

Impacts of Politics on Quality Education Delivery in Colleges of Education in Delta State

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Abstract: *The study examined the impact of politics on quality education delivery in colleges of education in Delta State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population for this study comprised of 1,344 academic staff in the public colleges of education in Delta State. Available data show that there are 704 male lecturers and 640 female lecturers in the public colleges of educations in Delta State. The researcher used stratified simple random sampling technique in the selection of the respondents while the instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled impact of politics on quality education delivery in colleges of education (IPQEDCE). The questionnaire was developed by the researcher and has two sections, A and B. The instrument was faced validated while the reliability co-efficient of the instrument was calculated using Cronbach Alpha method. Alpha value was found to be 0.76, indicating high reliability of the entire instrument. Mean score and standard deviation were used in data analysis, and t-test statistic was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study found that politics significantly impacts funding, admission, and location of colleges in Delta State. Respondents' ratings also indicate that politics affects the location of these institutions. To address these issues, it is recommended that appointments, admissions, and recruitments be based on merit and competencies, despite the observed representation, quota, and federal character policies.*

Keywords: Politics, Impacts, Education, Quality Assurance, Quality Education, Funding, Colleges of Education.

Background of the Study

Education is the catalyst that propels development both on national and individual levels. It shapes the direction of individual and national development. This explains why national and individuals invest in education. The quality and quantity of education provided to citizens determine the quality and quantity of development experienced in a nation. It is against this background that World Bank (2019) noted that education in general and higher educations in particular are fundamental to the construction of a knowledge, economy and society in all nations.

According to Olagboye (2020), education is the process of training man to fulfill his aim by exercising all the faculties to the fullest extent as a member of society. The above definition demonstrates the critical role that education plays in the development of individuals as well as

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nations. The definition strengthens the general belief that no nation can develop in the absence of functional education. In Nigeria and many other developing countries, educational institutions are witnessing more and more government interest and control as well as increasing intervention by the legislatures and courts (Federal Government of Nigeria as cited in Ukpong, 2019). The role of politics in the management of colleges of education in Nigeria is manifested in the government interference. This is because education is interwoven with politics. Those two concepts work hand in hand for the development of nations. Politics is defined as "a social process whereby the limited available resources and values, whether material or symbolic, are allocated to the people or a society by those who have the authority to do so" (Nwankwo 2018).

In the context of development with particular reference to education, development occurs only when quality education is delivered to the citizens. Quality education is a function of quality teachers, facilities, administration, environment and funding to mention but a few. In other words, quality education is defined as education that is relevant and adapted to the needs of the society (Ndiomu, 2019). The author further argued that such needs must meet the standards in health, growth, and physical survival in a complex and globalized world. It implies education that is worthwhile, which empowers the recipients with relevant skills, knowledge, ideas, values and attitudes needed for him /her to make informed decisions and live a self-sustaining life. In other to achieve these feats, machineries must be put in place.

Various mechanisms have been put in place to ensure quality education. One of the mechanisms is referred to as quality assurance. Quality assurance, in the context of education, is defined as a process of continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning activities which will be achieved via pathways of employing mechanisms internal and external to the system. It is ensuring that at least the provision of the Minimum Academic Standards (MAS) are attained, maintained and enhanced (Omoregie, 2018). Ayeni (2021) in his contribution perceived quality assurance as the efficient management, monitoring, evaluation and reviews of the resource inputs and transformation process (teaching and learning) to produce a quality output (students) that meet set standards and expectations of the society.

The intervention of political considerations has often led to formulation of education policies which are negative. The federal government of the 70s in an attempt to correct the perceived educational imbalance between the North and the South made certain policies for admission into federal institutions (Nwankwo, 2018). This imbalance in education can be traced to some historical facts that influenced the establishment and spread of Western education. While the South embraced it, the Muslim North did not (Lassa, 2019). The federal government introduced admission based on quota system in an attempt to reflect and encourage the political imperative of "federal character". To implement this quota system of admission into federal institutions, it adopted the following criteria according to Kosemani (2020), merit 40%, catchment area of college 30%, educationally less developed states 20% and discretion 10%.

To effectively implement criterion there arose the politics of Educationally Less Developed States (ELDS) of which some states mostly in the North were identified. Those states clamoured for special attention through special funding which in most cases are diverted to other purposes. On seeing this, other states in the south also demanded to be classified as educationally disadvantaged in order to enjoy those funds. Thus, for political reasons, states want to be classified as educationally backward because of the benefits they receive from the Federal Government for educational development and it has become a serious problem today (Lassa, 2019).

