

How to Cite

Obioma, N. C. (2023). A new dawn for education: Strategies for sustainable funding in Nigeria. *International Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(4), 229-235. <https://doi.org/10.21744/ijss.v6n4.2218>

A New Dawn for Education: Strategies for Sustainable Funding in Nigeria

Nwaham Caroline Obioma, PhD

Faculty of Education, University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State, Nigeria

Corresponding author email: drcaroline_nwaham@gmail.com

Abstract---The paper examines Nigeria's complex educational system, with a particular emphasis on methods for ensuring long-term funding and high standards of instruction. Nigeria, a country full of potential and promise, faces many obstacles that have impeded its advancement in education. The abstract provides a succinct overview of the main ideas and suggestions covered in the paper. Budgetary restrictions, poor infrastructure, a lack of teachers, regional differences, and gender inequality are some of the issues that Nigeria's education system must deal with. A comprehensive strategy is suggested to get beyond these obstacles and start down the path to change. The paper provides ideas for long-term financing, such as creative fundraising campaigns, public-private partnerships, and cross-border cooperation. It highlights how important policy changes are for effectively allocating resources, improving teacher preparation, and promoting transparency.

Keywords---a new dawn, challenges, education, strategies, sustainable funding.

Introduction

Nigeria is at a turning point in its history when it comes to education, as it is widely believed to be the key to a country's future. Its ability to offer high-quality education to its expanding population will determine whether its residents may look forward to a better future (Aditya, 2017). But there are a lot of obstacles in the way of this goal, chief among them being the difficulty of finding long-term funding for the education sector.

Nigeria's educational landscape is characterized by a range of educational quality levels, insufficient infrastructure, and budgetary constraints. In this environment, the hopes, and dreams of innumerable youth dangle in the balance, waiting for the change that sustained funding can bring.

In Nigeria's educational system, there is a need for public-private partnerships, policy reforms, international collaboration, and community engagement (Nwankwo & Nnorom, 2020). Together, we will seek to bridge the equity gap, empower the marginalized, and measure the impact of our collective efforts.

The Education Dilemma in Nigeria

Nigeria, a nation with boundless potential and a burgeoning youth population, grapples with an education dilemma of significant magnitude (Andries et al., 2022). This dilemma manifests itself in several critical aspects that demand urgent attention and innovative solutions.

- **Budgetary Constraints:** The allocation of funds to the education sector in Nigeria has often fallen short of the recommended benchmarks. Limited financial resources have resulted in overcrowded classrooms, inadequate infrastructure, and a shortage of qualified teachers. As a result, the quality of education suffers, hindering the nation's development and global competitiveness.
- **Infrastructure Challenges:** Many schools in Nigeria lack basic amenities such as classrooms, libraries, and functional laboratories (Achor, 2019). The dilapidated state of educational infrastructure hampers effective teaching and learning, perpetuating an environment where students struggle to acquire essential knowledge and skills.

- *Quality of Education:* The educational landscape in Nigeria is marred by disparities in the quality of education provided across regions. Rural areas often face more significant challenges than urban counterparts, leading to an alarming literacy and numeracy gap. Inconsistent curriculum implementation, outdated teaching methods, and a dearth of instructional materials further exacerbate this issue.
- *Access to Education:* While efforts have been made to increase access to education, significant portions of Nigeria's population, particularly in marginalized communities, still lack access to basic education. Gender disparities persist, with girls often facing more obstacles to attending school, resulting in an unequal distribution of educational opportunities (Meinck & Brese, 2019).
- *Teacher Shortage:* Nigeria faces a severe shortage of qualified teachers, especially in remote areas. This shortage is compounded by inadequate teacher training and motivation, leading to suboptimal learning outcomes for students.
- *Funding Uncertainty:* The education sector in Nigeria is often subject to funding uncertainties due to fluctuations in oil prices, the primary source of government revenue. This volatility affects long-term planning and hinders sustained investments in education.

