

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The importance of education in individual and national economic life has been well recognized in some economic literatures of recent. At the individual level, education forms the foundation of one's professional career and well impacts, among other things, life-time income, health, level of socialisation and his wellbeing over the whole life-cycle. Similarly, education at the national level is vital for civilization, technology adoption, and effective political participation and for bringing societies out of poverty which are very fundamental for a sustainable economic progress of a country. Apart from the level of educational attainment, equity in access to education has also received the attention of researchers and policy makers. It is argued that unequal distribution of education among various groups within a country can prevent education from unfolding its welfare enhancing effects entirely and can lead to persistent income inequality among the populace. This can be said of the northern regions (North East, North West and North Central geopolitical zones in Nigeria) where most of the secondary school students cannot be academically compared those of the other words regions. This also shows in a vocational and technical subject like Home economics. The government needs to act fast in this area and create a balance.

In order to investigate effectively the actual role of education in development process of an economy, we need not to only focus on averages but must ensure the investigation of both the absolute and the relative dispersion of education. A measure of the education dispersion and interference between geo political zones in the country appears very useful both for analytical purpose and for necessary policy actions. Certainly, this is what this study is going to focus on. Nigeria serves as a case of study for interesting topics when it comes to the dynamics of educational opportunities. In the first instance, its educational system has been seriously experiencing changes through several educational policy reforms. One of such changes occurred in the late eighties when the '6 3 3 4' system was introduced. In 1999 specifically, Universal Basic Education (UBE) program was launched with explicit commitment of the government in providing education for all. Access to education, reception capacity in schools and universities and education quality remain the major drawbacks facing the system. The economic theory of inequalities can be related to Nigerian case of educational system. For over three decades now, Nigeria had considerable success in economic growth: its growth rate in the last decade averaged 7% annually. The country is really doing worse in terms of income

inequality when compared with most developing countries in the world. Additionally, it has been found that income inequality in Nigeria is very high with a coefficient that ranges between .46 to .60, despite the expansion of the economy in terms of government revenue and GDP growth.

The issues of regional development are multidisciplinary both in approach and analysis, spreading from the primary focus of politics, economics, sociology, public policy to environment. The concept of a region is usually explained using a wide range of criteria that will involve issues of geographical or spatial elements, and other social or cultural indices which play up the essentiality of identity and attachment to a place or location. Thus, regionalism could be viewed as the political manifestation of regional identity (McCall, 2010). As a sub national peripheral entity, with strong indicators of an economy as well as political and cultural identity, regions within a national framework are driven by the need to respond to pressures from political dynamics and economic activities in a strong bid to construct comparative advantages. Sorenson (2010) opined that a common thread for regional development concerns that usually focus on economic and social improvement, would most likely encompass such matters as more and better quality of infrastructure, improved political governance and community services, increased volume of economic production, lower unemployment rate and growing number of jobs (in the formal and informal sectors), need for rising purchasing power and improved quality of life. The debate has always been the parameters of engaging the regional development policies to achieve improved economic and social conditions of living is it Bottom Up, that is, to allow the liberal perspective by allowing the market to rule, or Top Bottom, that is, to ensure government deliberate intervention to moderate the market forces and instigate developmental processes through provision of hard and soft infrastructural facilities to create the enabling environment for growth. There are several approaches to regional development policies but the traditional ones revolve around the twin theoretical perspectives of neo-classical economics and interventionist development. In the former, governments are encouraged to stay away from active intervention and allow the operations of the market. The latter case is prevalent in developing economies like Nigeria. The essence of the political economy framework is hinged on three major platforms, namely that there is close linkages between political and economic structures in the society in Nigeria; that the political and economic structures of a society affect its general values, cultures and norms as well as the practice of political governance; and that a better understanding of the society, and a region specifically, could be provided by analyzing the synergy between the economy and politics, and their dialectical interrelations with other social institutions (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2005).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

At this stage, Nigerian educational development is supposed to be of high quality and good standard due to the eagerness the learners showed in the olden days. Their academic performance in secondary then was of high value in the country. Secondary school education was enough to earn one a living back then, but reverse is the case now. Unfortunately, the general public seems to be highly disappointed in the present educational system. It is now generally known that the standard has considerably fallen and quality is no longer there again. Government of today are not helping matters but rather worsening the situation. This can be said of the recent issue making round the wave in the country whereby the federal government is planning to reduce the cut-off mark (from the initial 200 to 120) for admission into the university. This was accepted by some institutions in the northern states but was sternly rejected by some institutions in the South Western, South Southern and South eastern states in the country. This shows the level of disparity in academic performance of students in different geopolitical zones in Nigeria. This is a drastic situation that needs drastic solutions. However, this research work on the effects of geopolitical interference in the study of Home economics in secondary schools in Nigeria will provide reasonable solutions to the problem.

1.3 Research Questions

This research will be carried out to answer the following research questions:

- i) what are the reasons for geopolitical interference in the study of Home economics in secondary schools in Nigeria?
- ii) what are the effects of geopolitical interference in the study of Home economics in secondary schools in Nigeria?
- iii) what is the prevalence of geopolitical interference in the study of Home economics in secondary schools in Nigeria?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to investigate the effects of geopolitical interference in the study of Home economics in secondary schools in Nigeria. The specific objectives include:

- i) to determine the reasons for geopolitical interference in the study of Home economics in secondary schools in Nigeria
- ii) to establish the effects of geopolitical interference in the study of Home economics in secondary schools in Nigeria
- iii) to analyse the prevalence of geopolitical interference in the study of Home economics in secondary

schools in Nigeria

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study investigates on the effects of geopolitical interference in the study of Home economics in secondary schools in Nigeria and therefore will be beneficial to the educational practitioners to identify some of the problems that stand as impediments to the successful implementation of the educational policy. This study will also contribute to academic knowledge and serve as a foundation upon which further research can be made.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study will be carried out among selected secondary schools in Surulere local Government Area, Lagos State, Nigeria. Information collected from these workers shall be subjected to further analysis and the results got from it shall be final.

1.7 Limitation of the study

The researcher was faced with time constraint of getting the targeted respondents to get the desired information. The researcher was also faced with the problem of reading the questions to some students as some of them did not understand the questions very well. Some of them were unwilling to give adequate information needed for this research work. This was tedious and time consuming.

1.8 Definitions of Terms

The following terms were used in the course of this study:

Geopolitical zone: a major division in modern Nigeria, created during the regime of president General Sani Abacha. Nigerian economic, political and educational resources are often shared across the zones.

Home economics: field of study that deals with the economics and management of the home and community. It deals with the relationship between individuals, families, communities, and the environment in which they live.

Secondary school: is the next step up from primary school. Secondary schools are often called high schools in the United States. In Britain, secondary schools may be public schools, grammar schools or comprehensive schools.

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