



## Political upheaval and inconsistent policies as predictors of poor academic performance in Ogun state public secondary schools, Nigeria

Adeyanju Hamed I<sup>1\*</sup>, Babalola Micheal<sup>2</sup>

1. Department of Educational Management, Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State, Nigeria. bestad2008@yahoo.com

2. Backok University, IlisanRemo, Ogun State, Nigeria. E-mail: unclmike2003@yahoo.com

\*correspondence author: Department of Educational Management, Tai Solarin University of Education, Ogun State, Nigeria, Email: bestad2008@yahoo.com

### Publication History

Received: 06 April 2013

Accepted: 11 May 2013

Published: 1 June 2013

### Citation

Adeyanju Hamed I, Babalola Micheal. Political upheaval and inconsistent policies as predictors of poor academic performance in Ogun state public secondary schools, Nigeria. *Discovery*, 2013, 4(12), 51-54

### Publication License



© The Author(s) 2013. Open Access. This article is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

### General Note

Article is recommended to print as color digital version in recycled paper.

### ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to investigate the effect of political upheavals and inconsistent policies on students' academic performance in Ogun State public secondary schools. Descriptive research design was used for the study. Forty (40) secondary schools were randomly selected and 10 teachers were selected from each school. Questionnaire was the major instrument used while students WAEC results were used to ascertain the performances of the students. Chi-square analysis was used in analyzing the data. The result revealed significant combined contributions of political instability and inconsistent educational policies to the predictors of academic performance. It was recommended among other things that the political class should endure stable political atmosphere now that we have returned to democratization after the prolonged military intervention to enhance stable academic programme in our schools. Government and policy makers should ensure consistency in policy formulation and implementation through continuity in every educational project or programme not withstanding change of hands in government and education should be seen by all as a right and not a privilege to power commitment that will ensure improved students' academic performance.

**Key words:** political upheaval, inconsistent policies, predictor and academic performance

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The issue of poor academic performance of students at all levels of Nigeria's education system has continued to generate comments from education stakeholders who obviously are not pleased with the dwindling fortune of the millions of products turned out by all levels on yearly basis. Academic performance is the major yardstick for measuring the success or otherwise of

the education system in any country. The west African examination council (WAEC), National Examination Council (NECO) and National Board for Technical Education (NABTEC) are bodies saddled with the responsibility of conducting external examinations for secondary school students in Nigeria and the students performances to a large extent is used to determine their progression to institutions of higher learning. Obanya (1999) observed that

education is tied to the political system in operation in any society. According to him, the major problem bedeviling the education system in most African countries is political instability leading to inconsistency in policy formulation and implementation. In Nigeria, internal crisis as well as military regime experiences have greatly prevented the country from settling down to think of development activities including educational development and also prevented the thriving of ideas which could have led to creativity.

In the opinion of Enamiroro (2007), Nigeria like many other developing nations has witnessed an alarming fall in the standard of education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of our educational system which has caused differential academic performance of students especially in the last two decades. The inconsistency of government programmes on education especially when it is viewed in the line of the political manifestoes and ideologies of operating political party has its input in the aged long puzzle. Political parties like Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) as well as Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) in their bid to impress Nigerians that they have solutions to myriads of problems affecting the education system by initiating and implementing automatic promotion for students in primary and secondary school levels thereby presenting unqualified candidates for Junior Secondary School Examination (JSCE), Senior Secondary School Examination (SSCE) and other external examinations in this category which has resulted in mass failure of the students in the said examinations.