The promise of sustainable funding

Sustainable funding represents the beacon of hope amid Nigeria's education challenges. It holds the potential to transform the nation's educational landscape, ensuring a brighter future for generations to come (Adesua et al., 2021). This promise of sustainable funding encompasses several crucial dimensions:

- *Stability and Predictability:* Sustainable funding brings stability and predictability to the education sector. With assured financial resources, educational institutions can plan for the long term, invest in infrastructure, hire and retain qualified teachers, and implement effective educational programs without the fear of budgetary shortfalls.
- *Quality Enhancement:* Adequate funding enables the improvement of educational quality. It allows for the development and adoption of modern teaching methods, the provision of up-to-date learning materials and technology, and the creation of conducive learning environments that inspire students to excel.
- *Equitable Access:* Sustainable funding ensures that educational opportunities are accessible to all, regardless of their socio-economic background or geographical location. It addresses disparities in resources and facilities between urban and rural areas, bridging the educational divide and promoting inclusivity.
- *Teacher Empowerment:* Adequate funding supports the training and professional development of teachers, empowering them to deliver high-quality education. It fosters a conducive work environment, better compensation, and incentives that attract and retain skilled educators.
- *Innovation and Research* (Lăzăroiu, 2017). Sustainable funding encourages innovation and research in education. It enables the development of curriculum enhancements, educational technology, and data-driven strategies to improve teaching and learning outcomes.
- *Global Competitiveness:* A well-funded education sector equips students with the skills and knowledge needed to compete globally. It enhances the nation's workforce, making Nigeria more competitive in the international arena and attracting investments in research and development.
- *Economic Development:* Education is a catalyst for economic growth. Sustainable funding not only benefits individuals but also contributes to the overall economic development of the nation by producing a skilled workforce capable of driving innovation and productivity.
- *Social Development:* Beyond economic benefits, education fosters social development by promoting tolerance, inclusivity, and civic engagement. It empowers individuals to be active and informed citizens, thereby strengthening the fabric of society.

Charting a new dawn for education in Nigeria

A new day is dawning in the Centre of Nigeria's educational landscape, where obstacles have frequently eclipsed opportunity. This is a dawn of innovation, hope, and a shared will to change the course of education in this dynamic country. Nigeria has struggled for far too long to meet the needs of its diverse and growing populace with high-quality education. The journey has been difficult due to financial limitations, inadequate infrastructure, and differences in educational quality. But in the face of these obstacles, a robust spirit shows itself, one that is determined to use sustainable finance to revitalize the education sector (Malinić, 2019).

When funding is stable and predictable, educational institutions can have enormous dreams. They can make long-term plans, update antiquated facilities, and provide contemporary teaching resources that encourage creativity and critical thinking in the classroom. No matter where they live, all children will be able to receive a top-notch education that leads to countless opportunities thanks to sustainable funding (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Avram, 2014; Selvaranjan et al., 2021).

The current landscape: navigating the challenges of Nigerian Education

Nigerian education is a broad and diversified field with a rich tapestry of opportunities and difficulties (Alkali, 2020). One must go into the complex layers of Nigeria's educational landscape, where systemic barriers coexist with the promise of change, to fully comprehend it.

A major problem that sits at the core of the contemporary educational landscape is fiscal limits. Nigeria has had difficulty providing enough funding for its education system even with its abundance of resources. Every aspect of the educational process is impacted by the nationwide fallout from this underfunding (Pilaar, 2018). The deterioration of the educational infrastructure is one of the most obvious effects of this underinvestment. Many schools suffer from overcrowding in classrooms, decaying infrastructure, and a dearth of basic amenities.

Furthermore, there are differences in the actual quality of education. While certain metropolitan areas and regions have well-resourced schools staffed by qualified instructors, the situation for others is very different. An alarming disparity in reading and numeracy is a result of widespread teacher shortages and inadequate resources in rural and marginalized regions (Evans, 2008; Wu et al., 2013).

Education access is yet another important issue. Even with tremendous efforts to boost enrollment, some populations—especially those in rural areas—remain without access to basic education for children. Gender differences still exist, with females frequently encountering greater obstacles to education than their male peers.

Strategies for sustainable funding

Amidst the challenges having Nigeria's education sector, a repertoire of innovative strategies has emerged, offering a ray of hope for sustainable funding (Nwachukwu et al., 2021). These strategies, when implemented thoughtfully and strategically, have the potential to revolutionize the way education is financed and delivered in the nation: Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), Innovative Fundraising Initiatives, Leveraging Technology for Financial Inclusion, Endowment Funds, Impact Investment, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Education Bonds, Educational Trusts, Resource Allocation Efficiency, International Grants and Aid, Tax Incentives for Education, Education Savings Plans.

