



Approaches to Educational Planning in the 21st Century for National Development

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Abstract

This paper looked at approaches to educational planning in the 21st century for national development. It view educational planning as a process of preparing a set of decisions about educational enterprise in such a way that the goals and objectives of education will be sufficiently realized in the future with the available resources. The key areas of educational planning were discussed in the paper. The paper delved into rationale for educational planning, processes of educational planning, and approaches to educational planning. The paper galvanized into the main approaches relating educational planning which are social demand approach, manpower requirement approach, cost benefit approach and alternative approach (synthetic). There advantages, disadvantages and steps in applying the main approaches in educational planning were discussed. The paper concluded that that no particular approach to educational planning is the best for all. The following recommendation were made: Increase teachers effectiveness, proper data collection should be carried out according to the country's sectors to ascertain the nearly accurate manpower demand of the different sectors in the country, most of the factor that impedes the implementation of good education programmes in funding. So adequate funding should be made available for educational sector and

adequate statisticians should be trained in order to collect data organized, analyze and come up with where the education system needs to focus on.

Keywords: Approaches, Educational, Planning, 21st Century, National Development

Introduction

The Nigerian education system has undoubtedly encountered a number of significant impediments in the last few decades and it continues to struggle with the implementation and assurance of educational and teaching quality because of lack of effective planning. A shortage of accurate statistical data, finances, qualified planners, poor economic performance, unstable governing structures, political interference and general instability have all contributed to low quality in educational planning. Thus, educational planning is the process of setting out in advance, strategies, policies, procedures, programmes and standards through which an educational objective (or set of objectives) can be achieved. It is a detailed and systematic process; it just does not happen by chance. It is goal-oriented: it is directed at achieving a set of educational objectives. Educational planning strives to research, develop, implement and

advance policies, programs and reforms within educational institutions.

It is against this backdrop that the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme was introduced by the then Administration of General Olusegun Obasanjo in 1976 to cater for the educational needs of all Nigerian children who were of school age in the bid to meet their right to education failed due to poor planning which has to do with provision of inadequate facilities, funds, trained personnel and so many other factors. The Country's economic sector remains retarded due to inadequate training of appropriate manpower that will fit into her development plan (Emechubie, 2021).

Education is also seen as a process of acquiring knowledge, skills, values and attitude through formal or informal instruction training, or experience. It is a fundamental human right and a key driver of personal development, social progress, and economic growth.

Education plays a crucial role in shaping individuals intellectual, emotional, and social development, empowering them to reach their full potential and contribute meaningfully to society. In fact, education is the key that unlocks the door for the development of any nation. It is the instrument that facilitates political, economic, social and technological development of a country. For education to play its role on the transformation of a nation, it needs to be adequately and effectively planned because a faulty educational planning can jeopardize a country's development for decades (UNESCO, 2024). Therefore the importance of educational planning cannot be over emphasized. In a nutshell, education is a transformation process that empowers individuals, enriches communities, and drives progress and innovation in society. It is a fundamental human right that should be accessible, inclusive and of high quality for all individuals; regarding of their background or circumstances.

CONCEPT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

Educational planning according to Azunwena and Uchena (2021) is a process of preparing a set of decisions about educational enterprise in such a way that the goals and objectives of education will be sufficiently realized in the future with the available resources. The word 'educational planning' has lost the undertones it had earlier of infringement with individual liberties and is becoming increasingly accepted by all as part of the vocabulary of development, each country having its own type of planning within its own political system. In what follows, planning refers to the system a country adopts of forecasting its needs and setting up a framework, or alternative frameworks, of national action to meet them. It deals with matters which are subject to forecast and to substitution and can never cover the whole policy. A sudden policy decision to devalue the currency or to enter a common market may have more important effects on economic development and social structure than the most detailed ten-year plan (Babalola, 2023).

