



## **Democratic Governance and Educational Development in Nigeria**

**Moses Baribera GBARAGE PhD, Th.D.**

Department of Educational Management,

Affiliated University: Ignatius Ajuru University of Education

**Abstract:** Democratic governance is foundational to sustainable socio-economic development and the safeguarding of human rights. Despite progress in expanding educational access in Nigeria under democratic rule, the quality of education remains a concern. Key factors like curriculum, teaching methods, teacher quality, and the learning environment are pivotal in shaping educational quality. Notwithstanding efforts to revise the curriculum, enhance teacher training, and improve the learning environment, desired outcomes have been elusive. Rising illiteracy rates have contributed to social issues such as terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, militancy, and cultism. Contrary to expectations, education has not brought about the anticipated societal transformation, despite substantial budget allocations. This paradoxical situation, wherein significant investments in education have not translated into social improvements, necessitates closer scrutiny. This study investigates the impact of democratic governance on Nigeria's educational development from 1999 to 2022, using the Human Capital Theory as a lens. Using a qualitative research approach, the study analyzes data from secondary sources such as textbooks, journal publications, internet materials, and government publications. The study reveals a multifaceted impact of democratic governance on Nigeria's education, with key policies enhancing educational access and infrastructure. However, policy implementation has encountered obstacles such as corruption, inadequate funding, poor teacher quality, and socio-cultural factors. Despite the involvement of diverse stakeholders, persistent challenges call for continued collaboration for improved education quality. To strengthen Nigeria's educational development under democratic governance, the study recommends several steps. These include increasing financial commitment to education, aligning it with UNESCO's recommended 15-20% national budget allocation, tackling corruption, improving teacher quality, and enhancing stakeholder engagement. Further, addressing socio-cultural barriers to education through advocacy campaigns and culturally sensitive educational policies is crucial. These measures aim to foster a more inclusive, high-quality educational system in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Education, Democracy, Governance, Development, Educational Policy, Implementation.

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

Democratic governance is the bedrock of any society striving for sustainable socio-economic development and the protection of human rights. Democratic governance is a form of government that is often seen as the optimal political system for ensuring freedom, human rights, and social and economic development. The defining features of democratic governance include free and fair elections, citizen participation, adherence to the rule of law, and respect for basic human rights (Coppedge et al., 2011). Free and fair elections are a crucial component of democratic governance. They provide citizens with the opportunity to choose their leaders and voice their opinions on public policies and decisions. According to Dahl (2000), free and fair elections are a fundamental prerequisite for a democratic government, as they ensure that power is based on the will of the people.

Citizen participation is another essential element of democratic governance. It includes the right

of all citizens to take part in the political process, either directly or through freely chosen representatives. Citizen participation enhances the legitimacy of the government and ensures that it is responsive to the needs and interests of the people (Verba, Scholzman & Brady, 2015). Democratic governance also involves adherence to the rule of law. This means that all individuals, institutions, and entities, including the government itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced, and independently adjudicated (Tamanaha, 2004). Also, democratic governance respects and protects human rights. This includes civil and political rights, such as freedom of speech and freedom of assembly, as well as economic, social, and cultural rights, such as the right to education and the right to health (Donnelly, 2013). By respecting and protecting these rights, democratic governance promotes human dignity and equality through a quality educational process.

In Nigeria, the journey towards democratic governance has been a tumultuous one, punctuated by military coups and civil unrest (Falola & Heaton, 2008). However, since 1999, Nigeria has enjoyed an uninterrupted democratic rule, marking a significant milestone in its political history. The democratic governance in Nigeria is based on the 1999 Constitution, which establishes Nigeria as a Federal Republic, with a President as the head of state and government. The constitution also provides for the separation of powers among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, a fundamental principle of democratic governance (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999).

The executive branch, headed by the President, is responsible for implementing laws and managing the day-to-day affairs of the government. The president is elected by the citizens through a general election, which is held every four years (Jega, 2015). This electoral process is a critical component of democratic governance, as it gives citizens the power to decide who governs them. The legislative branch, comprising the Senate and the House of Representatives, is responsible for law-making. The Nigerian legislature has played a crucial role in deepening democratic governance through its law-making functions and oversight of the executive (Ogundiya, 2010). The judiciary, as the third arm of government, plays a critical role in upholding the rule of law. In Nigeria, the judiciary has been instrumental in resolving electoral disputes and ensuring the accountability of the executive and legislative branches (Oyewo, 2016).

These democratic institutions play a crucial role in the development of various sectors within a country, including education. Education is a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of sustainable development. It plays a crucial role in social and economic development, fostering personal and societal well-being (UNESCO, 2017). According to Dewey (2018), education is a social process that equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to participate effectively in society. It is more than just formal schooling; it encompasses a lifelong learning process that takes place in various contexts, including the family, community, and workplace (UNESCO, 2015). However, access to quality education remains a global challenge, with disparities evident across regions, socio-economic groups, and genders (World Bank, 2020).

In Nigeria, the impact of democratic governance on educational development has been substantial yet complex, with varying degrees of success and challenges. Democratic governance provides an environment conducive for policy formulation and implementation. In Nigeria, democratic rule has seen the creation of policies aimed at improving the education sector. For instance, the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act of 2004, implemented during the democratic era, aimed to provide free and compulsory basic education for all Nigerian children (UBE, 2004). This policy was a significant step towards achieving universal primary education, a key goal of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2015). It also shows how democracy can foster an inclusive education policy that takes into account the needs of all citizens.

Another policy milestone under democratic governance was the implementation of the National Policy on Education (NPE) revised in 2013. The NPE provides a framework for education

development in Nigeria, emphasizing the need for functional education for self-reliance, better human relations, national unity, and national development (FRN, 2013). These policies reflect the democratic ethos of equal opportunity and the right to education for all citizens.

Resource allocation for education has also improved under democratic governance. Democratic governments have often prioritized education in budget allocations, reflecting the sector's importance in national development (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2003). For example, the allocation to education in the Nigerian federal budget has increased over the years, with the sector receiving 7.02% of the total budget in 2020 (NBS, 2020). Despite this increase, it is still below the UNESCO benchmark of 15-20% for developing countries (UNESCO, 2016). However, it is crucial to note that democratic governance has paved the way for more transparency and scrutiny of these allocations, fostering accountability.

While the democratic dispensation has made substantial strides in enhancing access to education, the quality of education in Nigeria continues to be a subject of concern. Factors such as curriculum, teaching methods, teacher quality, and the learning environment often determine educational quality. Efforts have been made under democratic governance to review the curriculum, enhance teacher training, and improve the learning environment. Yet, these endeavors have not led to the desired outcomes, as evidenced by a worrying rise in illiteracy rates, contributing to social issues like terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, militancy, and cultism in Nigeria.

Education, ideally, is expected to elevate the standard of living and promote societal transformation, especially in a democratic context. However, the Nigerian experience seems to deviate from this developmental paradigm. Despite substantial budget allocations for educational development, there has been an alarming increase in poverty levels during the democratic era, further hindering Nigerians' access to quality education.

