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FINANCING TERTIARY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: A TOOL FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Ownership of Tertiary Institutions is under the canopy of Federal Republic of Nigeria for Federal Universities, Federal Colleges of Education and Federal Polytechnics vis-à-vis state owned. The nation's (Federal) owned tertiary education tend to achieve the objectives of tertiary education through justifiable and adequate allocation of substantial amount of the annual budget to education. To achieve this, the paper presents documentary evidence of budgetary allocation in Nigeria with particular reference to the allocation to education sector from 20 World Bank Sampled countries, percentage allocation to Education in Nigeria 2012 to 2021. Percentage Allocation to Education by 16 African Countries and Analysis of Allocation to Tertiary Institution (Federal) 2018 to 2021. Comparative analyses on funding using percentage were compared between Nigeria and other African Countries. The comparative analysis or assessment showed that Nigeria is still unable to meet the statutory requirement of UNESCO benchmark of 26% of her annual budgetary allocation to Education. The unquantified 5.1% of allocation to education has led Academic of Senior Staff Union of Nigeria to strike severally between 1981-2020 spurring Government to revive fallen standard of Education in Nigeria. The implication of underfunding tertiary institution has lead to the nation's underdevelopment of the sectors in Nigeria. The study recommended among others that Federal Government of Nigeria should endeavour to adequately fund Tertiary Education sector by allocating at least 10-15% of her annual budget to education in line with the neigbouring countries of Ghana, Chad, Cape Verde and Gabon as illustrated by 16 African Countries in the year 2020.

Keywords: Budgetary Allocation, Funding, Tertiary Education and National Development

Introduction

Education is Nigeria is widely accepted as the major instrument for promoting change, social- economic, political and cultural development of individual or society. Put differently, education is an investment in human capital because resources are committed to it as input in the production process and in turn, contributes immensely to individual and national development (Ubogu & Itoro, 2023). The acceptance of education as a tool for upward social mobility and national development has received considerable attention from Nigeria government and internal organization (Omenyi, Nwankwo & Nwite, 2015). Additionally, education as on indispensable tool for human capacity formation and development, adequate

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budgetary allocation is required to provide the type of education that would take the nation to its next level of development (Nwadiani 2012; Nwite 2017 & Suleiman 2020).

In view of the above, tertiary education requires proper funding because it constitutes the core of human development, national education for empowering youth with relevant skills and the provision of youths with access to productive employment (Nwite, 2016). Tertiary education in the context of this study is the education offered to after post basic education institutions cut across universities, Inter-university centers such as National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), Collage of Education, Monotechnics, Polytechnics, Collage of Agriculture, school of health and technology, National Teachers Institute (NTI) (FRN Section 5 No 80 P, 39). The goals of Tertiary Education in Nigeria include but not limited to:

a) contribute to national development through high level manpower training,
b) provide accessible and affordable quality learning opportunities in formal and informal education in response to the needs and interest of all Nigerians
c) reduce skill shortages through the production of skilled manpower relevant to the needs of the labour market (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2014:39).

Achievement of above laudable education goals in Nigeria could be through justifiable and adequate allocation of substantiable amount of the yearly budget to education. Additionally, tertiary institution may not explore fully the areas of the above goals if budgetary allocation to education is static, low or beyond approved 26% annual budgetary allocation for developing countries recommendation by United Nations Educational, Scientific and cultural organization (UNESSCO, 2022 Report). Research findings shows that tertiary education in Nigeria is underfunded. Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN, 2014) reported that in 1999, percentage allocation to education was 4.46%, highest was in 2006 with 10.43%. Nwite, (2017) reported that Federal Government of Nigeria spent below 10% on education of its overall spending of 20 World Bank sampled countries, as indicated in table 1 below.

Table 1: Budgetary Allocation of 20 World Bank Sampled Countries

SN	Country	% Allocation to Education	Rank order
1	Ghana	31.0	1st
2	Cote d' Vore	30.0	2nd
3	Uganda	27.0	3rd
4	Morocco	26.4	4th
5	South Africa	25.8	5th
6	Switzerland	24.6	6th
7	Mexico	24.3	7th
8	Kenya	23.0	8th
9	United Arab Emirate	22.5	9th
10	Botswana	19.0	10th
11	Iran	17.7	11th
12	USA	17.1	12th
13	Tunisia	17.0	13th
14	Lesotho	17.0	14th