Policy returns

Policy reforms emerge as critical signposts guiding our way. These reforms hold the potential to reshape the educational landscape, ensuring that the financial commitment to education is not just substantial but also strategic and impactful (Cobbinah & Yamoah, 2019). Here, we delve into the essential policy reforms that can chart a path towards a brighter educational future, Allocating a Larger Share of the Budget, Targeted Investment in Teacher Training, Transparent and Accountable Governance, Curriculum Reforms, Financial Assistance and Scholarships, Incentives for Private Sector Participation, Strategic Implementation of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), Long-Term Planning, Specialized Funds for Education, Quality Assurance and Evaluation, Equity-Centric Policies, Flexibility and Adaptability (Kehlet & Wilmore, 2002; Casadesus-Masanell & Ricart, 2010).

International collaboration: Forging global partnerships in Nigerian education

In the pursuit of sustainable funding and educational excellence, Nigeria recognizes the immense value of international collaboration (Ainscow, 2020). The challenges facing its education sector are not insular; they are part of a global tapestry of educational disparities and opportunities. By engaging with the international community, Nigeria can tap into resources, expertise, and support to advance its educational goals. Here, we explore the avenues and benefits of international collaboration in Nigerian education: Tapping into Global Education Initiatives, Foreign Aid and Grants, Scholarship Programs, Research Collaborations, Educational Diplomacy, Exchange Programs, Technology Transfer, Professional Development, Educational Trade Missions, Global Education Network, Crisis Response and Support, Advocacy for Educational Reform.

Community engagement: Empowering the heart of Nigerian education

In the quest for sustainable funding and educational transformation, community engagement emerges as a powerful force that can shape the destiny of Nigerian education (Yusuf, & Idoghor, 2020). Communities are not mere spectators but active stakeholders in the educational journey. Here, we explore the significance and strategies of community engagement in Nigerian education: Mobilizing Local Support, Parental Involvement and Awareness, Grassroots Education Campaigns, Community Schools, Cultural Integration, Community Resource Centers, Adult Education Programs, Skills Development, Local Governance Involvement, Community Feedback Mechanisms, Partnerships with Local Businesses, Celebrating Educational Milestones.

Ensuring equity in Nigerian Education: Bridging divides and fostering inclusivity

In the pursuit of sustainable funding and educational excellence, ensuring equity within Nigeria's education system emerges as a fundamental imperative in the pursuit of sustainable funding and educational excellence, ensuring equity within Nigeria's education system emerges as a fundamental imperative (Ezinna et al., 2021). Equity goes beyond mere access; it encompasses the guarantee that every child, regardless of their background, has an equal opportunity to receive a high-quality education. Strategic approaches to ensure equity in Nigerian education: Bridging the Urban-Rural Divide: Equitable Resource Allocation, Gender Equality in Education, Inclusivity for Diverse Communities, Special Needs Education, Affirmative Action and Scholarships, Community-Based Solutions, Data-Driven Decision-Making, Teacher Training on Equity, Safe and Inclusive Learning Environments, Affordable and Accessible Educational Materials, Monitoring and Accountability, Community Outreach and Sensitization, Inclusive Curriculum (Mobjörk & Linnér, 2006; Abebe et al., 2021; Cuccia & Rizzo, 2016).

Measuring impact: Navigating the educational journey with data and accountability

In the pursuit of sustainable funding and educational excellence, measuring impact stands as a compass that guides Nigeria's educational journey. Effective assessment and evaluation of educational initiatives are essential to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently and that educational goals are achieved (Mahirah, 2017). The critical importance of measuring impact in Nigerian education and strategies to accomplish this include: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Data-Driven Decision-Making, Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation, Benchmarking and Comparative Analysis, Parent and Student Feedback, Teacher Assessments, External Evaluations, Longitudinal Studies, Cost-Benefit Analysis, Peer Reviews, Feedback Loops, Transparency and Accountability, Use of Technology, Alignment with Educational Goals (Giang et al., 2022).

Overcoming challenges: Navigating the path to educational transformation

As Nigeria endeavours to secure sustainable funding and drive educational excellence, it must confront a myriad of challenges that have long hindered progress. Overcoming these challenges is pivotal to unlocking the full potential of its educational system and ensuring that every child receives a quality education (Bala, 2018). The critical challenges and strategies to navigate them include:

- Ensuring sustained political will and stability is paramount. Consistency in educational policies and long-term commitment from political leadership is crucial for implementing reforms and securing sustainability.
- Corruption can siphon vital resources away from education. Implementing transparent financial management systems, accountability measures, and stringent anti-corruption measures are essential.
- Nigeria's reliance on oil revenues makes the education sector vulnerable to economic fluctuations. Diversifying the economy and establishing a stable, education-focused funding mechanism can mitigate this risk.
- Overcoming infrastructure challenges, such as inadequate classrooms and facilities, requires strategic investment and planning. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) and international collaborations can help bridge the infrastructure gap.
- Addressing the shortage of qualified teachers necessitates comprehensive teacher training programs, competitive compensation, and incentives to attract and retain educators, especially in underserved areas.
- Navigating international relations and advocating for global support for education requires diplomatic efforts to secure grants, partnerships, and technical assistance.
- The educational system must be flexible and adaptable to evolving economic landscapes. Preparing students with skills for the jobs of the future is essential.