The political turmoil witnessed in Nigeria has also led to the neglect of the education system which has caused almost entire system malfunction. Even when there seems to be government attention in the education system, such in most times are uncoordinated leading to duplication of projects or even abandonment of such projects (Akanle, 2008). Even though Nigeria regards Education as capable of achieving rapid development and national integration as well as bring about desirable change in all spheres of human endeavor, the efforts of the various levels of government to provide education to the teeming population has been counterproductive. In other words, the efforts made have only succeeded in achieving growth and not development which is paramount to the academic performance of the students (Mohammed and Akanle, 2008). According to World Bank report (2008), the frequent changes in the education pattern in most African States have been responsible for the high rate of failure recorded. According to the report, in the last four decades, Nigeria has changed its education system more than four times i.e. 7-3-5, 6-5-4-, 6-3-3-4 and now 9-3-4. In the view of the World Bank report, the problem facing the education in Nigeria and most African Nations is not the system itself but its implementation. The current 9-3-4 cannot guarantee the total overall education system in Nigeria unless certain issues including human capital development allocation of 26% of the country's education, proper monitoring and evaluation which can only be achieved under positive political will that has soft spot for education.

Government instability has been a very serious bottle neck to institutional plan and implementation in Nigeria where there is frequent change of government characterized by non-continuity of policy programme. Since 1946, there has not been a conducive political atmosphere needed for smooth implementation of institutional planning in the country (Ajadi and Adedeji, 2009). They also added that the trend of politics in Nigeria has been that new governments come in with different policy for our educational institutions. Plans made by previous governments are either disrupted or discontinued, it is even worse if it is from a military to a civilian. They concluded that political instability is responsible for the gradual fall in the standard of education at the primary and secondary school levels which caused differential academic performance of students. Obayan (as cited in Lamido 2001) affirm that, in Africa, Education has been a product of the various historical, social, political and economic forces which have determined the future of the regime over the years. In the similar way, Gboyegallusanya (2007) in his work stated that politics and political instability have affected educational development in Nigeria. According to him, development may be difficult in poor countries without qualitative and quantitative education if a high percentage of the population is illiterate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

TebohoMoja (2000) also hinted that over the past decade, Nigeria has been plagued by frequent political unrest. This political instability has generated negative effect on the education system. Shittu (2004) in his own contribution opined that Nigeria like any other developing nations has witnessed prolong military rule and aborted civilian administration of decrees, edicts and laws concerning educational practices at federal, state

and local government levels. The inconsistent contribution of government due to frequent coup d'état which is usually characterized by non-continuity in the implementation of education laws and policies since the 1970s till the present time play a dominant role in lowering the quality of education in the country. Doris Bertrand (2003) went back the memory lane and concluded that the problem of education system in Nigeria started even when the colonial masters were at the helms of affairs. According to him, ten years after independence, there were ten times more children in primary education and nearly fifty times more at secondary school level. Since then further progress has been made despite the number of impediments and difficulties encountered many of which still prevail. According to him, some of the threats to the quality of education are painlessness, under funding or mismanagement of funds, poor maintenance culture and politicization of educational policies and programmes.

After the attainment of independence, emphasis was shifted from welfare delivery that was advocated in the 1914 development plan and that of 1946 to 1960 to economic growth. There were four national development plan between 1962 and 1985 and 3year rolling plan from 1990 to 1998. The first development plan focused on economic development. The Ashby commission was put in place in 1960 to look into education at the post school certificate and higher education. The Ashby formed the pillar upon which the education development plan was built. It is important to remember the political instability of the following years. Due to unsettled conditions, ongoing educational projects were stopped abruptly as donor countries terminated or postponed contracts. By this period, the political conditions became increasingly strained covering significant distortions in the original allocations of development plans which are generally at the expense of such services as education. The second development plan was 1970 to 1974 which was launched after the 1967 to 1970 civil war experience. The plan focused on reconciliation reconstruction and rehabilitation. As at 1973/1974, enrolment in primary and secondary schools doubled. Government committed 6.8% investment to the plan from GDP. The fourth development plan covered a period between 1981 and 1985. The envisaged expenditure under this plan was ₦85 billion which was hardly achieved due to decline in the economic fortune of the country and change in regime that occurred in December 1993. For instance the GDP growth rate expected during the period declared form 4.0% per annum to 2.9% per annum. The economy was also scheduled with inflation, unemployment and rising external debt. Government projects were abandoned and living standard of Nigerians started to decline. This period 1981 to 1985, the civilian government was in the country until 31st December 1983. During the civilian rule there was excessive politicization of educational policies and programmes. The fourth development plan was characterized with some educational development such as:

- A. A.Deliberate disregard for the national education policy, which was replaced by the educational programme of the ruling political parties at federal and state levels
- B. An unprecedented explosion of the educational system within so short a period from primary to university level including proliferation of private secondary and university education.