Educational planning is a systematic process of setting goals, defining objectives and developing strategies to achieve desired educational outcomes. It involves analyzing future trends, and challenges, and designing programs and initiatives to address those needs effectively. Educational Planning aims to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently, programs are implemented effectively, and outcomes are evaluated to improve the quality and relevance of education. Emechuble (2021)

enumerated the following reasons which educational planning is necessary in every school organization.

- It helps management to clarify focus and research their organization development and prospects.
- It provides a local framework within which the educational system can develop and pursue strategies.
- It plays vital role in helping to avoid mistake or recognized hidden opportunities.
- It enables educational managers to understand more clearly what they want to achieve, how to achieve it and when to achieve it.

Based on these reason's it could be said that educational planning involves the process of identifying educational needs, the direction which education should take and how to implement the plans. To further stress the relevant of implementation of plan, UNESCO (2024) asserts that preparation of a comprehensive plan will not guarantee success but effective implementation will. Therefore it is necessary to pan education, implement plan, and evaluate the planning process for attainment of educational goals at different levels of education.

Therefore, the concept of educational planning is to identify what the school organization wants to do by using questions which are “where are we today? Where are we going? Where do we want to go? How are we going to get there? It is on the basis of answering these questions that made planning one of the most essential functions of educational administrators and planners. It should be noted that education must be planned for in order to attain the goals of education in Nigeria.

Obi (2023) Summarize the needs for educational planning to include five key areas:

ENHANCE CHECKS:

In all formal organizations such as the school system, those who see to the realization of set goals cannot achieve their aims effectively without a constant check on their subordinates and all other stakeholders in the business of schooling. The educational managers can only do this by the aid of a carefully drawn plan.

Such plans are used to connect loopholes, give directive, and maintain a focus on the objectives accomplishments.

FOCUS ON OBJECTIVES:

It is on records that any authentic education planning has set goals and objective it wishes to accomplish at a stipulated period. It is therefore obvious that, the major concern of such plans will also be to concentrate on the achievable objective and ensure their realization. Every educational plan has set objectives, and the planners always struggle to include all aspects of the education plan objectives and seriously work towards realizing such objectives.

CORRECT A WRONG FORM OF EDUCATION:

There is a great need to plan education in conjunction with societal needs. This in effect could address the problems of wrong choice of educational system. For instance, the educational system left by some colonial masters to the African people did not address the need of the indigenous African's nation. The lopsided colonial education increased the numbers of uneducated unemployment, which results when people indulge in studying courses that have no immediate relevance to the societal needs.

NEED FOR NON –FINANCIAL PLANNING:

The saying that money does not supply an answer to every problem in education enterprise calls for effective educational planning. Therefore, at this point educational planning becomes inevitable as it aims at using and coordinating all the scarce human/materials for school goals attainment. Outside financial difficulties education sector of the economy faces a lot of other problems such as lack of adequate and competent teaching personnel long period of time required for training of teachers, lack of competent industries to handle constructions, furnishings and production of teaching facilities. Therefore, for Nigerian education system to achieve its set goals/ objective non-financial resources need to be taken seriously while planning education for Nigeria

FINANCIAL DEMANDS HIGHER THAN REVENUE:

In the face of dwindling economic situation with educational budgets and revenue far less than demands of services to be rendered in education at this situation,

the educational planners would be required to sit down to plan out how to enhance education with meager revenue. Population explosion which characterized the expansion in schools enrolment, calls for strategic planning to enable education as a public good to be made accessible to school children. To spread available resources over more and more students made planning a needful exercise, though this would be done at the expense of educational quality.

RATIONALE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

Educational planning is very needful step towards progress and goals attainment in education enterprise. It is always hard to obtain results on any educational programme not well planned and implemented. According to Osareren and Omoike (2023), planning education could be beneficial to school organization in many ways such as:

- Increase efficiency of school organization
- Reduce risks in modern organization/ activities
- Facilitates proper coordination within organization.
- Planning aids in organizing all available resources in school organization.
- Planning gives right direction to the organization.
- Planning helps the organization to achieve its objectives
- Planning motivates school personnel
- Planning helps in decision making

PROCESSES OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

In the words of Babalola (2023) state that the process of Educational planning is a complex one involving the interaction of three (3) distinct bodies, namely;

- I. The policy or legislature
- II. The technical or professional planner and
- III. The administration which is commonly referred to as bureaucracy.
- iv. The policy or legislature – represent the government of the day at the time of the plan. This body gives directives on duration of the plan which are prone to be politically based.
- v. The technical planners is responsible for analysis of the education system, making available projections for enrollment, physical facilities, funds and personnel required for an education project.