This paradoxical situation, wherein substantial investments in education under democratic governance have not led to expected social improvements, calls for an in-depth examination. It compels scholars and policymakers to question and investigate the role and impact of democratic governance on Nigeria's educational development. Consequently, this study aims to scrutinize the role of democratic governance on educational development in Nigeria from 1999 to 2022. The analysis will delve into the policies implemented, the improvements achieved, and the challenges encountered, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between democratic governance and education in Nigeria.

### **Aim and Objectives of the study**

The main aim of the study is to examine the impact of democratic governance on educational development in Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- 1) assess the impact of democratic governance on educational development in Nigeria.
- 2) identify the challenges militating against the implementation of educational policies under democratic governance in Nigeria.
- 3) examine the role of stakeholders in promoting democratic governance and educational development in Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were stated to guide the study:

- 1) What is the impact of democratic governance on the educational development in Nigeria?
- 2) What are the challenges militating against the implementation of educational policies under democratic governance in Nigeria?
- 3) What are the roles of stakeholders in promoting democratic governance and educational development in Nigeria?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Democratic Governance**

Democratic governance is a form of government in which power and civic responsibility are exercised by all adult citizens, either directly or through their freely elected representatives (Dahl, 1998). The concept is often juxtaposed with authoritarian or dictatorial governance, where power is concentrated in the hands of a few or a single individual. The essence of democratic governance lies in the principle of "rule by the people" (Dahl, 2010).

In a democracy, citizens have the power to elect their representatives in free and fair elections. These representatives are held accountable for their actions and decisions through the legal and political system (Schmitter & Karl, 2011). This system of checks and balances, originally articulated by Montesquieu (1748), is a defining feature of democratic governance. It prevents the concentration of power and protects the rights and liberties of individuals. Democratic governance is not just about elections, though. It also encompasses principles of transparency, participation, responsiveness, consensus, equity, effectiveness, and rule of law (UNDP, 2014). These principles ensure that the government is open and accountable, that citizens can participate in decision-making processes, and that the government responds to the needs and expectations of the citizens.

Transparency in democratic governance means that the government's operations and decisions are open to public scrutiny. This is crucial for preventing corruption and maintaining the trust of the citizens (Holmberg, Rothstein, & Nasiritousi, 2009). Transparency necessitates that governmental actions and decisions be open to public examination (Holmberg, Rothstein, & Nasiritousi, 2009). This openness serves as a deterrent to corruption, providing a check on misuse of power and public resources. Moreover, transparency is integral to fostering and preserving public trust in government. It reassures citizens that decisions are being made in their best interests and with public accountability. By promoting honesty and accountability, transparency thus strengthens the democratic process, as it enables citizens to make informed judgments about the performance of their elected representatives and public institutions. In essence, transparency is fundamental to a healthy democracy, contributing to good governance and the overall betterment of society.

Participation, a central tenet of democratic governance, advocates for the inclusion of all citizens in decision-making processes, not just in voting, but in a broader context (Pateman, 2010). It encourages citizens to partake in public debates, offer their perspectives during consultations, and get involved in various civic activities. This active participation is crucial for a functioning democracy, as it ensures diverse voices are heard, and policies are representative of the collective will. More than just a democratic right, participation is a responsibility, fostering a sense of ownership in democratic processes. It empowers individuals, making them active contributors to their society. Therefore, participation is not merely about casting votes; it's about fostering an engaged and active citizenry, thereby strengthening democratic governance.

Responsiveness in democratic governance means that the government listens to the needs and concerns of the citizens and responds accordingly. This principle ensures that the government serves the interests of the people, not just the interests of those in power (Pitkin, 1967). Consensus in democratic governance refers to the process of making decisions that consider and reflect diverse views and interests. This principle promotes social cohesion and stability, as it helps to prevent conflicts and divisions within society (Lijphart, 2017).

Equity, another key principle, ensures that all citizens have equal rights and opportunities, regardless of their social, economic, or political status. This principle is crucial for promoting social justice and reducing inequalities (Rawls, 2011). Effectiveness in democratic governance refers to the government's ability to implement policies and deliver services efficiently and effectively. This principle ensures that the government is capable of meeting the needs and expectations of the citizens (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2010).

Rule of law is another key tenet of democratic governance. It implies that all individuals and entities, including the government itself, are equally accountable to the law (Tamanaha, 2004). It establishes a fundamental principle: that no one is above the law, regardless of their position or power. This cornerstone of democratic governance serves as a safeguard for individual rights and freedoms. It delineates the boundaries of authority, and provides mechanisms to prevent and redress abuses of power. By ensuring fair application of the law, it promotes justice and equality. The rule of law thus forms the bedrock of a democratic society, offering assurance that every citizen, from the common man to the highest government official, operates under the same set of legal principles, thereby maintaining a fair and balanced society.

Despite these ideals, democratic governance faces numerous challenges. These include the risk of "tyranny of the majority", where the majority can impose its will on the minority; the potential for corruption and misuse of public resources; and the possibility of political instability due to factionalism and polarization (Tocqueville, 2015; Lipset, 2019; Przeworski, 2011). However, with robust institutions and active citizen participation, these challenges can be mitigated to a large extent.

In conclusion, democratic governance is a form of government that emphasizes the principles of transparency, participation, responsiveness, consensus, equity, effectiveness, and rule of law. It empowers citizens to participate in decision-making processes, holds the government accountable for its actions, and strives to serve the best interests of all citizens. Despite its challenges, democratic governance remains a cornerstone of free, just, and prosperous societies.

### **Educational Development**

Educational development refers to the process of improving the quality of education in a society through a variety of means such as policy reform, teacher training, curriculum design, educational technology, and more (Fullan, 2017). Educational development also involves a systemic approach, taking into account the complex interactions between different components of the education system and the broader socio-economic context (Fullan, 2017). This includes aspects such as education policy, leadership, financing, community involvement, and more. It requires a holistic and coordinated effort from all stakeholders, including governments, educators, parents, students, and communities. It's a dynamic, ongoing process that aims to ensure all individuals have access to high-quality, relevant, and effective education. Education is a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of social and economic development (UNESCO, 1990). A well-educated population is more likely to be productive, healthy, and actively engaged in civic and cultural life (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2008). Therefore, the development of education is a priority for countries worldwide.

An essential aspect of educational development is the promotion of equitable access to education. This means ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their socio-economic background, gender, ethnicity, or other factors, have equal opportunities to receive a quality education (UNESCO, 2000). It involves addressing barriers to access, such as poverty, discrimination, and geographical isolation, as well as providing inclusive and adaptive learning environments for students with different learning needs (UNESCO, 2015).

In addition to access, the quality of education is a key focus of educational development. Quality education goes beyond basic literacy and numeracy. It aims to develop a broad range of skills and competencies, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and social and emotional skills, that are necessary for individuals to thrive in the 21st century (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). To achieve this, educational development initiatives often focus on improving curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and assessment systems (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Teacher training is another critical area of educational development. Research has shown that teacher quality is one of the most important factors influencing student achievement (Hattie, 2008). Therefore, enhancing the professional skills and knowledge of teachers, as well as improving their working conditions and status, is a key strategy for improving the quality of education (OECD, 2005).

