding from alternative sources beyond government budgetary allocations. However, the present study aims to investigate the trends in budgetary allocations of the Federal Government to the education sector from 2017 to 2020 and their implications for the smooth functioning of the Universities Federation in the North Central States of Nigeria.

It is observed that the Federal Government, through the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) and the National Universities Commission (NUC), annually allocates millions of naira to universities for infrastructure development and human resources. Indeed, university funding promotes workforce development in society [10]. However, these funds appear to be insufficient to operate universities in Nigeria [11]. Etor et al report that in 2002[12], the federal government's annual allocation to the education sector showed that 35% was allocated to primary education and 29% to secondary education, while higher education schools (including universities, colleges, and other training institutions) receive a meagre 36% which was extremely low for the effective functioning of public universities in Nigeria, as management complains bitterly.

Management can be described as an organized group that coordinates the execution of an action and an easier course of action that provides someone or a group of people within the organization with all the necessary means necessary to complete the task. This involves being helpful and creating a favourable atmosphere that makes it easier to get work done [13]. Individuals view management from different perspectives depending on the situation and environment. According to Boma-Siaminabo [14], management can be defined as the coordination of all resources of an organization through the process of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling to achieve organizational goals. Boma-Siaminabo further argues that management can also be the direction or direction of people toward the goals or objectives of an organization or business[14]. However, Boris and Jens define "management as the process of planning, organizing, directing, controlling and evaluating to achieve the predetermined goals of an organization through the coordinated use of resources people and materials"[15]. These researchers further summarize that management is the art of achieving desired work with the help of others within a given budget and within a given time frame. This means that the management function goes beyond individual responsibility but is a collective effort of a group of people within the organization.

On the basis of above, Lumen stated that management is a human behavioural process in which managers plan, organize, staff, direct, and control human resources and financial resources[16]. It is in an organized group effort to realize optimally desired individual and collective goals effectively. Also, Boris and Jens stated that "management is the process of planning and organizing activities aimed at ensuring the coordination of human and material resources necessary to achieve the set objectives effectively and efficiently"[15]. The researchers added that resources are human and material resources, i.e. people, both teaching and non-teaching staff, while materials are equipment and infrastructure needed in schools, such as teaching facilities, recreational facilities, general facilities, and student accommodation among others. The provision and appropriate use of infrastructure are largely the responsibility of the management of a scientific institution. The objective of this study is to find out the trend of annual federal government allocation to the education sector from 2017 to 2020 and its impact on the functioning of federal universities in the north-central states of Nigeria.

The management team of the Federal University of Nigeria consists of the Visitor, Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Board of Governors, Registrar, Treasurer, Director of Works, University Librarian, and University Senators. A university's effectiveness in achieving its educational goals rests largely in the hands of its leaders. However, staff and other stakeholders in university education have expressed comments and complaints about the cost and poor quality of graduates in Nigeria. This seemingly poor quality of graduates is due to the poor allocation of resources to university education, as has been noted, among others [17]. Ayoko also pointed out that 15 to 30% of the infrastructure, equipment, and books in our universities are non-functional, obsolete, or dilapidated due to a lack of adequate funding allocation to universities[7]. The researchers also added that most university professors' offices are still far from being in a good condition to facilitate optimal teaching and research. The result is that dilapidated HR offices affect employee productivity. Augustine, Andrew, and Ibrahim found that under-investment in universities impacts the provision of faculty offices, and lecture halls, recruitment of sufficient teaching staff, and the appropriate ratio of teaching to non-teaching staff[18]. Researchers such as Nnabuike and Madu estimate that these impacts the performance and productivity of various groups[19], including management teams at universities in a north-central state in Nigeria. In Nigeria, universities rely primarily on government budgetary allocations for their development priorities. This bill implies that Nigerian universities will not only be unable to support the government in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals but will also continue to lag behind international standards. However, the cause of concern in this study lies in the yet unknown trends in federal government resource allocation to education systems from 2017 to 2020 and its impact on the governance of federal universities in the north-central states of Nigeria.