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15	Burkina Faso	16.8	15th
16	Norway	16.2	16th
17	Colombia	15.6	17th
18	Nicaragua	15.0	18th
19	India	12.7	19th
20	Nigeria	8.4	20th

Source: World Bank (2012/2013)

Table 1: present developing Africans countries % Budgetary allocation with Serial Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, & 20, and developed countries with S/N 7, 9, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, & 19 for percentage budget and allocation analyzed by World Bank in 20/2/23.
Nigeria is ranked 20th position (8.4%) with the least budgetary allocation to education. 8.4% shows an indication of poor funding policy on budgetary allocation to education. The World Bank report of 2012/2013 cited in Nwite (2017) stated that Universities in Nigeria was not in the list of top most best 2000 nor the best 6,000 Universities in the World. Additionally, Ubogu & Itoro reported that Nigeria budgetary allocation to education in 2023 is 8.4% which is of low percentage. In the context of this paper, 8.4% budgetary allocation to education amounts to noting place side by side with the deficit between World Bank recommended 26% and actual allocations over the past years in Nigeria (see table 2). This issues of dwindling percentage of budgetary allocation to education in 2009 (7.2%), 2010 (4.8%), 2011(6.15%), 2012 (8.2%), 2013 (8.5%), 2014 (9.9%) 2015 (7.7%), 2016 (6.5%), 2017 (7.3%), 2018(7.9%) and 2018 (8.5%) with the percentage of 8.5%, hence there is the need to address the low percentage allocation by government of Nigeria, because of high cost of tertiary education and explosion in the demand for the education sector particularly in higher education.

Purpose of the Study
This paper examined documentary evidence of funding (budgetary allocation) tertiary education in Nigeria. The study covered public universities, collages of education and polytechnics in Nigeria between 2012 -2021 and the narrative of ASSU strike 1981 -2020 in tertiary institutions.

State of Nigerian Federal Tertiary Institutions: Education falls under the concurrent Legislative list in the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria, therefore Federal Universities, Federal Collage of Education and Federal Polytechnic are funded by Federal Government of Nigeria. Other conventional sources of funding education include: Government subventions and grants that constitute the total budget of federal institution' (NOUN, 2013:73). In addition, Donations, Education Tax fund (ETF) and External aids are tailored toward the funding education in Nigeria. Despite the above sources, funding the education sector is still underfunded because of politicking and lack of political will of the Federal Government which serves as antecedent elements to the decay in education in Nigeria. Akinyemi, Ofem & Adebisi (2018) identified placement of limit on education by government, very low education budget, reduced financial support from foreign donors, weak

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economic growth and uneven distribution of wealth as reasons for underfunding education in Nigeria. The above challenges have in no small measure hindered the sector from attaining its optimum in the 21st century. Instances of underfunding tertiary education in Nigeria are illustrated in tables 2 and 3 using percentage (%) budgetary allocation.

Table 2: **Percentage Budgetary Allocation to Education in Nigeria (2012-2021)**

Year	% Allocation
2012	8.5
2013	8.7
2014	9.0
2015	9.3
2016	6.7
2017	6.1
2018	5.9
2019	5.9
2020	5.1
2021	5.1
Grand Mean (x)	**6.9%**

Source: World Bank 2021.

Table 2 shows an average percentage of 6.9%, this affirms that government allocation to education is not significant. 6.9% of budgetary allocation to education in Nigeria remains relatively low and underfunded when compared with UNESCO recommended 26% allocation for developing countries. Education sector in Nigeria over ten (10) years remains underfunded, only in 2015 (9.3%) and 2014 (9.0%) Nigeria had the highest budgetary allocation which suddenly dropped to (5.1% table 3) each in 2020 and 2021 despite the growing concerns, Nigeria's education allocation still remains below recommended benchmark of UNESCO. The mean of 6.9% budgetary allocation to education over the past years amounts to nothing placed side by side with the deficit between recommended and actual allocation over the past 13 years.