The role of educational technology in educational development has also become increasingly prominent in recent years. Digital technologies can enhance teaching and learning by providing access to a wealth of resources and opportunities for collaboration and interaction. They can also help to personalize learning and provide feedback on student performance (Collins & Halverson, 2009). However, the effective integration of technology in education requires careful planning and support, including infrastructure development, teacher training, and policy support (UNESCO, 2013).

Despite the progress made in educational development, many challenges remain. These include persistent disparities in access to and quality of education, the rapid pace of technological and societal change, the need to prepare students for the jobs of the future, and the impact of global issues such as climate change and migration on education (OECD, 2019). Therefore, educational development requires ongoing efforts and innovation to ensure that all individuals can benefit from high-quality education.

In conclusion, educational development is a complex and multifaceted process aimed at improving the quality and accessibility of education. It is an essential endeavor for building a prosperous, equitable, and sustainable future. Despite the challenges, the potential benefits of educational development - for individuals, communities, and societies - are immense.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Democratic governance significantly impacts the development of education in any given country, and Nigeria is no exception. The relationship between these two concepts can be analyzed through the lens of the Human Capital Theory. This theory was first proposed by economists Schultz (1961) and Becker (1962), who argued that investments in education (or 'human capital') significantly contribute to economic growth.

The major assumptions of the Human Capital Theory are as follows:

Firstly, the theory posits that education enhances an individual's productivity. By equipping people with skills and knowledge, education can increase their economic potential and value in the labor market. This not only improves their individual prosperity but also contributes to societal wealth and development (Schultz, 1961).

Secondly, the theory asserts the necessity of investments in education. These investments, made by individuals, families, or governments, are viewed as essential for improved economic outcomes. Governments, particularly, are tasked with the responsibility of funding education and shaping policy reforms to facilitate this development (Becker, 1962).

Lastly, Human Capital Theory conceives of the skills, knowledge, and abilities acquired through education as a form of 'capital.' This capital, much like physical or financial assets, can be used to generate economic and social benefits. Individuals, by investing time and resources in education, can enhance their human capital, leading to better job opportunities, higher earnings, and improved life outcomes. On a broader scale, a society with a high level of human capital is likely to experience greater economic growth and social progress (Becker, 1964).

The relevance of the Human Capital Theory to the study of democratic governance on educational development in Nigeria is profound. Democratic governance involves making decisions and policies that are in the best interests of the citizens, based on their participation and input. This includes decisions and policies about education. When a democratic government invests in education, it is essentially investing in human capital. By improving the quality and accessibility of education, the government can enhance the productivity and prosperity of its citizens, leading to better economic and social outcomes for the country as a whole.

In the Nigerian context, the Human Capital Theory can be used to analyze the effects of democratic governance on educational development. For example, the introduction of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program in 1999, which aimed to provide free and compulsory education for all children aged 6-15 years, can be seen as an investment in human capital

(Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). By expanding access to education, the program aimed to enhance the skills and abilities of the Nigerian population, thereby contributing to the country's economic development.

Similarly, efforts to improve the quality of education, such as curriculum reforms and teacher training programs, can be viewed through the lens of the Human Capital Theory. These initiatives aim to enhance the 'capital' of the Nigerian population by improving the quality of the education they receive.

However, the application of the Human Capital Theory also highlights some of the challenges facing educational development in Nigeria. Despite efforts to improve access and quality, the education sector in Nigeria remains underfunded, and there are significant disparities in access to and quality of education between different regions and socio-economic groups (Oduro, 2007). These issues indicate that more needs to be done to fully realize the potential benefits of investing in human capital.

In conclusion, the Human Capital Theory provides a useful framework for analyzing the impact of democratic governance on educational development in Nigeria. It highlights the potential benefits of investing in education and underscores the need for continued efforts to improve the quality and accessibility of education in the country.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study employs a qualitative research design to scrutinize the influence of democratic governance on educational development in Nigeria. The qualitative approach provides a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted interactions between governance practices and educational outcomes. It allows for a deep exploration of the dynamics, challenges, and prospects of democratic governance in shaping the educational landscape in Nigeria.

The data for this study were gleaned primarily from secondary sources, encompassing a range of materials to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the topic. These sources include government publications, which offer official perspectives and statistical data on educational policies and their implementation. Academic textbooks and scholarly articles provide theoretical frameworks and empirical findings on the subject, contributing to a thorough and rigorous analysis. Newspapers and other journalistic resources provide real-time reports and commentary on the state of education and governance in Nigeria, offering invaluable insights into the contemporary context. These various sources offer a broad spectrum of perspectives, from academic to practical, local to global, and official to public, thereby enriching the depth and breadth of the analysis.

This wealth of data was meticulously subjected to content analysis, a research technique used to interpret textual data systematically. This process involved categorizing the data into themes and patterns related to democratic governance and educational development. Content analysis allowed for an objective and systematic description of the data, thus offering significant insights into the impact of democratic governance on Nigeria's educational development. This comprehensive approach to data collection and analysis, grounded in a qualitative research design, ensured a robust and in-depth exploration of the research topic, providing a significant contribution to the understanding of the interplay between democratic governance and educational development in Nigeria.

## **DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

This heading presented data based on the stated research questions in the section of this study.

### **Assessment of the Impact of Democratic Governance on Educational Development in Nigeria, 1999-2022**

Since Nigeria's return to democratic rule in 1999, the impact of democratic governance on the educational development in the country has been a topic of great interest. The period from 1999 to 2022 has seen several governance changes and educational policies which have shaped the trajectory of educational development in the country. Democratic governance is fundamentally

about ensuring that all citizens have a say in the decisions that affect their lives, including those concerning education. In theory, democratic governance should lead to improved educational outcomes, as it promises a government that is responsive to the needs and aspirations of its citizens (United Nations Development Programme, 2002).

One of the significant educational policies enacted during this period is the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act of 2004. This Act mandated free and compulsory basic education for every Nigerian child in the primary and junior secondary school age bracket (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). As a landmark legislation, the UBE Act aimed to broaden access to education for all Nigerians, with a particular focus on addressing the needs of the marginalized and disadvantaged sections of the population. The UBE Act aimed to tackle the barriers to education by making it both universally accessible and compulsory. This ensured that every child, irrespective of their socio-economic background, would have the chance to receive basic education. The implications of this were profound - education was no longer a privilege, but a fundamental right, thereby democratizing access to learning. This ambitious legislation yielded substantial results in terms of increased school enrollment rates. In the span of 18 years, from 2000 to 2018, the primary school net enrollment rate witnessed a significant surge from 61.3% to 70.6% (World Bank, 2020). This increase was a testament to the transformative potential of the UBE Act in expanding access to education in Nigeria.

However, the implementation of the UBE Act has not been without challenges. The policy's noble objectives were often hampered by practical hurdles on the ground. A crucial concern was the inadequate funding for education, which resulted in infrastructural deficits in schools, leading to poor learning conditions for students. Many schools, especially in rural areas, grappled with shortages of basic facilities, such as classrooms, libraries, and laboratories, undermining the quality of education. Another significant challenge was the shortage of qualified teachers, particularly in rural areas. The lack of well-trained and motivated teachers has been a persistent issue, hampering the effectiveness of the UBE Act. Teachers form the backbone of any educational system, and without their adequate presence, the goal of universal basic education remains elusive (UNESCO, 2015).