The federal government's consistent and underappreciated allocation of financial resources to education, especially as it appears to have influenced the administration of federal universities over the years, has become a worrisome discourse among various interest groups and education agencies at the national and international levels. There were complaints from education authorities at the National Universities Commission (NUC), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) about the operation of the universities below the recommended standards in Nigeria. This is seen in many universities, where many teaching staff are concentrated in a single classroom, there is no suitable furniture to facilitate work, and classrooms are equally inadequate and overcrowded. The facilities available in many universities are outdated and the situation is inversely proportional to the

inadequate funding of Nigerian education.

Literature from other geopolitical zones shows that federal government allocations to the education system are an attractive factor in the effective management of public universities in Nigeria, but no known work has shown that such allocation is a factor in the current situation of Federal Universities in the North Central States of Nigeria. Therefore, there is an urgent need in this study to examine the trends in federal government resource allocation to the education sector from 2017 to 2020 and its impact on the performance of federal universities in the north-central states of Nigeria.

2 PURPOSE OF STUDY

This study examines trends in Federal Government financial allocation to the educational sector from 2017-2020 and its implications for the running of Federal Universities in North Central states in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Find out the Federal Government budgetary allocations to the education sector from 2017–2020
2. Ascertain the influence of federal Government budgetary allocations to the education sector from 2017–2020 on the management of Federal Universities in the North Central States in Nigeria.

3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the Federal Government budgetary allocations to the education sector from 2017–2020?
2. How do Federal Government budgetary allocations to the education sector from 2017–2020 influence the management of Federal Universities in the North Central States of Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis will guide the study and will be tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the management staff from different federal universities in North Central on the influence of Federal Government budgetary allocations to the education sector from 2017–2020 on the management of Federal Universities in North Central States in Nigeria.

4 METHODOLOGY

The study employed a quantitative approach involving descriptive research design. Descriptive design according to Omachi focuses more on the “what” than the “why” of the research subject [20]. This design is ideal for this study because it involves gathering and describing data from management staff of Federal Universities to determine the trends in Federal Government Budgetary Allocation of the Educational Sector from 2017-2020 and Its Implications for the Management of Federal Universities in North Central states of Nigeria. This study was carried out in universities across the North Central States of Nigeria which include: Kwara, Kogi, Niger, Benue, Plateau, Nassarawa States, and FCT-Abuja. The area has eight Federal universities namely: University of Ilorin, Federal University, Lokoja, Federal University of Technology, Minna, University of Agriculture, Makurdi and University of Health Technology, Otukpo, University of Jos, Federal University of Lafia, and University of Abuja, FCT Abuja [11]. Federal Universities in this region are characterized majorly by old buildings; school facilities available for instructional delivery are few and not well managed and lecturers’ attrition is high. North Central states were picked for the study due to the state of neglect in these institutions and the urgent need for improvement of education, especially in public universities in the North due to their high level of backwardness in education.

The population of the study comprised 56 management staff which include the Pro-chancellor, Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Bursar, Director of Works, and University Librarian of 8 Federal Universities in the North Central States of Nigeria. The choice of this population study is based on the fact that these staff members are in charge of the daily administration of the Federal Universities and as such are in the best position to describe the situation in their various schools. A total enumeration technique was used to study the entire 56 management staff because the population size is accessible and manageable.

Two research instruments were employed to gather data for this research, namely Trends in Federal Government Budgetary Allocation to Education Sector Observation Schedule (TFGBAESOS) and Federal University Allocation Management Questionnaire (FUAMQ). TFGBAESOS contains the approved national budget and the approved portion allocated to the education sector in comparison with UNESCO's recommendation of 26% from 2017-2020 where the respondents can observe and report the adequacy status of the allocation within the period. FUAMQ is a 10-item instrument structured on a four-point option of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). FUAMQ dealt with items on the implications of Federal Government Budgetary Allocation to the Educational Sector from 2017-2020 for the Management of Federal Universities in the North Central States of Nigeria. The instruments TFGBAESOS & FUAMQ used for data collection in this study were face-validated by three experts, two from Educational Management and Business Education and one from the Library and Information Science Department, all in the Faculty of Education, Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Ekiti state. The experts examined the instruments based on their relevance, format suitability, and clarity. Based on validates’ corrections and comments, amendments were made and the final copies of the instruments were produced.