Table 3: Percentage Allocation to Education by16 African Countries as at 2020

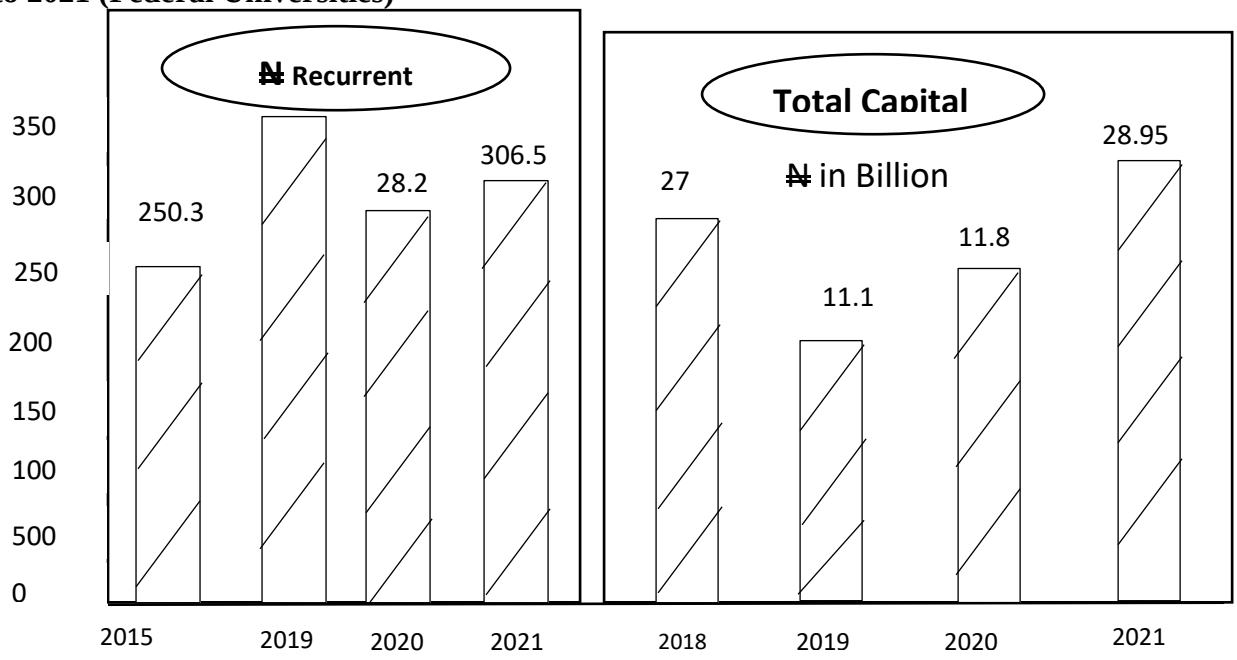
SN	Country	% Allocation
1	Madagascar	15.5
2	Cape Verde	15.1
3	Chad	15.1
4	Gabon	15.1
5	Cot d' Ivoire	15.0
6	Cameroon	14.9
7	Lesotho	13.7
8	Guinea	12.0
9	Niger	12.0
10	Zambia	11.5
11	Canada	11.3
12	Seychelles	10.5
13	Central Africa Rep.	9.1
14	Angola	6.9
15	Saotome	6.7
16	Nigeria	5.1

Source: World Bank, (2021)

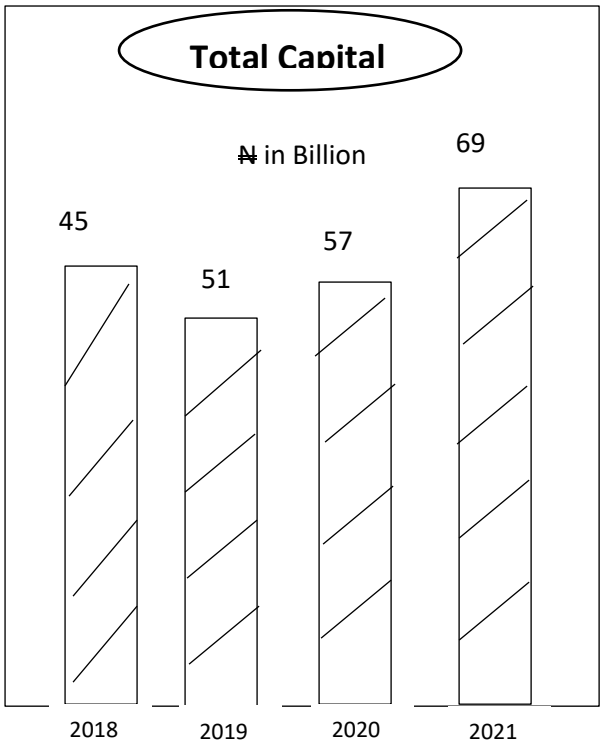
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Table 3 presents 16 African countries percentage of budgetary allocation to education as at 2020. Nigeria ranked 16th position with 5.1% standing in the hierarchy, while Madagascar with 15.5% ranked 1st position; Cape Verd, Chad, and Gabon ranked 2nd position with 5.1% respectively. These countries appear to have added political will to fund their education with impressive margin against Nigeria with a very low (5.1%). Percentage of five point one (5.1%) percent budgetary allocation to education in Nigeria is relatively insignificant to fund all the levels of federal tertiary institution. In agreement with the above submission, Ogbette, Eke & Ori (2017) affirmed that inadequate budgetary allocation to education over the years has stirred national discourse among university stakeholders and scholar over low budgetary allocation to education. UNESCO (2022) World Education Report, revealed that Nigerian 20.2 Million children and youth are out of school, the highest in Africa and third globally. In summary, underfunding remains the bane of the Nigeria education system. Secondly government of Nigeria appear to have little or no interest in the development of education sector considering budgetary allocations of 8.4% in 2012, 5.1% in 2020 and 5.1% in 2021 respectively (see table 2 and 3 above).