Second, the establishment of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) in 2011 marked another pivotal moment in Nigeria's quest to enhance its educational landscape. This fund was introduced as a supplementary financial resource specifically targeted at public tertiary institutions (TETFund, 2012). The rationale behind the TET Fund was to provide these institutions with the much-needed financial support to foster their growth and improve the quality of education offered. One of the key areas that the TETFund has significantly impacted is infrastructural development in tertiary institutions. By providing funds for the construction and maintenance of physical structures such as lecture halls, libraries, laboratories, and hostels, TETFund has helped to create a conducive learning environment in many institutions. This has not only increased the capacity of these institutions to admit more students, but also significantly improved the quality of education delivered.

Moreover, the TETFund has been instrumental in boosting research activities in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Recognizing the role of research in fostering innovation and enhancing the quality of education, the fund has provided much-needed financial support for research activities. This has promoted academic scholarship and contributed to the generation of new knowledge and innovative solutions to societal problems. Staff development is another area where the TETFund has made significant contributions. The fund has supported capacity-building programs, including training and professional development for academic and non-academic staff. This has enhanced the quality of teaching and learning in these institutions, as well as improved the administrative and managerial efficiency of these institutions (TETFund, 2012).

However, the implementation of the TETFund has not been without challenges. Concerns have been raised about the equitable distribution of the fund. Some critics argue that the allocation of the fund has not been evenly distributed among the various tertiary institutions in the country,



leading to disparities in the quality of education offered by these institutions (Okebukola, 2013). This raises questions about the effectiveness of the TETFund in addressing the systemic challenges facing Nigeria's tertiary education sector.

In sum, while the TETFund has made significant contributions to infrastructural development, research, and staff development in Nigeria's public tertiary institutions, issues of equitable distribution remain a concern. Addressing these concerns will be crucial in ensuring that the TETFund achieves its ultimate objective of improving the quality of tertiary education in Nigeria.

Third, the democratic governance plays a crucial role in fostering community participation in the educational decision-making process. By incorporating the voices of civil society and local communities into these processes, democratic governance can create a more inclusive and responsive education system. One of the key initiatives that exemplify this approach in Nigeria is the School-Based Management Committee (SBMC). Introduced under the democratic dispensation, the SBMC is a mechanism designed to facilitate direct community involvement in the management and governance of schools. These committees are typically comprised of various stakeholders, including parents, teachers, community leaders, and sometimes students. The overarching aim of the SBMC initiative is to enhance the accountability, transparency, and effectiveness of schools by ensuring they are responsive to the specific needs of their local communities (World Bank, 2020).

The establishment of SBMCs across Nigeria has brought a significant shift in the management of schools. Previously, decisions regarding school management were often made by distant administrative bodies with little or no input from the communities directly affected by these decisions. The SBMCs, by contrast, bring decision-making powers to the local level, allowing those who are most familiar with the unique challenges and opportunities of their communities to have a direct say in how their schools are run. SBMCs play various roles in school management. They help develop school improvement plans, monitor teacher attendance, mobilize resources for school development, and advocate for the needs of their schools to higher authorities. By performing these roles, SBMCs not only contribute to the day-to-day running of schools but also to the broader objective of improving educational outcomes (World Bank, 2020).

Moreover, SBMCs promote accountability in school management. They provide a platform for community members to scrutinize the performance of their schools, thus ensuring that school administrators and teachers are held accountable for their performance. This heightened accountability can lead to improved teacher performance, better use of resources, and ultimately, better educational outcomes for students. Furthermore, by engaging community members in school management, SBMCs can foster a sense of ownership and commitment to education among community members. When parents and community members are actively involved in the governance of their local schools, they are more likely to take an interest in the education of their children and to support their schools in various ways (World Bank, 2020).

The SBMC initiative, facilitated by democratic governance, represents a significant step towards a more inclusive, accountable, and effective education system in Nigeria. By bringing decision-making closer to the grassroots level, SBMCs have the potential to enhance the responsiveness of schools to local needs, improve educational outcomes, and foster a culture of community ownership and support for education. However, for these potential benefits to be fully realized, it is crucial to ensure that SBMCs are adequately supported and empowered to perform their roles effectively.

However, the impact of democratic governance on educational development in Nigeria has been mixed. While there have been improvements in access to education and policy reforms, significant challenges remain. These include persistent disparities in educational access and quality, inadequate funding, infrastructural deficits, and poor teacher quality (World Bank, 2020). The disparities in educational outcomes are particularly evident when comparing different regions in the country. The northern part of Nigeria, for instance, has significantly lower

educational indicators compared to the southern part, reflecting regional disparities in wealth, security, and cultural attitudes towards education (UNESCO, 2015).

In conclusion, the impact of democratic governance on educational development in Nigeria from 1999 to 2022 has been significant but also fraught with challenges. While democratic governance has facilitated policy reforms and increased citizen participation, it has not fully addressed the persistent issues of inadequate funding, poor quality, and inequitable access. As Nigeria continues its democratic journey, it is essential that these challenges are addressed to ensure that all Nigerians can benefit from quality education.

### **Challenges Militating against the Implementation of Educational Policies under Democratic Governance in Nigeria**

The implementation of educational policies in Nigeria under democratic governance from 1999 to 2022 has faced numerous challenges. Despite the significant strides in policy formulation, the realization of the intended objectives has often been impeded by a combination of factors. One major challenge has been inadequate funding. This is a key challenge militating against the successful implementation of educational policies in Nigeria, a situation that has persisted from 1999 to 2022. The issue of funding is central to the execution of any policy, more so for educational policies which require substantial financial resources to facilitate infrastructural development, hire and train teachers, develop curriculum, and manage day-to-day operations of educational institutions. Despite the universal acknowledgment of education as a pivotal sector for national development, the fiscal commitment to education in Nigeria has often been lacking. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommends that to achieve significant strides in educational development, governments should allocate between 15% to 20% of their national budget to the education sector (UNESCO, 2015). This recommendation is based on the understanding that substantial investment in education is necessary to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and in the long run, enhance the human capital of a country.

However, the case of Nigeria presents a different reality. The country has consistently fallen short of this recommended benchmark, with budgetary allocations to education often falling woefully below the suggested minimum. This persistent underfunding has created an enormous financial gap that adversely affects the execution of educational policies and programs. The impact of this underfunding is evident in the implementation of various educational policies and programs. For instance, the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program, which was designed to provide free, compulsory education for every Nigerian child of primary and junior secondary school age, has been significantly hampered by inadequate funding. The vision of the UBE program is undermined by the reality of under-resourced schools, poorly paid and untrained teachers, and a lack of essential educational materials.

Similarly, the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), established to provide supplementary funding for public tertiary institutions, has also been affected by the broader issue of inadequate funding. While the TETFund has indeed contributed to infrastructural development, research, and staff development in tertiary institutions, its reach and impact are limited by the overall underfunding of the education sector.