- vi. The Bureaucracy – this constitutes the executing channel of educational planning which often times create serious bottleneck to plan implementation.

Azunwena and Uchenna (2021) identified phases of planning process in education as follows:

1. **Plan Making:** This is the initial stage of the planning process which the stakeholders express their desires and needs.
2. **Plan Formulation:** At this stage, a committee made up of the professionals in the field of planning and education sector are put in action to brainstorm and formulate plans.
3. **Plan Implementation:** This is the most crucial stage in the process. At this point the formulated plan is put into an action based on the availability of human and material resources.
4. **Plan Evaluation:** This stage involves assessing the extent to which the objectives of the plan have been accomplished. It serves as a forum for examining the weak and strong points in the plan projections and problems encountered during implementation stage.
5. **Feedback:** This is the stage in the planning process that links the evaluation with plan – making. This is the evidence to show that planning process is cyclic in nature. This stage present the success and failure recorded at the implementation state which helps the planners in the beginning of another plan on how to improve and rectify the problems that resulted in failure.

APPROACHES TO EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

Before considering the approaches to education, several factors should be taken into consideration to ensure effective planning and implementation and those factors are state by Babalola (2023) as follows:

1. **Economic Indicators:** Analyzing economic factors such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth, employment rates, industry trends, and income levels can help determine the types of skills and qualifications that are in demand in the labour market and grade the development of relevant educational programs.
2. **Demographic Trends:** Understanding the demographic characteristics of the target population, such as age, gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status, is

essential for identifying the specific educational needs and demands of the community.

3. **Social Factor:** Considering social factors such as cultural norms, values, beliefs and societal challenges is crucial for addressing the broader social needs and demands of the population and ensuring the educational programs are relevant and responsive to the community.
4. **Technological Advancements:** Recognizing the impact of technology on education and training is important for leveraging innovative tools and platforms to enhance learning outcomes, expand access to education and improve the overall quality of educational programs.
5. **Stakeholder's Engagement:** Involving key stakeholders such as students, parents, teachers, employers, policy makers, and community members in the planning process is essential for gaining insights, feedback, and support for educational initiatives and ensuring that programs are aligned with the needs and expectations of the stakeholders.
6. **Resources Availability:** Assessing the availability of resources such as funding, infrastructure, personnel, and materials is critical for determining the feasibility and sustainability of educational programs and ensuring that resources are allocated effectively to achieve the desired outcome.

By considering these factors before applying the different approaches to education, policy makers and planners can develop well-informed and strategic educational plans that address the specific needs and demands of the population, drive economic growth, and promoted social development.

On the other hand, an approach refers to a particular methods, strategy or way of addressing a problem, task or situation. In the context of education or any other field, an approach is a systematic way of thinking, planning and executing actions to achieve specific goals or objectives. Approaches provide a structured framework for organizing activities, making decisions, and guiding processes towards desired outcomes. The main approaches of relating educational planning to development planning which are in use are set out below:

1. Social demand approach
2. Manpower requirement approach

3. Cost benefit approach
4. An alternative approach (synthetic)

SOCIAL DEMAND APPROACH

According to the social demand approach education is considered to be a consumer good that should be available to all as soon as possible. This method takes educational needs in terms of the current demand for education at the different levels and projects them on the basis of population increases, age distribution, and long-term national or social goals and on the basis of what is known about state and consumer preferences for education. Among such goals and preferences are universal literacy, universal compulsory primary education, and cultural objectives. The stress is upon education infrastructure for development purposes, and as an end in itself. The financial implications of these targets are then considered. The social demand approach can therefore be regarded as a traditional approach to education planning in applying this method; planners consider strategies that will enable them make adequate provision for everyone who is qualified and willing to receive education irrespective of the manpower requirement (Okwori and Ede, 2022).