Table 4: Assessment of Nigeria budgetary Allocation to Tertiary Institutions from 2018 to 2021 (Federal Universities)



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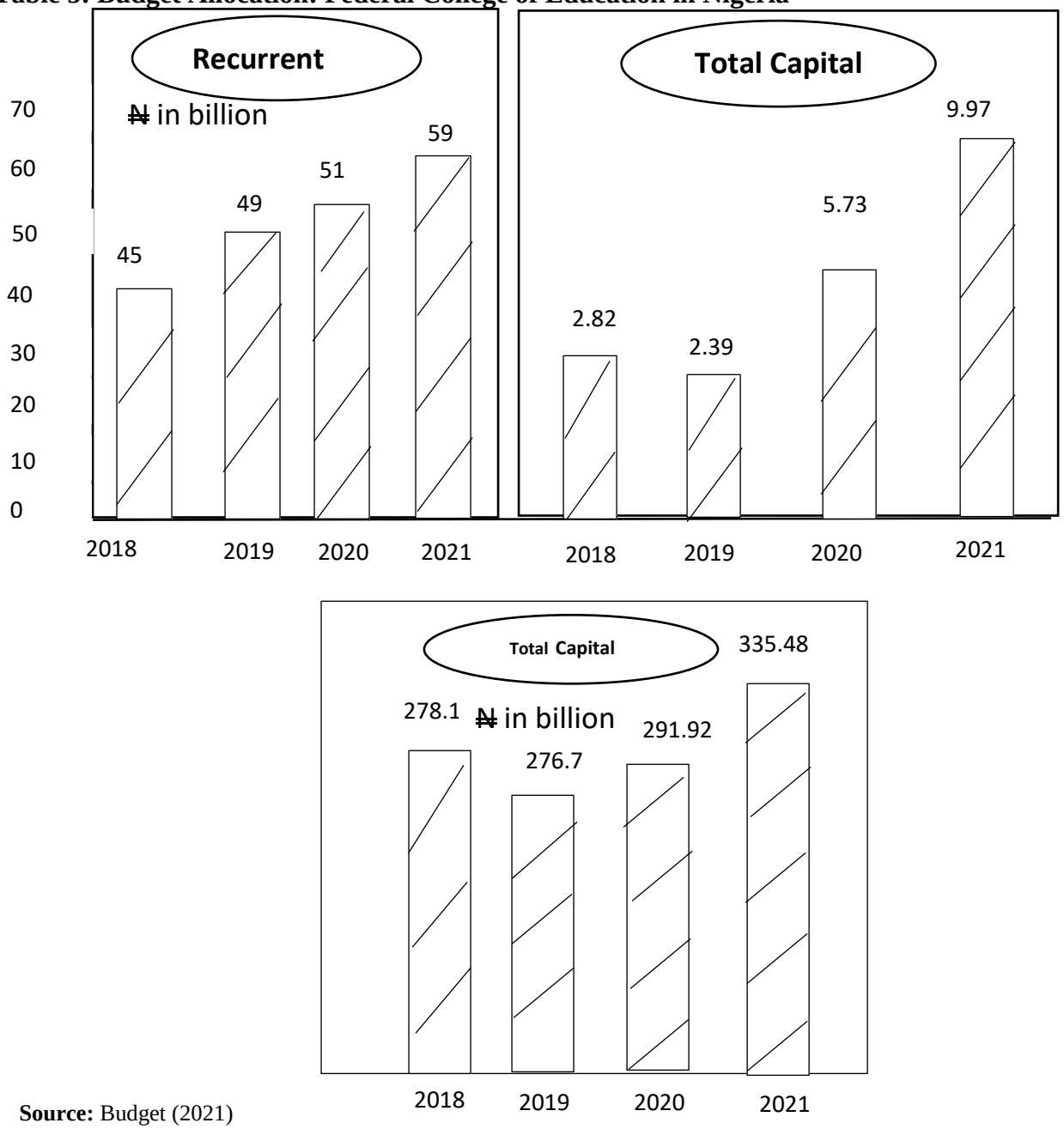