As soon as the military took over power in 1983, there was polarization of educational system in which some harsh measures were taken to control the educational growth and to share in the burden of funding with other stakeholders, voluntary agencies and private sector. Spending on classroom repairs for example climbed on real terms 1999 to 2000 at the primary level while it fell substantially at the secondary school level as part of lack of commitment of the political class as well as dwindling resources. Studies have confirmed that the much talked about free and compulsory education introduced by the government at primary and secondary school levels seems to focus only on increasing the number of students and not on improving educational performances or on raising standard with a conclusion that for government to achieve quality education, it is a costly endeavor that requires expenditures on textbooks, equipment, teaching materials, human capital development and adequate compensation. Secondary education remains strategic in any education system because it serves as the bridge between primary school and tertiary institutions. Whatever goes wrong with the system will definitely affect the higher system.

In Ogun State, the last dispensation witnessed political upheaval among the political class i.e. the executive and legislature over certain issues having

direct bearing on the education system to the extent that the state became notorious politically among other states in the south west as a theatre of trouble. The refusal of the state house of assembly to pass the bill of one hundred billion naira bond proposed by the executive set the stage for the much talk about show of shame which led to delay in payment of teachers salary and allowances, overdue promotion, return of schools to the missionaries, depletion of co-operative savings of teachers as well as other workers in the Gateway state. This led to frequent strike actions by teachers to press home their demand. The Compass Newspaper of 14<sup>th</sup> July 2010 reported the demonstration in Ogun central senatorial district under the umbrella of the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) against the return of schools to the missionaries. Also, the next newspaper of 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2010 also reported the demonstration of parents at Iwelroyin press centre to express their displeasure over the planned return of schools. While the government then led by OtunbaGbenga Daniel through his press secretary held that the action will bring about moral rebirth and academic excellence no pointer has confirmed that the twenty seven (27) schools returned to the missionaries are better off in terms of academic achievements. The broad aim of secondary education is the preparation for useful living within the society and for higher education. The principle which states that the secondary schools should be able to provide quality secondary education to all those who can benefit from it (NPE, 2004).

### 1.1. Statement of the Problem

However, it appears that the secondary schools are not living up to expectation in discharging its obligations. Omoregie (2005) lamented the products of today's secondary school system that apart from displaying dismal academic performance in external examinations, they can neither usefully live in the society nor move into higher institutions without their parents aid or forgery. They cannot think for themselves or respect the views and feelings of others. They have no aorta of dignity of labor except for things that will give them quick money. Ajayi (2002) observed that it is obvious that Nigerian secondary schools especially in Ogun state lack the quality, standard, efficiency, excellence, worthiness and peace that lead to the achievement of learning goals. The laudable benefits of secondary education in Nigeria may be a mirage due to infrastructural decay owing to long years of neglect, frequent changes in educational policies as well as poor human capital development hence, the need to research on the independent contributors of political upheaval on the academic performance of public secondary school students.

### 1.2. Purpose of the study

1. To diagnose the relationship between unhealthy political changes and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ogun State.
2. To investigate the relative effect of inconsistent government policy on the output of the products of public secondary school students in Ogun State.

### 1.3. Research Hypotheses

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** there is no significant relationship between political instability and students' academic performance in Ogun state public secondary schools

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** there is no significant relative effect of inconsistent government policies on secondary school students' academic performance in Ogun state.