Social demand approach to educational planning solicits that education has to be provided for every individual who is interested, qualified and express desire to acquire any type of level of schooling in this approach; the planning of education is geared towards satisfying the private demand of students/parent's for education. This is the approach which education is planned to cater for public demand for school places. Social demand approach to education planning view education as a service which is demanded by public just like any other goods and services like hospitals, road, water and electricity. For instance, the leaders of the newly independent nation Nigeria in the 1960s aimed at satisfying the demands for education by the people because of its political importance (Okwori and Ede, 2022). The idea of free and compulsory education at the primary level in the late 1950s and 1960s even in the 1970s as experimented by the military Government were more of a response to the social demands by pupils and parents rather than a response to the challenge of development.

Furthermore, the social demand approach to educational planning has three major short coming as highlighted by (Okwori 2021).

1. It is capital intensive
2. It places too much emphasis on population for education at the expense of proper costing and quality.
3. It leads to one-sided production of man-power

The implication of social demand to educational planning according to Azunwena and Uchena (2021) is that, the type of education, levels of education and demographic data are put into consideration. Based on the assumption of the social demand that education is a consumption rather than investment food, a fundamental right of the people. Osareren and Omoike (2023) highlighted the limitations of the approach to include:

1. The approach has no control over factors such as the price of education
2. The approach has no control over absorptive capacity of the economy for trained personnel.
3. The approach is poor because it does not guaranteed effective /economic distribution of resources.

Thus, it is on this basis that the social demand approach is referred to as the aggregate demand for education. It is the sum total for the demand of education by all individuals at a given place and time under prevailing cultural, political and economic situation. The social demand approach became popular among African leader when they started to realize the need to meet the demand for education by the citizen and the need to use education as means of mobilization. The importance was also highlighted when the United Nations declared education as a fundamental “Right” of everyone and request nations to provide free education at primary levels (Omoike, 2013).

STEPS IN APPLYING THE SOCIAL DEMAND APPROACH

1. We should examine the size of the age group relevant to the level of Education i.e Primary and Secondary.
2. Extend the levels of the age groups that are likely to attain the levels needed for entry.

3. Consider how many of those qualified that should be assumed to enter school.
4. Decide on the basis of assumption the future length of study.

ADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL DEMAND APPROACH

1. It offers everyone the chance to receive education and acquire the related benefit.
2. It promotes literacy in the country.
3. It tends to enhance political participation of citizens and can lead to national unity.
4. It provides forum for inculcating national ideas.
5. It can be politically rewarding to a country on international basis because some international organizations attach importance to high literacy rates among member countries.

DISADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL DEMAND APPROACH

1. Data problem of obtaining demographic
2. The crucial issue of resource allocation in the country is ignored, because resources are allocated to education to the detriment of other sectors.
3. There is the problem of ignoring the pattern and type of manpower required for development programmes.
4. The current graduate unemployment is a result of learning on this approach of over producing with considering manpower needs.
5. This approach can water down the standard of education because it is likely that the limited resources will be spread over the large population of students.

MANPOWER REQUIREMENT APPROACH

The manpower requirement approach educational planning is generally concern with the demand for economy of any country. Okwori (2021) posits it to be an approach which aims at developing those skills that are in severe shortage in the economy. It also aims at planning for future manpower requirement to increase the rate of economic development. The manpower requirement approach has great

relevance to developing countries like Nigeria because of the persistent shortage of the right kind and number of workers. Through this approach, it is possible to forecast the number of people that would be needed in a country for specific employment sectors over time. Severally, Nigeria has made efforts to use this approach in planning manpower requirements (Okunamiri, 2019). The approach aims at striking a balance of demand and supply of educated manpower in the labour market as the main focus of manpower planners. The manpower requirement approach educational planning is based on the view that any nation with plans or aspirations for economic development has to consider the preparation of its human agents of development. The rationale here is that, it is the trained manpower of a country that must guide both its educational and development decision as a whole. This implies that for any country to develop economically, socially and politically, it must have the manpower to its objectives.