Source: Budget 2021

Table 4 shows that the budgetary allocation to Federal Universities increased in 2021 from ₦ 291.92 billion in 2020 to ₦335.48 billion with an increase of ₦43.56 billion. Similarly, The Capital allocation also increased from ₦ 11.79 billion in 2020 to 28.95 billion with an increase of ₦ 17.16 billion. This is an indication of would be more capital development. However it is regrettable that the quality of infrastructural facilities in Federal Universities (Laboratories and Workshop) is utterly of poor quality where available. Akpolu (2018) added, that infrastructural facilities are either in adequate or un-useable for higher institution in Nigeria to function optimally, there is need for more investment in education. In 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 the intervention for universities across the country stood at 77.9 billion Naira, an indication of underfunding of tertiary education as to actualize set goals.

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Table 5: Budget Allocation: Federal College of Education in Nigeria



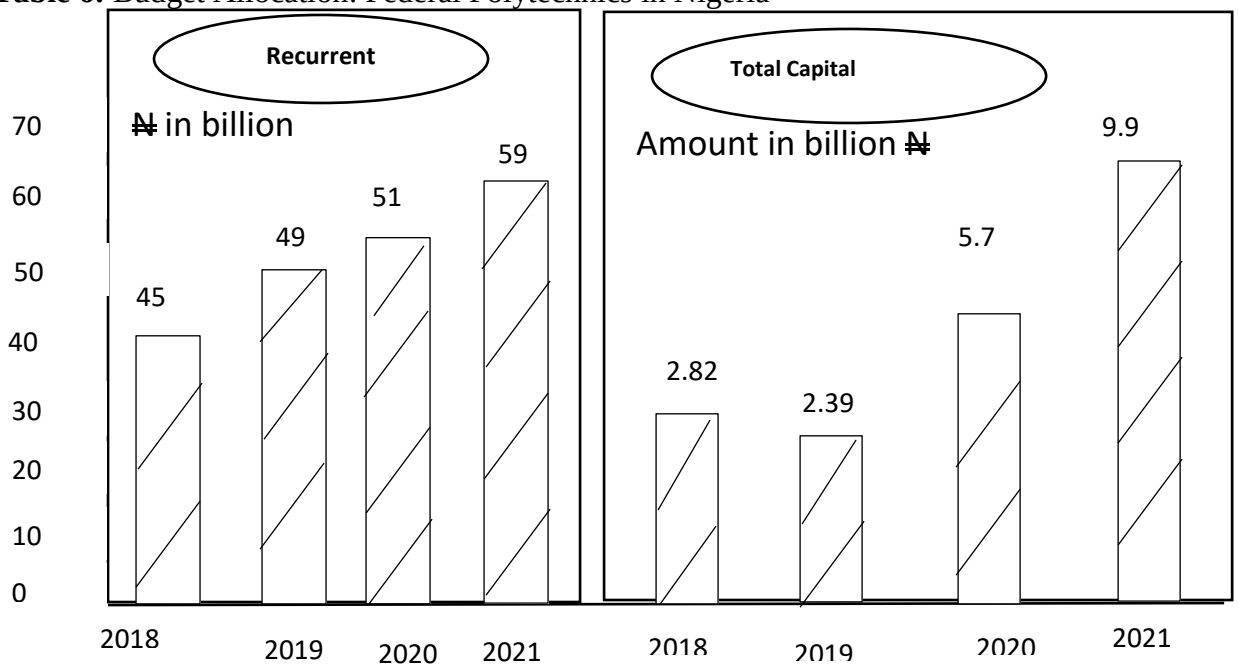
Source: Budget (2021)