### 1.4. Significance of the Study

This study will serve as guide for future policy planning and implementation in schools and provide alternative for the over politicized education system. It will educate government, policy makers, school administrators, teachers and parents on the roles of political upheaval in determining the academic performance of students in our secondary schools.

## 2. RESEARCH DESIGN AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The study employs descriptive design. Stratified and random sampling was used to select forty (40) public secondary schools stratified on zonal basis out of the three hundred and twenty three (323) public secondary schools in Ogun state and ten (10) teachers were selected randomly from each of the schools. Students' WAEC results for 2007 to 2012 were also collected from the selected schools to measure the students' academic performance.

### 2.1. Research Instrument

A self-developed and validated questionnaire tagged Political Upheavals and Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (PUSAPQ) was designed on political upheavals and students' academic performance. Students' WAEC results from 2007 to 2012 were also collected and analyzed to find students' academic performance. The questionnaire was administered through research assistants and 95% return rate was achieved.

### 2.2. Validation and Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument for the study was validated by subjecting the instrument to screening by experts which include colleagues to ascertain the validity of the instrument. The instrument was further subjected to test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.76 and 0.77 for both teachers and students using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient test.

### 2.3. Data analysis

The two null hypotheses stated in the study were tested using SPSS package subjected to chi-square statistical method.

## 3. RESULTS

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** there is no significant relationship between political instability and students' academic performance in Ogun State public secondary schools.

Table 1 shows the summary of chi-square analysis on the relationship between political instability and students' academic performance in Ogun state public secondary schools

Test statistics

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 5.9

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 5.1

$X^2_{cal} = 44.257$

Df = 16

$X = 65.535$

$X^2_{tab} = 26.296$

Table 1 above reveals that  $X^2$  calculated value 44.257 is greater than  $X^2$  tabulated value of 26.296 at 0.005 level of significance. The null hypothesis HO<sub>1</sub> is therefore rejected. The findings show that there is significant effect of political instability on students' academic performance.

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** there is no significant relative effect of inconsistent government policies on secondary school students' academic performance in Ogun state.

Table 2 shows the summary of chi-square analysis on the relative effect of inconsistent government policies on secondary school students' academic performance in Ogun state.

Test statistics.

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 7.2.

b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 6.7

Chi-square = 43.297<sup>a</sup>

Mean = 58.356<sup>b</sup>

Df = 13

Table value = 22.362

Table 2 above reveals that  $X^2$  calculated value 43.297 is greater than  $X^2$  tabulated value 22.362 at 0.5 level of significance. The null hypothesis HO<sub>2</sub> is therefore rejected. The finding shows that there is a relative effect of inconsistent government policies on secondary school students' academic performance in Ogun state.

### 3.1. Discussion of the Results

The two hypotheses were generated and tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The two hypotheses were tested on the effect of political instability and inconsistent policies on the academic performance of students in Ogun state. Table 1 revealed significant effect of political instability on students' academic performance ( $X^2 = 44.257$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the postulated hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis. This means that political instability has effect on academic performance of students. This corroborates Enamiroro (2007) and Muhammad and Akanle (2008) views that higher education and other levels have been extremely politicized and Nigeria has witnessed series of political instability with obvious effect on education which gradually laid the foundation for fallen standard at all levels of education which caused differential academic performance of students. The finding is also in line with the work of Gboyega (2007) which says politics and political instability have affected educational development in Nigeria. This finding also agreed with Teboho (2000) which says political instability has generated negative effect on education system. The second hypothesis states that there is significant relative effect of inconsistent policies on students' academic performance in state public secondary schools. Table 2 revealed significant effect of inconsistent educational policies on students' academic performance ( $X^2 = 43.297$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the postulated hypothesis is rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis. This means that inconsistent policies on education have significant effect on students' academic performance. This finding is in line with David (2001) that the poor quality of the products of our education system might not be unconnected with the frequent changes in the policy guidelines of education which does not ensure continually and full implementation.