The introduction of the quota system while enhancing the chances of one reduces the chances of another. Thus quality was sacrificed on the altar of quota, it is against this background that Sogolo (2019) asserted that this system was an attempt by the federal government of the day to reckon with and address our social and historical antecedents forgetting that such policies will not only kill merit but perpetuate inequality in terms of access to higher education. Hence, Uduanya (2018) had warned that unless the government of the day employed the right concept of equal opportunities, it may result in greater disparity and discontent among the states and individuals. This policy which was meant to foster unity has created hatred and suspicion among the citizens as people no longer cherish the citizenship of Nigeria but rather the indigenes of a particular state or region.

As observed by Ezekiel-Hart (2021), Nigeria's educational reform policies are often criticized for their ad hoc approach to issues. They address one issue at a time without any organic link with related problems and oftentimes without carrying the stakeholders along. Different institutions such as colleges of education and universities were established according to the government programme of the day without full consultation with stakeholders to know the type of institution to be established. Hence a government that believes in promoting science and technology established universities of Science and Technology. Universities of Agriculture were established when the government of the day believed in and wanted to encourage agriculture. This is a height of politicizing education.

Another area that is highly politicized is in the area of funding. When government adopted education as an instrument "par excellence" for national development, it went ahead to declare university education tuition free as usual without a thought for its planning implications. This policy was introduced more to gain popularity among the citizens and pacify them (Osokoya, 2019). Events have shown however that government alone cannot effectively fund higher institutions. It would not allow charging of fees because it is a politically sensitive issue. When for instance it attempted to do so in 1978 it met with stiff resistance from both students and parents because it was given a political interpretation. As such even though faced with the reality of the times it lacks the political will to take the necessary step. This issue of funding has been a sore point between the government of the day and Colleges of Education Academic Staff Union (COEASU), Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) which has often led to confrontation between the two, leading to strikes and closure of schools with its attendant consequence on academic calendar (Osokoya, 2019).

Government on its part also politicks with this issue of funding by attempting to cover up their inadequacies through playing up public emotions. They often quote quantum of naira spent on education without such details as the percentage of the budget, unit cost etc. This is used as electioneering campaign strategy and to give the people a feeling that so much is being done. In an attempt to address the issue of funding, government in 1993 through the Education Tax Act established an intervention agency the Education Tax Fund (ETF) and the Tertiary Education Fund (TETFund) to disburse funds to the relevant institutions. Particularly the TETFund was set up to provide funds to state and federal higher institutions for educational development such as staff training, research, equipment procurement, among others. Who gets what from these funds is also highly politicized which directly or indirectly affect the quality of education delivery (Osokoya, 2019).

According to Nwanna (2020), colleges of education are not living up to expectation in discharging their obligations due to the political interference in the system. On this strength, Ajayi (2019) lamented that colleges of education in Nigeria is riddled with crises of various dimensions and magnitude such as interference in admission process, shortage in human and material resources and poor funding, all of which combine to suggest that the system is at crossroad.

It is this issue of being at cross wad that has agitated the mind of this researcher. The researcher's worry is that if the quality of education delivery in colleges of education is low, it will affect the quality of teaching and learning in Delta State. This is because a teacher cannot go beyond what he knows. This is where quality assurance mechanism becomes relevant in colleges of educations. It is this process that will ensure and enhance the quality of teaching and learning which by extension enhance the quality of the products from them. It is against this background that the need to examine the impact of politics on quality education delivery in colleges of education in Delta State has become imperative.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, issue of concerns have been expressed by stakeholders over the influence of politics on the appointment of colleges of education stakeholders in system (Nwankwo, 2018). There are arguments that political influence has the potentials of weakening the quality of college of education delivery. Argument equally abounds that political influences on such area as appointment of members of governing council, provost, funding, student's admission and establishment of colleges have the potentials of flooding the system with mediocre, especially state college of education where the visitors are the sole owners of the schools. The stakeholders like who have argued that colleges of education should be shielded from political influence. According to them, it is only through this approach that colleges of education will function effectively. This by extension will lead to production of quality graduates who will manage the various sectors of the nation's economy. Education managers, Council members have expressed fears that if higher institutions are not insulated from the influence of politics, Nigerian's technological development will be an illusion. This is because political influence has a way of glorifying mediocrity at the expense of merit. Thus the researcher moved by the arguments of some of the stakeholders, then to investigate the impact of politics on quality education delivery in colleges of education in Delta State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the impact of politics on quality education delivery in colleges of education in Delta State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. effect of politics on the funding of colleges of education in Delta State;
2. effect of politics on the admission of students in colleges of education in Delta State; and
3. effect of politics on the location of colleges of education in Delta State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the effects of politics on the funding of colleges of education in Delta State?
2. What are the effects of politics on the admission of students in colleges of education in Delta State?
3. What are the effects of politics on the location of colleges of education in Delta State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses which were tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study.