TFGBAESOS was seen to be reliable since it had been debated upon by members of the National Assembly several times before the final ascent. To determine the reliability of FUAMQ a trial test was conducted using 30 administrative staff from Ekiti State University, Ekiti State of Nigeria which is outside the study area to establish the internal consistency of

the instrument, and the responses were analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha correlation coefficient and the result showed 0.94. This is high enough for the items to be considered reliable for the study.

TFGBAESOS takes the form of a checklist which was used by researchers to observe the approved national budget and the approved budgetary allocations to education as well as their percentages in comparison with UNESCO recommendations. This assists the researchers in determining the adequacy status of the budgetary allocations to the education sector from 2017 to 2020. The research assistants were also used in the collection of data. The research assistants had a meeting with the researchers on the purpose of the study and on how to ensure an effective response from the respondents to ensure the completion and return of the copies of the questionnaires that were given to them.

The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive and parametric statistics (percentage, mean, standard deviation). Specifically, the percentage was used to answer research question one; mean and standard deviation were used for research question two. 26% recommended by UNESCO was used as a cut-off mark for the determination of the adequacy of budgetary allocation to the education sector within the period of 2017-2020. Budgetary allocation to the educational sector below 26% was considered inadequate (poor) while those allocations from 26% and above was considered adequate. In the analysis of research question two, the benchmark for mean ratings was put at 2.50. The null hypothesis was tested using ANOVA at a 0.05 significance level. The null hypothesis was accepted when the P-value was less than the alpha value, but where the p-value was greater than the alpha value, the null hypothesis was rejected.

5 RESULTS

The data were analyzed and presented according to the research questions and hypothesis that guided the study.

Research Question one: What are the Federal Government's annual budgetary allocations to the education sector from 2017–2020?

Table 1 Analysis of Federal Government Budgetary Allocations to the Education Sector From 2017–2020

Years	Total Budget	Allocation to Education	Percentage	UNESCO Recommendation	Remarks
2017	7.44 Trillion	540.89 billion	7.41%	26%	Poor
2018	9.12 Trillion	605.22 billion	7.14%	26%	Poor
2019	8.92 Trillion	634.5 billion	7.02%	26%	Poor
2020	10.59 Trillion	706 billion	6.48%	26%	Poor

Source: Field work 2022

Table 1 shows the Federal Government budgetary allocations to the education sector from 2017–2020. The table, it was revealed that in the year 2017, the approved total national budget was 7.44 trillion naira and 540.89 billion naira which was 7.41% of the total budget allocated to the education sector below the recommendation of UNESCO. The table also revealed that in the year 2018, the approved total national budget was 9.12 trillion naira, and only 605 billion naira which was 7.14% of the total budget was allocated to the education sector below the recommendation of UNESCO. The table also revealed that in the year 2019, the approved total education budget was 8.92 trillion naira, and only 634 trillion naira which was 7.02% of the total budget was allocated to the education sector below the recommendation of UNESCO. The table also revealed that in the year 2020, the approved total national budget was 10.59 trillion naira, and only 706 billion naira which was 6.48% of the total budget was allocated to the education sector below the recommendation of UNESCO.

Research Question 2: How do Federal Government budgetary allocations to the education sector from 2017–2020 influence the management of Federal universities in the North Central States of Nigeria?