- Sustaining community engagement efforts requires ongoing communication, collaboration, and the empowerment of local communities to take an active role in shaping education.
- Investing in teacher training and professional development is critical to improving the quality of education. This requires funding, curriculum enhancements, and partnerships with teacher training institutions.
- Advocating for increased budget allocations to education and exploring innovative financing mechanisms can help address funding limitations.
- Embracing educational technology and digital resources may face resistance due to infrastructure challenges.

Recommendations

Based on the discourse, the following recommendations are made:

- *Increase Budget Allocation:* Advocate for a significant increase in the allocation of the national budget to education, meeting internationally recommended benchmarks to ensure adequate funding for all levels of education.
- *Sustainable Funding Mechanism:* Establish a stable and sustainable funding mechanism for education that is insulated from economic fluctuations, such as a dedicated education fund or endowment.
- *Transparent Financial Management:* Implement transparent financial management systems and robust accountability measures to prevent corruption and misallocation of educational resources.
- *Teacher Development:* Prioritize teacher training and professional development programs to improve the quality of education. This includes competitive compensation and incentives for teachers, particularly in underserved areas.
- *Infrastructure Development:* Launch an ambitious infrastructure development plan to address deficiencies in school facilities, particularly in rural and marginalized communities, using innovative financing approaches like public-private partnerships (PPPs).
- *Curriculum Reform:* Continuously evaluate and update the curriculum to align with global best practices and emphasize practical skills, critical thinking, and creativity.
- *Girls' Education:* Implement targeted initiatives to promote girls' education, including addressing cultural and societal barriers, providing scholarships, and ensuring safe and inclusive learning environments.
- *Community Engagement:* Encourage active community involvement in education through grassroots campaigns, parent-teacher associations (PTAs), and community-managed schools.
- *International Collaboration:* Forge international partnerships to access funding, expertise, and support for educational development, aligning with global education initiatives and advocating for educational cooperation.
- *Inclusivity and Equity:* Develop policies that prioritize equity, inclusivity, and diversity within the education system, including addressing regional disparities and providing support for students with disabilities.
- *Teacher Accountability:* Implement performance assessments and evaluations for teachers to ensure their effectiveness in the classroom.
- *Digital Literacy:* Embrace educational technology and digital resources, including the provision of affordable and accessible devices and internet connectivity to enhance digital literacy.
- *Policy Consistency:* Ensure consistent policy implementation by transcending political cycles and maintaining a long-term commitment to educational reform.

Conclusion

Nigeria's educational scene is a complex tapestry with a wide range of opportunities, aspirations, and obstacles. Though the landscape has seen its fair share of storms, something transformative and progressive may be seen within its folds—something that can become a reality with dedicated work. We pursue excellence in education and sustainable funding in Nigeria with a feeling of purpose and hope. Equipped with the awareness that education is not just a means to personal achievement but also the foundation of national wealth, Nigeria finds itself at a crossroads.

Techniques for long-term financing, legislative changes, global cooperation, community involvement, equity projects, and accurate impact assessment. These markers point Nigeria in the direction of a more promising future for education.