HO₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effect of politics on the funding of colleges of education in Delta State.

HO₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effect of politics on the admission of students in the colleges of education in Delta State.

HO₃: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effect of politics on the location of colleges of education in Delta State.

Research Method

The design of this study was descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey research design, according to Ali (2021), is a study in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. Hence, the researcher deems it necessary to use this design because a representative sample of the entire population was used for the study. The study was carried out in Delta State. Delta State is made up of 25 local government areas; Delta State (recognized on August 27, 1991) is an oil and agricultural producing state in Nigeria. It is situated in the region known as the South-South geo-political zone. The population for this study comprised of 1,344 academic staff in the public colleges of education in Delta State. There are four colleges of education in Delta State. Available data show that there are 704 male lecturers and 640 female lecturers in the public colleges of educations in Delta State (personnel units).

Simple random sampling technique was used to sample respondents from public colleges of educations in the State. Proportionate random sampling technique was used to sample 10% of male and female lecturers from the entire population. While the instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled impact of politics on quality education delivery in colleges of education (IPQEDCE). The questionnaire was developed by the researcher and has two sections, A and B. section A dealt with the bio-data of the respondents while section B dealt with information on impact of politics on quality education delivery in colleges of education. The instrument was faced validated while the reliability co-efficient of the instrument was calculated using Cronbach Alpha method. Alpha value was found to be 0.76, indicating high reliability of the entire instrument. Mean score and standard deviation were used in data analysis, and t-test statistic was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The results are presented in tables according to research questions.

Research Questions One

What are the effects of politics on the funding of colleges of education in Delta State?

Table 1: Mean Rating and Standard Deviation of Male and Female Academic Staff on the Effects of Politics on the Funding of colleges of education in Delta State

S/N	ITEMS	Male academic Staff		Female Academic Staff		Overall		Dec
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	
1	There is provision of adequate funds.	2.60	1.08	2.50	1.13	2.55	1.11	A
2	Funds are made available to acquire adequate facilities.	2.47	1.09	2.51	1.12	2.49	1.11	D
3	Funds are made available for Maintenance of facilities in colleges of education.	2.56	1.15	2.55	1.09	2.55	1.12	D
4	Funds are made available to embark on Improvement in staff capacity building.	2.39	1.12	2.54	1.11	2.47	1.12	D
5	There is availability of funds for Proper management of available resources.	2.53	1.13	2.54	1.15	2.53	1.14	D
6	Funds are release to school based on familiarity with TETFUND management team.	2.53	1.09	2.59	1.13	2.56	1.11	A
7	Funds are released for payment of staff salaries.	2.44	1.11	2.51	1.12	2.48	1.11	D
8	Funds are released at appropriate time to pay staff allowances.	2.49	1.11	2.49	1.11	2.49	1.11	D
	Cluster Mean/SD	2.50	1.11	2.53	1.12	2.52	1.12	A

A = Agreed, D = Disagree

The data analysis on Table 1 shows the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the funding of colleges of education in Delta State. In Table 1, the male academic staff mean ranged from 2.39 to 2.60, while the female academic staff mean ranged from 2.49 to 2.59. The values of the cluster mean for male and female academic staff are 2.50 and 2.53 with standard deviations of 1.11 and 1.12. However, their overall mean ranged from 2.47 to 2.56 with cluster mean of 2.52 and standard deviation of 1.12. The standard deviations of the two groups of the respondents indicate that they were homogenous in their responses. In other words, the standard deviations were close. The finding of the study shows that politics has significant effects on the funding of colleges of education in Delta State according to respondents ratings.

Research Question Two:

What are the effects of politics on the admission of students in colleges of education in Delta State?

Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Male and Female Academic Staff on the Effects of Politics on the Admission of Students in the colleges of education in Delta State

S/N	ITEMS	Male academic Staff		Female Academic Staff		Overall		Dec
		\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	
	Effects of Politics on the admission of students include that the:							
1	Ethnic considerations are key factors in the admission of new students	2.84	.78	2.92	.80	2.87	.79	A
2	Party affiliations do not influence the admission process	3.19	.75	3.56	.50	3.39	.65	A
3	Admission of some new students is based on sectional sentiments	3.34	.63	3.47	.50	3.41	.56	A
4	Catchment area policy influences the admission of students	3.24	.76	3.48	.50	3.37	.64	A
5	Religious affiliations is considered in the admission of new students	3.01	.82	3.01	.83	3.01	.82	A
6	Quota system is a key factor influencing admission of new students	2.84	.78	2.92	.80	2.87	.79	A
7	Quota system is a key factor in the appointment of admission member committee.	2.59	.75	2.56	.50	2.57	.65	A
	Cluster Mean/SD	3.01	.75	3.13	.63	3.07	.70	A

A = Agreed, D = Disagree

The data analysis on Table 2 shows the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the admission of students of colleges of education in Delta State. In Table 2, the male academic staff mean ranged from 2.59 to 3.34, while the female academic staff mean ranged from 2.56 to 3.56. The values of the cluster mean for male and female academic staff are 3.01 and 3.13 with standard deviations of .75 and .63. However, their overall mean ranged from 2.57 to 3.41 with cluster mean of 3.07 and standard deviation of .70. The standard deviations of the two groups of the respondents indicate that they were homogenous in their responses. In other words, the standard deviations were close. The finding of the study shows that politics has significant effects on the admission of students of colleges of education in Delta State according to the respondents' ratings.

Research Question Three:

What are the effects of politics on the location of colleges of education in Delta State?

Table 3: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Male and Female Academic Staff on the Effects of Politics on the Location of colleges of education in Delta State

ITEMS		Male academic Staff		Female Academic Staff		Overall		Dec
S/N	Effects of Politics on the location of colleges of education includes that the:	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD	
1	Ethnic considerations are key factors in the location of colleges.	3.04	.78	3.16	.81	3.11	.80	A
2	Party affiliations do influence the location of colleges.	3.19	.77	2.97	.81	3.07	.80	A
3	Locations of colleges are based more on clannishness than on any other consideration.	2.91	.85	2.93	.80	2.92	.82	A
4	Locations of colleges some time are determine by those who are political power.	3.00	.88	2.98	.82	2.99	.84	A
5	Educationally advantaged and disadvantaged stages are considerations key factors in the location of colleges of education.	2.92	.79	3.00	.81	2.96	.80	A
6	Quota system is a key factor influencing location of colleges of education.	3.04	.78	3.16	.81	3.11	.80	A
7	Oftentimes political and personal considerations are key factor influencing location of colleges of education.	3.19	.77	2.97	.81	3.07	.80	A
Cluster Mean/SD		3.04	.80	3.02	.81	3.03	.81	A

A = Agreed, D = Disagree

The data analysis on Table 3 shows the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the location of colleges of education in Delta State. In Table 3, the male academic staff mean ranged from 2.91 to 3.19, while the female academic staff mean ranged from 2.93 to 3.16. The values of the cluster mean for male and female academic staff are 3.04 and 3.02 with standard deviations of .80 and .81. However, their overall mean ranged from 2.92 to 3.11 with cluster mean of 3.03 and standard deviation of .81. The standard deviations of the two groups of the respondents indicate that they were homogenous in their responses. In other words, the standard deviations were close. The finding of the study shows that politics has significant effects on the location of colleges of education in Delta State according to the respondents' ratings.

Testing of Hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the funding of colleges of education in Delta State.

Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the funding of colleges of education in Delta State

Group	N	\bar{x}	SD	Df	p-value	Decision
Male Academic Staff	71	2.50	1.11	132	.311	H ₀₁ not rejected
Female Academic Staff	64	2.53	1.12			

Data in Table 4 for male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the funding of colleges of education in Delta State show that at 132 degree of freedom, the p-value was .311. The outcome of the p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance set for this study. This signifies that the null hypothesis was not rejected and, therefore, there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the funding of colleges of education in Delta State.