**Table 1** Chi-square analysis on the relationship between political instability and students' academic performance in Ogun state public secondary schools

	HTSI	HTMI
Chi-square	44.257 <sup>a</sup>	65.535 <sup>b</sup>
If	16	19
Asymp. Sig.	0.000	0.000

**Table 2** Chi-square analysis on the relative effect of inconsistent government policies on secondary school students' academic performance in Ogun state

	HTS2	HTM2
Chi-square	43.297	58.356 <sup>b</sup>
Df	13	14
Asymp. Sig.	0.000	0.000

## DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

There is no financial support for this research work from the funding agency.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Many thanks to our guide and the respondents for their support and constructive criticism towards the successful completion of this research work.

## REFERENCE

- Ajadi TO, Adedeji SO. Principle of institutional administration, Lagos, National Open University of Nigeria. All Africa.com, stores, 200907060254: rancor in Ogun state, 2009
- Ajaji IA. Performance analysis of secondary education system in Nigeria. *Journal of contemporary issues in education*, 2004, 1(1), 95-100
- David E. The Indonesia economic crisis and its impact on educational environment and quality, Singapore institute of south East Asian studies, 2001, [www.http://www.iseas.edu.sg/pub.html](http://www.iseas.edu.sg/pub.html)
- Doris Bertrand. Achieving the universal primary education goal of the millennium declaration; new challenges for development co-operation, 2003, [www.unjui.org](http://www.unjui.org)
- Enamiroro PO. Education, poverty and development in Nigeria: the way forward in 21<sup>st</sup> century. *Journal of social science*, 2007, 14, [www.krepublisher.com](http://www.krepublisher.com)
- Federal republic of Nigeria. National policy on education, Lagos, NORDC Publications, 2004
- Gboyegallusanya. Politics and development of tertiary institution in Nigeria, training and research fellow, national institute for educational planning and administration, NIEPA, Nigeria, 2008, [www.unilorin.edu.ng](http://www.unilorin.edu.ng)
- Lamido TZ. Dividends of democracy in education in Nigeria, the fourth Republic experience, a paper presented at the annual general meeting of Zain Educational Development Association (ZEDA) Konya conference hotel, Zaria, 2001, [www.jso-africa.com](http://www.jso-africa.com)
- Muhammad AY, Akani OB. Socio-economic factors influence students' academic performance in Nigeria: some explanation from a local survey, 2008, [www.medwelljournal.com](http://www.medwelljournal.com)
- Obanya. Major management challenge of UBE, UBE forum, 1999, 1
- Omoriegie N. Re-packaging secondary educating in Nigeria for great and dynamic economy, paper presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual national conference of association for encouraging qualitative education in Nigeria, 2005
- Shittu MR. Socio economic development and academic performance of secondary school students, 2004, [www.ijst.com](http://www.ijst.com)
- Tehobo M. Nigeria education sector analysis: an analytical system of performance and main issues, Abuja, World Bank, 2000, [www.site-resources.worldbank.org](http://www.site-resources.worldbank.org)
- World Bank. Education sector strategies in Africa, Washington, 2008

## 3.2. Statement of findings

It could be deduced from the above analysis that:

- There is a significant effect of political instability on students' academic performance among secondary school students in Ogun state
- Policy consistency is a potent factor of academic performance among secondary school students in Ogun State.

## 4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusively, it was observed that political instability and policy inconsistencies have a great influence on students' academic performance.

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers have found it pertinent to make the following recommendations:

- The political class should ensure stable political atmosphere now that we have returned to democratization after a prolonged military intervention
- Government and policy makers should ensure consistency in policy formulation and implementation through continuity in every educational project or programme.
- Government should display enough political will to recognize education as right and not privilege by allocating 26% of the country's GDP to education sector.
- No government should politicize education.
- Laws should be put in place to enforce educational policies to letter not withstanding change of hands in government.