- **Inadequate:** Inadequate funding remains a significant challenge to the implementation of educational policies in Nigeria. The persistent under-allocation of financial resources to education undermines the country's ability to improve its educational system and, by extension, its human capital development. As Nigeria continues its democratic journey, addressing this funding challenge will be crucial in ensuring that the country's educational policies can be effectively implemented to achieve the desired outcomes.
- **Corruption:** Corruption poses a substantial hurdle to the successful implementation of educational policies in Nigeria, hindering progress across various facets of the education sector. In a country grappling with high corruption levels, the education sector is not immune to this vice. The misuse and embezzlement of funds earmarked for educational development

have undermined the actualization of educational goals and policies (Transparency International, 2019). Corruption remains a significant impediment to educational development in Nigeria, with various studies and indices highlighting its prevalence in the sector. Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, which assesses the perceived levels of public sector corruption in countries worldwide, ranked Nigeria 149 out of 180 countries in 2020, indicating high levels of corruption (Transparency International, 2020). Within the education sector specifically, corruption manifests in numerous ways, including embezzlement of funds, bribery in school admissions, procurement fraud, and academic dishonesty. The Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) conducted a survey in 2020 that revealed that approximately 67% of the respondents perceived the education sector as highly corrupt (SERAP, 2020). These perceptions were largely driven by firsthand experiences of corrupt practices, such as having to pay bribes for school admissions or witnessing the misappropriation of school funds.

In 2018, the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) conducted a study centered on the prevalence of corruption in Nigerian university admissions. The findings revealed a concerning array of irregularities throughout the admissions process. Instances of bribery and favoritism were found to be alarmingly common, creating an unjust admissions environment. This widespread corruption resulted in numerous qualified and deserving candidates being unjustly denied admission opportunities. The ICPC's study brought to light the urgent need for stringent measures to combat these unethical practices and restore integrity to Nigeria's university admissions process (ICPC, 2018).

These corruption indices and statistics paint a grim picture of the state of Nigeria's education sector. They underscore the urgent need for comprehensive anti-corruption measures to ensure the integrity of the education system and guarantee equal access to educational opportunities for all Nigerians. The harmful effects of corruption in the education sector are manifold. At the most basic level, corruption results in the diversion of valuable resources away from their intended purposes. Funds that should be used for building classrooms, procuring teaching materials, improving infrastructure, and training teachers are siphoned off for personal gain. This deprives the education sector of crucial resources, leaving schools under-resourced and teachers underpaid, and denying students the quality education they deserve.

Corruption also erodes public trust in the education system. When funds allocated for education are misappropriated, it undermines the credibility of the system and creates a perception that the education sector is not functioning effectively. This can lead to public disillusionment and apathy, with parents becoming less willing to support schools and citizens becoming less inclined to hold the government accountable for educational outcomes. Furthermore, corruption can perpetuate inequality in the education sector. When funds are embezzled, it is often the most vulnerable students - those in rural areas, girls, and the poor - who bear the brunt of the resource shortage. This exacerbates educational disparities, making it harder for these disadvantaged groups to access quality education

➤ **Lack of Quality Teachers:** Nigerian educational system lacks quality teachers. The quality and availability of teachers represent pivotal challenges facing Nigeria's education sector. A robust education system relies heavily on the presence of motivated, well-trained teachers capable of delivering high-quality education. Unfortunately, the teaching profession in Nigeria has been plagued by a series of issues that have compromised both the attractiveness of the profession and the quality of instruction provided. One of the key issues is low remuneration. The teaching profession in Nigeria is typically characterized by low wages, which, in addition to the high workload and challenging working conditions, makes the profession less appealing. This low salary scale does not only discourage potential entrants but also demotivates those already in the profession, leading to a decrease in the overall quality of teaching (World Bank, 2020).

- **Lack of Motivation:** Gbarage M.B & Ololube, (2022) asserted that teachers should be motivated in terms of good healthcare and housing loan to able them get house of their own. When teachers are happy, they will perform well. Motivation is a critical factor in any profession, and it is especially important in teaching, where the level of a teacher's motivation can significantly impact the quality of instruction and, ultimately, students' learning outcomes. The low levels of motivation among Nigerian teachers can be attributed to various factors including low remuneration, poor working conditions, limited opportunities for career progression, and a lack of recognition and respect for the profession (Gbarage, 2021)
- **Lack of Professional Development:** Additionally, there is a distinct lack of opportunities for professional development for teachers in Nigeria. Continuous professional development is crucial in the teaching profession as it helps teachers to keep up with the latest pedagogical strategies, changes in curriculum, and advancements in technology. However, in Nigeria, opportunities for such professional growth are limited, which inhibits the ability of teachers to improve their teaching practices and adapt to the changing demands of the profession. The culmination of these issues has led to a shortage of qualified teachers, particularly in rural areas. Many qualified professionals are dissuaded by the low remuneration, lack of motivation, and limited opportunities for professional development, leading to a significant shortage of teachers. This shortage is more pronounced in rural areas, where the working conditions are even more challenging.
- **Lack of Good Infrastructure:** Inadequate infrastructure is a substantial challenge that continues to hamper the progress of the educational sector in Nigeria. This issue is particularly stark in rural areas, where schools often lack the basic facilities that are instrumental for an effective learning environment. Essential facilities such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and sanitation facilities are often lacking or in a state of disrepair in these rural schools. Classrooms, for instance, are typically overcrowded and in dire need of maintenance, making them unsuitable for effective teaching and learning (Adeyemi, 2008). Libraries and laboratories, crucial for enhancing students' learning experiences and for teaching science and technology subjects effectively, are either non-existent or poorly equipped (Akpan, 2011). Sanitation facilities are another area of concern. Many schools lack access to clean water and decent toilets, which poses a significant health risk and adversely affects school attendance rates, especially among girls (UNICEF, 2015). The poor state of infrastructure in these schools undermines the learning environment and, by extension, the quality of education. This situation has significant implications for the implementation of educational policies aimed at improving the quality of education. Without the necessary infrastructure, policies such as the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program, meant to provide free, compulsory, and quality education, cannot be effectively implemented (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004).
- **Poor Salary:** One of the key reasons why people work is to earn good money that will help them responsible to their responsibilities. Amongst all the workers in the Nigeria, teachers are paid poor salary. They can be able to take care of their families in terms of feeding, payment of children school fees, pay house rents, meeting up their social-responsibilities in their environments and in-laws. Hence, most teachers are not satisfying in their workplace. Gbarage, (2022) asserted that teachers' job satisfaction is the ability of teachers to display professionalism, skills, and able to work alone without frequent supervisors' interference.
- **Lack of Good Working Environment:** Teachers lack good working environment and as a matter of urgency education policy makers must provide this in order to achieve education goals. (Gbarage, 2021). As an experienced worker, good working environment is the place where a worker carries out his/her daily activities which includes; spacious classroom and staff rooms, good team work, well- equipped offices, lighting, temperature, ventilation, noise level, good equipment maintenance, good library, good working tools such as computers,

internet good toilet system. Ololube (2017) described good working environment involves the physical geographical, place where teachers perform their job, as well as the immediate environment.