Table 2 Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses of Staff on Influence of Federal Government Budgetary Allocation to Education Sector From 2017-2020 on Management of Federal Universities

S/N	Items	N	Mean	St.D	Decision
1	Incessant strikes	56	3.32	0.81	Agree
2	Poor structure of staff salary	56	2.93	0.83	Agree
3	Poor provision of classrooms by the management	56	3.41	0.83	Agree
4	Poor quality equipment	56	1.93	0.26	Disagree
5	Inadequate office accommodation	56	3.20	1.09	Agree
6	Poor execution of projects in schools	56	3.63	0.49	Agree
7	Poor attention to school plant maintenance	56	1.55	0.93	Disagree
8	Staff attrition	56	2.64	1.10	Agree
9	Ineffectiveness of general administration	56	2.57	1.16	Agree
10	Difficulty in staff retention	56	3.41	0.85	Agree
	Grand Mean	56	2.86	0.84	Agree

Source:Fieldwork 2020

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of the effect of federal government budgetary allocations to the

education sector in 2017-2020 on the performance of federal universities in North Central states of Nigeria. The data shows that the main influences are poor implementation of projects in schools, poor provision of classrooms by management, difficulties in retaining staff, constant strikes and insufficient office space with funds 3.63, 3.41, 3.41, 3.32 and 3.20, while low quality of equipment and Low attention paid to maintenance of school facilities, with means of 1.93 and 1.55, do not have a major effect of federal government budget allocations to the education sector in 2017-2020 on the performance of federal universities in North Central states of Nigeria.

Test of Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of the management staff from different federal universities in North Central on the influence of Federal Government budgetary allocations to the education sector from 2017–2020 on the management of Federal Universities in North Central States in Nigeria.

Table 3 Summary of ANOVA on Mean Ratings of Management Staff from Different Federal Universities in North Central on the Influence of Federal Government Budgetary Allocations to Education Sector from 2017–2020 on the Management of Federal Universities in North Central States in Nigeria

S/N	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	3.357	7	0.480	0.701	0.671	Not significant
Within Groups	32.857	48	0.685			

Significant at a 0.05 level

Table 3 shows that the F value of 0.701 is significant at 0.671. Since this significance level of 0.671 is higher than the significance level of 0.05 at which the null hypothesis was tested, the null hypothesis is confirmed. Thus, there was no significant difference in the mean rating of executives from various federal universities in North Central on the impact of the 2017-2020 federal government budget allocation to the education sector on the management of federal universities in North Central States, Nigeria.

6 DISCUSSIONS

6.1 Federal Government Budgetary Allocations to Education Sector from 2017–2020

The results reveal that the budgetary allocation trends to Nigeria's education sector over time were declining concerning recommendations by UNESCO (26%). This indicates that universities in this geopolitical region may not meet her overall goals with respect to poor allocation from the federal government of Nigeria. The result is the poor quality of human and material resources in place, having to contend with the level seen across universities within that region. The discovery by Lucky aligns with present finding that the budget to support university education in Nigeria is substandard internationally which has resulted in an unclear realization of Nigerian educational objectives[21]. The revelation of Dimunah lend credence to this finding when stated that one of the major factors that limit effective control in the university administration is a shortage of funds to run its affairs[22]. This insight underscores that the resources available are insufficient to absorb the growth in student enrolment hence, the underfunding of the education sector has no doubt had a devastating toll on teaching, research, and community services. It is based on these reasons that researchers such Ekpoh et al stated that from the eighties to date[23], students in tertiary institutions are too many and cumbersome to be managed with poor funding to the education sector.

The present finding exonerates the discovery of Osuji that economic outlay is a necessity within the provision of school facilities in tertiary institutions of studying[24]. The writer stated that to create a suitable environment for teaching and learning, necessary substances and gadgets are imperatively needed. Shaibu and Isah highlighted the centrality of economic provision inside the advancement of tutorial targets once they observed that the difficulty of educational financing is the critical pivot'[25]. That is because; the critical issue of the character, quantity, satisfaction, and efficacy of the academic system in large part depends on the extent in addition to the appropriateness and management of the economic provision. Osarenren-Osaghae and Irabor examine the supply and adequacy of human and fabric belongings for the teaching and learning of talent-based publications in Nigerian public universities[26]. The finding, among others, becomes that: the human and fabric resources at the floor for the coaching and learning of skill-based courses in Nigerian public universities did not match the minimum trendy requirement encouraged by the National Universities Commission (NUC) because of the inadequacy of finances to training[31]. Arogundade investigated the problems of facilities in South West Nigerian universities and the way forward[27]. The purpose is to investigate the adequacy of facilities in South West Nigerian universities. The finding showed that the monetary aid of the universities was inadequate, that the universities were no longer supplied with adequate centres, and that students and groups of workers' preservation lifestyle contributed to the destruction of the available facilities.