References

- Abebe, Y., Adey, B. T., & Tesfamariam, S. (2021). Sustainable funding strategies for stormwater infrastructure management: A system dynamics model. *Sustainable Cities and Society*, 64, 102485. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scs.2020.102485>
- Achor, E. E. (2019). Going Back to the Basics in the Quest for Scientific Development in Nigeria: From Classroom to Laboratory in Pre Tertiary Science. In *Science Exposition: Oju Journal Of Science, Technology And Mathematics Education* (Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 1-9).
- Adesua, V. O., Balogun, B. N., & Adelokun, I. S. (2021). Educational Finance in Pre-Covid and Covid-19 Era in Nigeria: What has changed and Way Forward. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 5(3), 69-84.
- Aditya, S. (2017). Education, the Smart Solution for Developing Smart Cities a Prime Requisite for Development for a better Tomorrow. *National Journal of Management and Technology*, 7, 36-44.
- Ainscow, M. (2020). Promoting inclusion and equity in education: lessons from international experiences. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*, 6(1), 7-16.
- Alkali, M. (2020). Barriers to Education and Learning: Security and Safety factors in Nigeria., 14.
- Andries, A., Morse, S., Murphy, R. J., Lynch, J., & Woolliams, E. R. (2022). Assessing education from space: Using satellite Earth Observation to quantify overcrowding in primary schools in rural areas of Nigeria. *Sustainability*, 14(3), 1408.
- Avram, M. G. (2014). Advantages and challenges of adopting cloud computing from an enterprise perspective. *Procedia Technology*, 12, 529-534. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.protcy.2013.12.525>
- Bala, M. (2018). CSR Initiatives in Education in India: A Critical Review of Initiatives, Issues and Challenges. *Madhu Bala (2018), "CSR Initiatives in Education in India: A Critical Review of Initiatives, Issues and Challenges"*, In Subathra C., Millath MA, Jameela S., Meenakshi VS, Priya LS (Eds.), *Social Responsibility*, 89-101.
- Casadesus-Masanell, R., & Ricart, J. E. (2010). From strategy to business models and onto tactics. *Long range planning*, 43(2-3), 195-215. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2010.01.004>
- Cobbinah, J., & Yamoah, M. (2019). Educational Reform. Research Anthology on Instilling Social Justice in the Classroom.
- Cuccia, T., & Rizzo, I. (2016). Less might be better. Sustainable funding strategies for cultural producers. *City, Culture and Society*, 7(2), 109-116. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ccs.2015.07.002>
- Evans, C. (2008). The effectiveness of m-learning in the form of podcast revision lectures in higher education. *Computers & education*, 50(2), 491-498. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2007.09.016>
- Ezinna, P., Ugwuibe, C., & Ugwoke, C. (2021). Gender Equity, Women Education and National Development in Nigeria.
- Giang, T. T., Khanh, M. Q., Hong, N. T. T., & Hoa, V. L. (2022). Life skills education capacity structure of teacher in the context of current education innovation. *International Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(2), 105-109. <https://doi.org/10.21744/ijss.v5n2.1893>
- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of Social Media. *Business horizons*, 53(1), 59-68. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2009.09.003>
- Kehlet, H., & Wilmore, D. W. (2002). Multimodal strategies to improve surgical outcome. *The American journal of surgery*, 183(6), 630-641. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0002-9610\(02\)00866-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0002-9610(02)00866-8)
- Lăzăroiu, G. (2017). Is there an absence of capability in sustainable development in universities?. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 49(14), 1305-1308.
- Mahirah, B. (2017). Evaluasi belajar peserta didik (siswa). *Idarah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 1(2).
- Malinić, D. (2019). Challenges of creating sustainable growth in infrastructure sectors: The gap between ambitions and capabilities. *Ekonomika preduzeća*, 67(1-2), 51-72.
- Meinck, S., & Brese, F. (2019). Trends in gender gaps: Using 20 years of evidence from TIMSS. *Large-Scale Assessments in Education*, 7(1), 1-23.
- Mobjörk, M., & Linnér, B. O. (2006). Sustainable funding? How funding agencies frame science for sustainable development. *Environmental Science & Policy*, 9(1), 67-77. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2005.10.002>
- Nwachukwu, S. T., Ugwu, C. M., & Wogu, J. O. (2021). Digital learning in post covid-19 era: Policy options and prospects for quality education in Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 1-18.
- Nwankwo, B. C., & Nnorom, S. U. (2020). School community relationship: propulsion for quality assurance practices in secondary school in Nigeria. *European journal of education studies*, 7(8).
- Pilaar, J. (2018). Starving the Statehouse: The Hidden Tax Policies Behind States' Long-Run Fiscal Crises. *Yale L. & Pol'y Rev.*, 37, 345.

- Selvaranjan, K., Navaratnam, S., Rajeev, P., & Ravintherakumaran, N. (2021). Environmental challenges induced by extensive use of face masks during COVID-19: A review and potential solutions. *Environmental Challenges*, 3, 100039. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envc.2021.100039>
- Wu, H. K., Lee, S. W. Y., Chang, H. Y., & Liang, J. C. (2013). Current status, opportunities and challenges of augmented reality in education. *Computers & education*, 62, 41-49. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2012.10.024>
- Yusuf, H. O., & Idoghor, U. (2020). Community support as an alternative and complementary source of funding basic education in Nigeria. *European Journal of Education Studies*.