- **Inadequate or non-comprehensive data base:** It is difficult to know the number of children in Nigerian schools in order to plan to fit the increasing population of children in and out in Nigeria. In order to properly achieve and enforce the outlined national education policy, an accurate population of pupils in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions is required.
- **Poor Frame for policy implantation on home grown feeding.** In theory, the National Education Policy is praiseworthy. But cannot be able to implement them.
- **Socio-cultural factors:** These factors also pose significant challenges. Socio-cultural factors present substantial hurdles in the implementation of educational policies in Nigeria, with particular challenges arising in regions such as the northern part of the country where cultural and religious beliefs significantly influence attitudes towards education. Deep-rooted cultural attitudes and beliefs can, and often do, shape educational practices and policies in profound ways. These beliefs can either facilitate or hinder the implementation of educational policies, depending on their alignment with the objectives of the policies. In Nigeria, particularly in the northern region, some cultural and religious beliefs have posed significant obstacles to the implementation of educational policies. One of the most poignant examples of this challenge is the cultural attitudes towards female education. In some northern communities, there exists a deeply entrenched belief that the education of girls is less important than that of boys. This belief stems from traditional perceptions about the roles of women in society, which often prioritize domestic responsibilities over formal education for girls (UNESCO, 2012). This cultural bias against female education has led to lower enrollment rates for girls in these areas, thereby undermining the implementation of policies aimed at achieving gender equality in education. Despite national and international efforts to promote girls' education, these socio-cultural barriers persist, making it difficult to realize the goal of universal primary education for all children, regardless of gender.

Religious beliefs also play a significant role in shaping educational practices and the implementation of educational policies in Nigeria. In some cases, religious beliefs have been used as grounds for opposing certain educational policies or programs. For instance, some religious groups have opposed the teaching of certain subjects in schools on the grounds that they contradict their religious beliefs (Omorie, 2005).

These socio-cultural and religious factors pose significant challenges to the implementation of educational policies in Nigeria. Overcoming these challenges requires a multi-pronged approach that involves engaging with local communities, religious and traditional leaders, and civil society organizations. It also involves creating awareness about the importance of education for all children, regardless of gender, and addressing misconceptions about certain educational policies or programs.

In conclusion, the implementation of educational policies under democratic governance in Nigeria from 1999 to 2022 has been hampered by a range of challenges, including inadequate funding, corruption, poor teacher quality, inadequate infrastructure, and socio-cultural factors. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach, involving not only the government but also other stakeholders such as teachers, parents, communities, and development partners.

### **Role of Stakeholders in Promoting Democratic Governance and Educational Development in Nigeria**

The promotion of democratic governance and educational development in Nigeria, particularly from 1999 to 2022, has been the collective responsibility of various stakeholders, each playing a unique role in this process. These stakeholders include the government, educators, parents,

students, non-governmental organizations, international development partners, religious and community leaders, and civil society organizations.

First, the government, at both federal and state levels, plays the primary role in shaping the trajectory of education in Nigeria. Since the return to democracy in 1999, the government has initiated various policies aimed at improving access to and quality of education. Notable among these policies is the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act of 2004, which aimed to provide free and compulsory education for all Nigerian children of primary and junior secondary school age (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). The government has also worked to increase transparency and citizen participation in education governance, although these efforts have been challenged by issues such as corruption and inadequate funding (World Bank, 2020).

Second, the educators, including teachers, school administrators, and education officers, are instrumental in the implementation of educational policies. Despite challenges such as inadequate remuneration, poor motivation, and limited opportunities for professional development, Nigerian educators have strived to deliver quality education and manage schools effectively. They have also contributed to policy feedback mechanisms, helping to refine and improve education policies (Adeyemi, 2008).

Parents and students, as the principal beneficiaries of the education system, have indeed played pivotal roles in Nigeria's educational development between 1999 and 2022. Their active participation in education governance has been crucial in enhancing the effectiveness of educational policies and promoting accountability in schools. Parents' involvement in school governance has been facilitated through structures like the School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs). SBMCs were introduced by the Nigerian government as part of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program in 2005 to promote community participation in school management. According to a survey by the Nigerian Education Data Survey (NEDS) in 2015, approximately 84% of public primary schools had a functioning SBMC. These committees, composed mainly of parents and community members, are tasked with overseeing the management of schools, including the implementation of school improvement plans, monitoring teacher attendance, and mobilizing resources for school development (UBEC, 2012). Moreover, a World Bank impact evaluation study in 2013 found that schools with active SBMCs had improved learning outcomes, reduced teacher absenteeism, and increased community contributions to schools (World Bank, 2013). This underscores the importance of parental involvement in school governance in enhancing school performance and accountability.

Students, on the other hand, have contributed their voices through student councils. Although student councils in Nigeria are not as institutionalized as SBMCs, they provide a platform for students to participate in school governance. They give students the opportunity to learn about democracy and leadership, contribute to school decision-making, and hold school authorities accountable. For instance, a study by Ajayi (2012) found that student councils in selected secondary schools in Ogun State, Nigeria, were involved in organizing school activities, maintaining school discipline, and providing feedback to school authorities. However, the effectiveness of student councils in Nigeria is often hampered by lack of autonomy, inadequate support from school authorities, and students' lack of capacity to participate effectively in school governance (Ojogbane, 2017). Therefore, there is a need to strengthen student councils and enhance students' capacity for effective participation.

Third, Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international development partners have made significant contributions to Nigeria's education sector, particularly between 1999 and 2022. They have provided financial resources, technical assistance, and advocated for policy reforms that are crucial for educational development. Among these stakeholders, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) have been particularly active in Nigeria's education sector. They have implemented various programs addressing specific educational challenges such as improving access to education, promoting girls' education, enhancing teacher

training, and advancing curriculum development. For instance, UNICEF has been at the forefront of initiatives aimed at improving access to education for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children in Nigeria. Through its Girls' Education Project Phase 3 (GEP3), UNICEF has made strides in enhancing girls' access to quality education, particularly in northern Nigeria where girls' enrollment rates have traditionally been low. According to a 2018 report, the GEP3, funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), reached over 1.5 million girls and indirectly benefited an additional 300,000 girls through systemic changes (UNICEF, 2018).

USAID, another significant stakeholder, has been instrumental in improving reading outcomes for primary school students in Nigeria through its Northern Education Initiative Plus project. The project, which started in 2015, aims to improve the reading skills of first to third-grade students. As of 2020, USAID reported that the project had trained over 23,000 teachers in reading instruction and provided instructional materials to over 2 million students (USAID, 2020).

The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) has also provided significant support to Nigeria's education sector. Since 2012, the GPE has granted more than \$100 million to Nigeria to support the implementation of the country's strategic plan for education. The funding has contributed to the training of teachers, the development of learning materials, and the improvement of data collection in education (GPE, 2022).

Fourth, religious and community leaders play crucial roles in promoting educational development in Nigeria, particularly in the period from 1999 to 2022. Their influence within communities makes them instrumental in advocating for education, mobilizing resources, and mediating conflicts, thereby fostering an environment conducive for educational development. Religious leaders, given the high religiosity of the Nigerian population, have a significant impact on their followers' attitudes and behaviors, including those related to education. Some religious leaders have used their platforms to advocate for education, emphasizing its importance in religious teachings and encouraging their followers to embrace it. For instance, the Sultan of Sokoto, a highly respected religious leader in northern Nigeria, has been vocal in promoting education, especially for girls, which has historically been a challenge in that region (Abdulkadir & Bello, 2012).