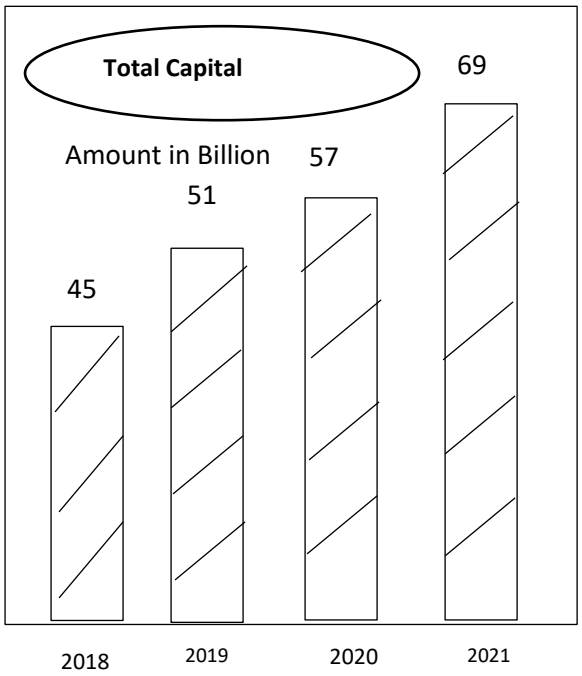
Table 5 shows a capital allocation of 21 Federal Collages of Education in 2018 to 2021. Capital allocation for 2018 and 2019 with a sum of 2.8 billion and 2.39 billion respectively. The 2021 capital budget stood at ₦ 9.97 billion indicating an increase of ₦ 4.25 billion when compared with to the 2020 allocation of ₦5.73 billion. This is relatively on recurrent expenditure which takes about 85% of the total allocated. In 2018 to 2020,

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recurrent expenditure stood at 91%, 95% and 94% the indication is underfunding as the infrastructural conditions of Federal Collage of Education have worsened.

Table 6: Budget Allocation: Federal Polytechnics in Nigeria





Source Adapted from budget 2021 with modifications

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The table 6 shows same amount was spent on Federal Collages of Education and was also spent on the federal polytechnics. The budgetary allocation to Federal Universities, Federal Collage of Education and Federal Polytechnics were grossly inadequate when placed side- by side, with education system in Nigeria

The capital allocation of each level has never gone beyond ₦ 3.5 billion, this is an aberration on the face of the government's neglect and abandonment. Neighboring countries like: Ghana, Chad and South Africa have kept on increasing their education allocation sectors, South Africa increased their allocations from R12.246 billion in 2018, to R 310 billion in 2019,R 387 billion in 2020 and tend to pro ject to R387 in 2023/2024 (Wahab,2022). Retrieve from http://www.abusites.com.ni gerian.pu.

The above backdrops in tables 1,2,3,5 and 6, have seriously contributed to variation of strikes by Academic Staff Union of University and embarked on strike actions to protest against poor funding of tertiary institutions for better conditions. This is illustrated on table 7 as state below.

Table 7: ASSU Strike and Duration 1981 -2020

S/N	Year of Strike	Duration of Strike
1	1981	6 months*
2	1988	2 weeks (14 days)
3	1992	6 months
4	1993	3 months
5	1994	6 months *
6	1995	5 months
7	1996	7 months **
8	1998	5 months
9	1999	5 months
10	2001	3 months
11	2002	2 weeks (14 days)
12	2003	6 months *
13	2005	3 days (3 days)
14	2006	2 months
15	2007	3 months
16	2008	1 week (7day)
17	2009	4 months
18	2010	5 months
19	2011	3 months
20	2013	6 months *
21	2017	1 months
22	2018	4 months
23	2020	9 months **

Source: Eduplona Report (2022)

In Table 7, the highest duration of the ASSU strike action was nine (9) months with three as trucks in 2020 and seven (7) months (*) in 1996, followed by six (6) months each in 1981, 1992, 1994, 2003, and 2013 (*). more so, five (5) months each in 1995, 1998, 1999 and 2010, while

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in 2009 and 2018 had four (4) months each among others.

The aggregate duration of ASSU strike within the 23 years is 7 years, six (6) months and ten (10) days, that is, 90 months, and 10 days. The duration is not an illusion or misleading vision that can mislead intectually, but the very need to spur government to action to the development of Federal Universities Education in Nigeria.