This approach states that manpower is changeable and can be customized according to the social, technical and economic development of the society. Manpower is the most forceful, significant and active function of educational system of any nation. In other words, this approach is based on the conception that the education system is primarily called upon to supply the economic system with the qualified personnel required at all levels. Thereby, this approach focuses on the vocationalization of education, and other ideas such as skill-based education and multiple educational courses leading to the fulfillment of manpower requirement of the nation. The manpower approach is a method that is associated with the development of human resources; therefore, it calls for conscious projection of the relevant educational facilities that can make the training of such personnel realistic, therefore human resources could be regarded as the energies, skills and knowledge of the people which when developed can be used for production of goods and services.

STEPS TO FOLLOWED WHILE ADOPTING MANPOWER APPROACH

1. Categorise the economy into sectors, such as Agricultural, Industry, Commerce and Health.
2. Prepare an inventory of manpower for the current year in the various sectors in relation to educational requirements for each of the occupation in the sectors.

This provides a basis for the estimation of future requirement and supply of manpower by educational qualification.

3. Determine the size of the labour force for the forecast year based on projected. Requirement by the various sectors, addition of these estimates amount to the total labour force projection for the country.
4. Allocate the total employment for the forecast year among the different categories of occupational classification. The aggregate constitutes the stock of manpower that will be required in the economy for the forecast year by occupational categories.
5. Convert data on occupational categories into requirements according to various levels and types of education within the system of education. Through this it is possible to relate occupation to educational supply of personnel with each main type of qualification for the forecast year, on the basis of present stock, expected outflows or graduates from the school system.
6. Estimate the anticipated supply of personnel with each main type of qualification for the forecast year, on the basis of present stock, expected outflows or graduates from the school system.
7. Calculate the changes in the annual outflow from the different levels or types of education that could create balance in the forecast year between what is required and what could be supplied, using the current educational output as basis.
8. Estimate the enrolment in each level or type of education that are needed to achieve the required annual outflow.

ADVANTAGES OF THE MANPOWER APPROACH

1. It allows realistic evaluation of the relationship between education and the manpower needed by the country.
2. This is important because in a developing country every effort needs to be directed towards providing manpower that can enhance
3. Advancement. The planner's attention is focused on the key educational areas that can contribute to the progress of the society.
4. With the manpower method rational application of available resources could be made to limit wastage.

5. It could also help to curtail the problem of unemployment and minimize related crimes.

DISADVANTAGES OF THE MANPOWER APPROACH

1. Most of the variables needed to be considered are often difficult to quantify. It is difficult to estimate in the country, the G.D.P. because some people are involved in more than one occupation.
2. Lack of clear-cut relationship between education and occupation, the result is that we have engineers teaching and teachers in manual jobs. Hence it is difficult for planners to project the manpower required on the basis of education for the purpose of recommending what our institutions should provide, or produce.
3. The needs and values of the people tend to be ignored by this approach, due to the emphasis on national development.
4. Data is difficult to get so projection on long-term basis is not easy.
5. It has a tendency to underestimate or overestimate the required manpower when planning using this approach.

COST BENEFIT RATE OF RETURN APPROACH

Education is now generally recognized as a form of investment in human beings. It yields both economic and non-economic benefit as a result it contributes to the wealth of any nation by increasing the productive capacity of the people. Tolutope (2010) noted that, Cost benefit approach looks at each level of education as investment in human beings with the purpose that the returns will help to improve the whole economy. The cost benefit analysis is the approach to planning that suggests a careful evaluation of the various alternatives to a problem in terms of the cost and benefits before making a decision on what steps to take. The differences in job cadres at the point of employment and variations of wages/ salaries paid to workers suggest the differences from the kind of education they all receive. It is a mode of analysis of current relationship between education and income. (Tulotope 2010) says education is perceived by the approach from two angles, namely:

- I. The social rates of return
- II. The private rate of return

The social rates of returns stress the benefit to be derived by the state of investing in a particular form of education. The cost of education is borne by the society as a whole, and can be calculated by equating the total present value earning of an average educated person before tax with benefits to be gained from alternative investments, in physical capital. The private rates of return – This is the investment by private individual and expected benefits for acquiring a particular type of education. This calculated by equating the direct and out of pocket costs of students plus earnings forgone by than while studying, to the present value of earning after tax e.g direct costs + pocket money + forgone earning. Economists have proposed that just as the cost benefit tool is used to assess profitability of industrial ventures so also can the cost benefit tool analysis be used to assess educational investments (Tolupte, 2010).

ADVANTAGES OF COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

1. It provides the planner information on the relationship between education and the labour market.
2. It portrays the picture of the economic consequences of alternative educational policies.
3. It can be used to get information about the different cost of different education and information on the balance between supply and demand of the various categories of educated manpower.
4. It provides useful information for making rational decisions.
5. It focuses our attention on the need for a constant evaluation of our educational programmes with special emphasis on the cost of the programmes.

DISADVANTAGES OF COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

1. Failure to deal with non-monetary return.
2. Difficulty of establishing a comparative value of similar monetary sums for different people.
3. Failure of the analysis to always identify the best possible programme.
4. Lack of attention to the problem of student's unemployment.
5. The intangible nature of many cost and benefit make it difficult to apply this approach.

6. The age earning profile that forms the basis of our calculation is deficient.
7. Over emphasis on economic benefit over other emphasis.

AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH (SYNTHETIC)

In national educational planning, the alternative approach involves exploring innovative and non-traditional methods for delivering education and training programs to address the diverse needs of the population. This may include leveraging technology to expand access to education, partnering with private sector organizations to enhance skills development, or adopting new pedagogical approaches to improve learning outcomes. By embracing alternative approaches to educational planning, policy makers can promote inclusivity, innovation, and excellence in education, driving sustainable development and progress for the nation as a whole (Tolutope, 2010). This approach is also called integrated approach because it considers all the above mentioned approaches from the fore-going; it would be observed that the afore-mentioned approaches have their virtues and also defects. So this approach combined the above three (3) approaches to complement each other.

CONCLUSION

There is a widespread agreement that no particular approach to educational planning is the best for all. In education the three major approaches as discussed above are Social Demand Approach, Manpower Requirement Approach, and the Cost Benefit Approach. The first one is the least complicated approach to educational planning. It simply charges the education system with providing schools and facilities for all children who demand admission and who are qualified to enter. These certainly have its advantages and disadvantages on the development of any nation. The manpower requirement approach is the most preferred methodology. In simple terms these approach emphasis three major specifications; specification of the composition of manpower needs at some future date, specification of manpower availability and a specification which reconciles the former with the latter.

The emphasis in manpower approach is forecasting, and hence the dangers that lies ahead in predicting the future. The cost benefit analysis is the least employed of

the three approaches to educational planning. Most decision makers are reluctant to go as far as calculating a rate of return for planning purposes. But it should be noted that the developing countries with limited financial resources cannot afford wastage, particularly in educational expenditure, hence they need more of this approach. Finally, it could be said categorically that no one single approach is applicable, any good educational planning should integrate the three approaches i.e. provide education for those who need it, make sure such education is relevant to the manpower needs of the country, and be sure of the cost implication of such programmes, so that implementation would not be affected.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the discussion above on approaches to educational planning in the 21st century for national development, the following recommendation were made:

1. Increase teachers effectiveness
2. Proper data collection should be carried out according to the country's sectors to ascertain the nearly accurate manpower demand of the different sectors in the country.
3. Most of the factor that impedes the implementation of good education programmes in funding. So adequate funding should be made available for educational sector.
4. Adequate statisticians should be trained in order to collect data organized, analyze and come up with where the education system needs to focus on.

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