Similarly, community leaders, such as traditional rulers and village heads, have influence over community norms and practices. They can advocate for education, mobilize community resources for school development, and mediate in cases of conflict within the school community. For instance, in the implementation of the School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs), community leaders have played a significant role in mobilizing community resources for school development. According to the Nigerian Education Data Survey (NEDS) in 2015, about 56% of schools reported receiving community contributions, which were often mobilized by community leaders (NEDS, 2015).

Moreover, religious and community leaders often serve as mediators in cases of conflict within the school community. Their respected status within communities makes them effective in resolving disputes and promoting peace, which is crucial for a conducive learning environment. For instance, in Kaduna State, community leaders have been involved in mediating conflicts between parents and teachers, thereby fostering a peaceful environment for teaching and learning (Yusha'u, Tsafe, Babangida, & Lawal, 2013).

Finally, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have been instrumental in fostering democratic governance in Nigeria's education sector, especially in the period from 1999 to 2022. They have undertaken a variety of critical roles that have collectively strengthened the effectiveness, transparency, and inclusivity of educational governance. One of the significant contributions of CSOs lies in the realm of research. Through conducting comprehensive, impartial, and innovative research, CSOs have generated valuable insights that inform education policy and practice. They have provided data on diverse issues ranging from enrollment rates, learning outcomes, teacher quality, to resource allocation, thereby identifying gaps and opportunities for policy improvements (Oketch, McCowan, & Schendel, 2014). Their research has been

instrumental in shaping policy debates and decisions, and in monitoring the progress and impact of implemented policies.

Capacity building of various stakeholders is another critical role played by CSOs. Through workshops, training programs, and collaborative projects, they have worked to enhance the capabilities of educators, parents, community members, and even policymakers. These capacity-building initiatives have strengthened the ability of these stakeholders to participate effectively in educational governance, thereby fostering a more inclusive and participatory governance process (Babajide, 2017).

Monitoring the implementation of educational policies is another crucial role of CSOs. As watchdogs, they scrutinize the implementation of policies, track education expenditure, and expose corruption and mismanagement in the education sector. For instance, the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP), a Nigerian CSO, has been active in promoting transparency and accountability in the education sector through its monitoring and advocacy activities (SERAP, 2020).

Furthermore, advocacy is a significant aspect of CSOs' work. They lobby for policy changes, mobilize public opinion, and advocate for the rights of marginalized groups. Through their advocacy, they have been able to influence policy decisions, promote equity and inclusion in education, and hold the government accountable for its obligations to provide quality education for all citizens (Oketch et al., 2014).

In conclusion, the progress made in promoting democratic governance and educational development in Nigeria from 1999 to 2022 has been a collective effort involving various stakeholders. Each stakeholder has played a unique role, and their combined efforts have contributed to the gains achieved during this period. However, significant challenges remain, and continued engagement of all stakeholders is necessary to overcome these challenges and achieve the goal of providing quality education for all Nigerians.

### Summary of Major Findings

The based on the analyzed data, the following findings were highlighted:

- 1) The impact of democratic governance on educational development in Nigeria from 1999 to 2022 has been both significant and complex. Key educational policies such as the Universal Basic Education Act and the Tertiary Education Trust Fund were implemented, leading to increased access to education and infrastructure improvements in tertiary institutions.
- 2) The implementation of educational policies under democratic governance in Nigeria from 1999 to 2022 has faced significant challenges including inadequate funding, corruption, poor teacher quality, inadequate infrastructure, and socio-cultural factors. While there have been attempts to address these issues, they remain persistent obstacles to the effective implementation of educational policies. These challenges suggest a need for a comprehensive approach that involves various stakeholders and addresses these issues in a systematic and sustained manner.
- 3) The promotion of democratic governance and educational development in Nigeria from 1999 to 2022 has been a collective effort involving diverse stakeholders. These stakeholders include the government, educators, parents, students, NGOs, international partners, religious and community leaders, and civil society organizations. Each group has contributed to policy formulation, implementation, and advocacy efforts. However, significant challenges remain, and continued engagement of all stakeholders is necessary to overcome these challenges and achieve the goal of providing quality education for all Nigerians.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the journey of democratic governance and educational development in Nigeria from 1999 to 2022 is marked by significant strides, challenges, and collective efforts from diverse stakeholders. The impact of democratic governance on education during this period has



been both profound and multifaceted. Key policy initiatives, such as the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act and the establishment of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), signal the commitment of the democratic government to the transformation of the educational landscape in Nigeria. These policies have led to notable improvements, including increased access to basic education, enhancement of tertiary institution infrastructure, and a boost in research activities. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of these policies has been stifled by a plethora of persistent challenges.

The implementation of educational policies during this democratic era has been significantly hampered by issues including inadequate funding, corruption, a lack of qualified teachers, insufficient infrastructure, and socio-cultural barriers. Funding, or a lack thereof, has been a critical stumbling block to the successful realization of educational policies in Nigeria. Without sufficient financial resources, the ambitious goals set forth by policies such as the UBE Act and the TETFund cannot be effectively achieved. The issue of corruption also undermines the education sector, leading to the misappropriation of valuable resources meant to enhance educational access and quality. Furthermore, the shortage of qualified teachers, particularly in rural areas, and inadequate infrastructure continue to pose significant challenges to the quality of education. Socio-cultural factors, deeply embedded in the fabric of some communities, have also impeded the implementation of educational policies, particularly those aimed at achieving gender equality in education.

However, despite these challenges, the period from 1999 to 2022 has also been marked by the collective efforts of various stakeholders committed to promoting educational development. These stakeholders, including the government, educators, parents, students, NGOs, international partners, religious and community leaders, and civil society organizations, have each played unique roles in shaping Nigeria's educational trajectory. Their collective efforts have contributed to the formulation, implementation, and advocacy of educational policies. They have also played a significant role in promoting transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in education governance.

The government's role in shaping the direction of education through policy formulation and implementation has been crucial. Teachers and school administrators, despite the challenges they face, have been instrumental in implementing these policies and delivering education. Parents and students have been key actors in school governance, contributing to enhancing accountability and effectiveness in schools. NGOs and international partners have provided substantial resources and technical assistance, while religious and community leaders have used their influence to promote education and peace within school communities. Civil society organizations, through their research, advocacy, and watchdog roles, have been critical in promoting transparency and accountability in the education sector.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the identified findings, the following recommendations were stated to strengthen educational development under the present democratic dispensation.

- **Boosting Financial Commitment to Education:** Based on the identified challenges associated with inadequate funding, there is a pressing need for the Nigerian government to substantially increase its financial commitment to the education sector. This can be achieved by aligning the national budgetary allocation for education with the recommended benchmark of 15% to 20% as suggested by UNESCO. Increased funding will facilitate infrastructural development, teacher training, curriculum development, and the day-to-day operations of educational institutions. It is recommended that the government consider diverse sources of funding, including increasing the education tax, establishing education levies, and encouraging public-private partnerships in education. Additionally, transparency and accountability in the utilization of these funds should be prioritized to ensure they are used for the intended purposes.