A short and long-run strike effects the employers and employees which could be the form of loss of productivity, non-payment of wages to employees of Federal Universities. Russell, (2023), Alabi (2019), and Sinha, (2020), saw industrial actions as a weapon of power in the hands of employees against employers who many likely dishonor employees demand. Consequently, strike actions in any form weather short or long-run impact negatively, on students' performance and their graduation. Put differently when federal government fails to meet and interact with ASSU's pro-strike or post-strike actions, definitely. Strike actions disrupt academic calendar which bestowed on students psyche cost and in ability to speedily regenerate towards academic exercise at the resumption of each semester.

Educational Implications of Funding Tertiary Education for National Development

The goals of manpower development and the promotion of basics research is conferred on tertiary education. Secondly, the future of any nation like Nigeria lies on the quantity and quality of education provided by tertiary institutions. In this view, for higher institutions to effectively promote national development, Federal Tertiary institutions must be adequately funded. Nahu & Ali,(2018) affirmed that financing education through increase in budgetary allocation is capable of enhancing human capital development in Nigeria.

The implication of the suggested options is that none adequate funding of education is increased, infrastructural decay, quality of teachers will as well improve leading to academic performance at all levels, hence the desired individual and national development. Poor funding of our education is characterized by decay and incessant strikes actions. Nigeria government should emulate some African countries like Ghana's 31%, Cote'd Vore (30%), Uganda (27.0%), Morocco (26.4%), South Africa (25.8%, Kenya 23.0%) and Tunisca 17.0%) (Table 1: World Bank 2012-2013), of their budgetary allocation to education in screening away illiteracy, unemployment and insecurity in the society.

Brain drain and reduces enrolment underfunding tertiary education can also lead to brain drain, as top students and faculty may seek better opportunities abroad. This can result in significant loss of talent expertise, ultimately affecting the countries economy and social development. Additionally, the reduced funding can lead to increase in tuition fees, making tertiary education less accessible to students from lower income backgrounds and ultimately, reducing enrolments.

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Conclusion

This paper x-rayed the major financer of tertiary education- the federal government budgetary allocation provision and other possible sources of funding via endowment donations, taxation, education tax fund among others. The budgetary allocation covers 20 World Bank sampled countries, percentage budgetary allocation to education in Nigeria between 2012 to 2021, Budgetary allocation to education by 16 African countries as at 2020 and budgetary allocation, to tertiary institutions from 1981 to 2021 and Federal Universities, Federal Colleges of Education, Federal Polytechnics 2018 to2021 in Nigeria.

The worrisome situation of underfunding tertiary education in Nigeria is the: 20 world bank sampled countries, Nigeria took the last 20th position with 6.9%, 16 African countries budgetary allocation, Nigeria ranked last position with 5.1%, and Nigeria percentage of budgetary allocation to education from 2012 to 2021, Nigeria with another lowest percentage of 5.1%.

The assessment / analysis shows that Nigeria government is still unable to meet the statutory requirement of the global body requirement of 26% of her annual budget that should be allocated to education. These must have led ASSU to strike severally between 1981 to 2020 spurring government to revive the fallen standard of education in Nigeria;

In summary, successful implementation of educational programmers at tertiary level is dependent on the adequate budgetary allocation of required funds. Suffice to state that adequate funding of tertiary institutions in Nigeria serves as the nucleus that place the higher institutions to be relevant development

Recommendation

Based on the above assessment on the funding of tertiary education, this study recommends as follows:

1: The federal government of Nigeria should endeavor to adequately fund tertiary education sector by allocating at least 15-20% of annual budget to education like her neighboring countries of Chad 15.1%, Cape Verde15.1% and Gabon 15; 1% as indicated by 16 African countries in 2020(table 1) 15.1% is more realistic considering Chad, Cape Vereke and Gabon targets and other West African Countries.

2: Funding of tertiary education in Nigeria should not be left at the hands of federal government nor through government budgetary provision alone rather there should be perfect deregulation of tertiary educations through public private partnership to ensure additional resources for the institutions.

3: Government should develop an applicable approach of organizing regular meeting or interactive sessions with ASSU executives to discuss issues of revitalization and availability of matching fund that may hinder the implementation of the agreement entered into be discussed. This if applied on time will certainly checkmate incessant strike actions.

4: Lastly, ASSU should always engage wider consultation and meeting with stake holders of education before

embarking on strike actions because wider consultation and dialogue will result in increased pressure on the government to implement agreement reached with ASSU on funding education.

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