6.2 Influence of Federal Government Budgetary Allocations to Education Sector from 2017–2020 on the

Management of Federal Universities in North Central States in Nigeria

The findings revealed that the major influence of federal government budgetary allocations to the educational sector from 2017-2020 on the running of federal universities in North Central states in Nigeria is poor execution of projects in schools, poor provision of classrooms by the management, difficulty in staff retention, incessant strikes, and inadequate office accommodation. This finding implies that the products of such universities may not be able to perform well in their places of work and at the same time with the international requirements when demanded abroad. This seems to be true because of the apparent inadequacy of educational resources among the Federal Universities in the North Central States in Nigeria. This finding is exemplified by some Nigerian schools where classes took place outside the normal classrooms like under the trees and in some cases, outside the school compound. One may say that the provision of adequate and qualified teachers should be a deliberate effort of both government and heads of schools because the successful administration of educational institutions is possible with qualified and dedicated teachers, well-equipped schools, and expansion of schools to accommodate the increasing enrolment of students and a co-operative community incorporating parents of students. This finding is consistent with the findings of Augustine, Andrew, and Ibrahim when revealed that there is inadequate funding of universities and this affects the provision of academic staff offices, lecture halls for undergraduate students, recruitment of appropriate lecturers, and the adequate ratio of teaching to non-teaching staff in North Central Federal Universities in Nigeria[18]. The findings also correspond with that of Augustine who equally observed that the prevalence of incessant strikes, poor execution of projects in schools, and ineffectiveness of general administration are orchestrated by underfunding of the university in Nigeria[5]. The finding is also supported by Nmadu and Khalil who revealed that difficulty in retraining staff[28], existing staff attrition, and prevailing inadequate office accommodation are the effects of poor allocation to university education in Nigeria. Similarly, Shaibu et al [29] and Nwankwo et al [30] stated that most facilities in Nigerian schools are in a dilapidated state due to a lack of funds for consistent maintenance and that most tertiary institutions of learning in the country are living in their past glories. Such situations affect effective delivery, making the process rigorous and cumbersome for teachers and students. Ayoko et al noted that the inadequacy of instructional facilities due to inadequate funds for the educational sector is a major problem facing the Nigerian educational system[7]. The facilities in schools are grossly inadequate to match the growing student population which is poorly maintained.

7 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and the discussion that followed, the researchers concluded the study that the Federal Government budgetary allocations to the education sector within 2017-2020 were poor and that the recommendation made by UNESCO should be considered. These poor budgetary allocations greatly affect the management of Federal universities in the effective administration of the North Central States of Nigeria. The study also concluded that the poor budgetary allocations manifest in poor execution of projects in schools, poor provision of classrooms by the management, difficulty in staff retention, incessant strikes, and inadequate office accommodation. It was also concluded that there is no difference across the different federal universities in North Central, Nigeria in terms of the poor federal government budgetary allocations. This conclusion implies that there cannot be effective administration and actualization of educational objectives in the face of inadequate financing of education in the country.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above conclusion, the following recommendations are made;

1. The Federal Government should increase the financial allocation to the educational sector in Nigeria in the subsequent years as this will go a long way to improve the productivity of Nigerian universities to meet the global challenge.
2. University management should come up with strategies to leverage their source of internal revenue and save costs and strategize to supplement the effort of the federal government in order to improve the effectiveness of the administration of universities in Nigeria.
3. University management should explore online technologies to complement the inadequate physical infrastructures to deliver effective teaching learning and research activities.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

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