HO₂: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the admission of students in the colleges of education in Delta State.

Table 5: Summary of t-test analysis of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the admission of students in the colleges of education in Delta State

Group	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	p-value	Decision
Male Academic Staff	71	3.01	.75	132	.167	H ₀₂ not rejected
Female Academic Staff	61	3.13	.63			

Data in Table 5 for male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the admission of students in the colleges of education in Delta State show that at 132 degree of freedom, the p-value was .167. The outcome of the p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance set for this study. This signifies that the null hypothesis was not rejected and, therefore, there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the admission of students into the colleges of education in Delta State.

HO₃: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the location of colleges of education in Delta State.

Table 6: Summary of t-test analysis of significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the location of colleges of education in Delta State

Group	N	\bar{x}	SD	df	p-value	Decision
Male Academic Staff	71	2.52	1.12	132	.132	H ₀₃ not rejected
Female Academic Staff	64	2.52	1.12			

Data in Table 6 for male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the location of colleges of education in Delta State show that at 132 degree of freedom, the p-value was .132. The outcome of the p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance set for this study. This signifies that the null hypothesis was not rejected and, therefore, there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the location of colleges of education in Delta State.

Discussion of Findings

From the findings of the study, evidence has shown that the respondents shared the view that politics has effects on the funding of colleges of education in Delta State. In other words, the findings show that funds are release to school based on familiarity with TETFUND management team. The findings of this study are in line with the statement of Ukpong (2019) who reported that improper disbursement leads to conflicts as well as inadequate funds to take care of purchases in the school. The findings also agree with Nwankwo (2018) who stated that educational institutions still lack the necessary funds to implement various programmes and activities. The findings also agree with Nidinechi (2020) who emphasized that the deplorable circumstances regarding the progressive decay of the sector is characterized by paucity of fund, facilities, students' unrest and prolong shutting down of the institutions. The findings also revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the funding of colleges of education in Delta State.

The findings of the study show that the respondents agreed that politics has effects on the admission of students in colleges of education in Delta State. The findings also revealed that ethnic considerations are key factors in the admission of new students. From the study it was show that catchment area policy influences the admission of students. Respondents also share the view that quota system is a key factor affecting the admission of new students. The findings are in consonance with the opinion of Lassa, (2019), who noted that the intervention of political considerations has often led to formulation of education policies which are negative. The federal government of the 70s in an attempt to correct the perceived educational imbalance between the North and the South made a policy of quota system for admission into federal institutions. This imbalance in education can be traced to some historical facts that influenced the establishment and spread of Western education. The result also showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the admission of students in the colleges of education in Delta State.

The findings of the study also show that the respondents agreed that politics has effects on the location of colleges of education in Delta State. The findings also revealed that oftentimes political and personal considerations are key factor influencing location of colleges of education in Delta State. The respondents also share the view that party affiliations do influence the location of colleges of education. The findings are in consonance with the opinion of Hallak, (2017), who observed that politics and tribal considerations are more than anything over-ride school mapping ethics, equity, rationality and considerations for effective management. The findings also agree with Ezekiel-Hart, (2021) who viewed school mapping as the orderly procedure for determining where to site educational institutions to ensure proper coverage, and maximum benefit to the communities they are intended to serve, however, oftentimes political and personal or religious considerations over-ride such tenets and as schools are sited without merit or suitability. This is more predominant among state colleges of education which are established by politicians and private colleges established by private individuals/agencies or religious bodies. In most cases such colleges of education end up in the home town of the founder. The findings also revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effects of politics on the on the location of colleges of education in Delta State.

Conclusion

The study concludes that politics influence colleges of education in different ways. They include the funding, admission of students and location of colleges of education in Delta State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were proffered.

1. Appointments, admissions and recruitments should be based on merit and competencies even if the policy of representation, quota and federal character are observed. This should be publicly advertised to create opportunities for the best candidates to be engaged even when quota and representative systems are applied in selected cases.
2. Location of colleges should be based on school mapping ethics, equity, rationality and considerations for effective management.
3. Public organizations should be allowed to fully control staff appointment, admission and recruitments to conform to their specific needs at any given time without undue interference by the political and influential class.
4. The appointment of heads in colleges of education, like provost, Principal offers, Deans, admission officers and Directors, should be made by a Senate Search Committee (SSC) with candidates of impeccable credentials as members, keeping the best interest of the institution in view.

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