- **Combating Corruption and Enhancing Teacher Quality:** Given the persistent challenge of corruption and poor teacher quality, concerted efforts should be made to address these issues. Anti-corruption measures should be strengthened, including enhancing the capacity of anti-corruption agencies, promoting transparency in the management of education funds, and implementing stringent sanctions for corrupt practices in the education sector. It is equally crucial to address the issue of teacher quality. Recommendations include improving teacher remuneration to make the profession more attractive, creating opportunities for continuous professional development for teachers, and implementing robust teacher recruitment, training, and retention strategies. A motivated, well-trained, and adequately remunerated teacher workforce is essential for delivering high-quality education.
- **Strengthening Stakeholder Engagement and Addressing Socio-Cultural Barriers:** The collective effort of diverse stakeholders in promoting educational development has been highlighted. However, there are still significant challenges, particularly related to socio-cultural barriers. Therefore, it is recommended to strengthen the engagement of all stakeholders, particularly at the grassroots level, in the education sector. This includes enhancing the capacity of parents, community leaders, and students to participate effectively in education governance. Similarly, sustained efforts should be made to address socio-cultural barriers to education. This may involve advocacy campaigns to change negative attitudes towards education, particularly for girls, and working closely with religious and community leaders to promote the value of education. It is also recommended to design and implement educational policies that are sensitive to the socio-cultural context of different regions in Nigeria.

## References

1. Abdulkadir, R., & Bello, A. U. (2012). The Role of Religious Leaders in Promoting Education in Nigeria. *International Journal of Islamic Thought*, 2, 15-23.
2. Adeyemi, K. (2013). Financing of education in Nigeria: An analytical review. *American Journal of Educational Research*, 1(8), 355-361.
3. Adeyemi, T. O. (2008). The Influence of School Variables on Academic Performance of Primary School Pupils in Ekiti State, Nigeria. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, 1(1), 1-18.
4. Adeyemi, T. O., & Adeyinka, A. A. (2003). The Principles and Content of African Traditional Education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 35(4), 425-440.
5. Ajayi, I. A. (2012). Students' Participation in University Governance and Organizational Effectiveness in Ekiti and Ondo States, Nigeria. *International Education Studies*, 5(1), 119-125.
6. Akpan, P. A. (2011). Basic Science Development in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges. *US-China Education Review*, 8(5), 561-569.
7. Akpan, P.A. (2015). Work-related variables as correlate of institutions' commitment of Secondary School teachers in Cross River State, Nigeria. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Science*, 6(51), 315-325.
8. Babajide, V. T. (2017). Role of Civil Society Organizations in Educational Development in Nigeria. *International Journal of Education, Learning, and Development*, 5(6), 21-29.
9. Babalola, Y. A. (2020). Girl-child Education in Northern Nigeria: Issues, Challenges and The Way Forward. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 11(6), 82-89.
10. Becker, G. S. (1962). Investment in human beings. *Journal of Political Economy*, 70(5, Part 2), 9-49.
11. Becker, G. S. (1964). Human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis, with special reference to education. University of Chicago Press.

12. Campbell, J., & Harwood, A. (2018). *Nigeria: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford University Press.
13. Collins, A., & Halverson, R. (2009). *Rethinking education in the age of technology: The digital revolution and schooling in America*. Teachers College Press.
14. Coppedge, M., Alvarez, A., & Maldonado, C. (2011). Two persistent dimensions of democracy: Contestation and inclusiveness. *The Journal of Politics*, 73(3), 762-782.
15. Dahl, R. A. (2000). *On democracy*. Yale University Press.
16. Dahl, R. A. (2000). *The future of democratic governance*. In I. Shapiro & C. Hacker-Cordón (Eds.), *Democracy's edges* (pp. 57-77). Cambridge University Press.
17. Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). *The flat world and education: How America's commitment to equity will determine our future*. Teachers College Press.
18. Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. Macmillan.
19. Dewey, J. (2018). *Experience and Education*. Kappa Delta Pi.
20. Donnelly, J. (2013). *Universal human rights in theory and practice*. Cornell University Press.
21. Fafunwa, A. B. (2004). *History of education in Nigeria*. University Press.
22. Falola, T., & Heaton, M. M. (2008). *A History of Nigeria*. Cambridge University Press.
23. Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN). (2013). *National Policy on Education*. NERDC Press.
24. Federal Republic of Nigeria. (1999). *Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*. Federal Government Press.
25. Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2004). *National Policy on Education (4th ed.)*. NERDC Press.
26. Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2004). *Universal Basic Education Act*. Federal Republic of Nigeria.
27. Fullan, M. (2007). *The new meaning of educational change (4th ed.)*. Teachers College Press.
28. Gbarage, M.B. (2022). Teachers' job satisfaction and effective implementation of National Policy on Education in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Rivers State. *International Journal of Institutional Leadership and Management*, 4 (2), Pp 278-308.
29. Gbarage, M.B. (2021). Teachers' work management and family life balance for improved service deliver in Public Secondary Schools in Rivers State. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 14(1), 177-193.
30. Gbarage, M.B; & Ololube N.P (2022). The Influence of staff welfare scheme and career Development Needs and the Effective Implementation of the Nigerian National Policy on Education (NPE). *International Journal of Economics, Environment Development Society*, 3(3), 265-287.
31. Global Partnership for Education (GPE). (2022). *GPE in Nigeria*. GPE.
32. Hanushek, E. A., & Woessmann, L. (2008). The role of cognitive skills in economic development. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 46(3), 607-668.
33. Hattie, J. (2008). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. Routledge.
34. Holmberg, S., Rothstein, B., & Nasiritousi, N. (2009). Quality of government: What you get. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 12, 135-161.
35. Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC). (2018). *University admissions: Study of corruption, preferences, and biases in Nigeria*. ICPC.

36. Jega, A. M. (2015). Nigeria's 2015 General Elections: Continuity and Change in Electoral Democracy. Rowman & Littlefield.
37. Kaufmann, D., Kraay, A., & Mastruzzi, M. (2010). The worldwide governance indicators: Methodology and analytical issues. *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law*, 3, 220-246.
38. Lijphart, A. (1977). Democracy in plural societies: A comparative exploration. Yale University Press.
39. Lipset, S. M. (1959). Some social requisites of democracy: Economic development and political legitimacy. *American Political Science Review*, 53(1), 69-105.
40. Montesquieu, B. (1748). The spirit of the laws. Hafner.
41. National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). (2020). Nigerian Gross Domestic Product Report. NBS Press.
42. Nigerian Education Data Survey (NEDS). (2015). Nigerian Education Data Survey. NEDS.
43. Oduro, G. (2007). Educational leadership for social justice in Ghana and Nigeria. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 45(6), 789-811.
44. OECD. (2005). Teachers matter: Attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers. OECD Publishing.
45. OECD. (2019). Trends shaping education 2019. OECD Publishing
46. Ogonnaya, N. O. (2013). Issues in the implementation of universal basic education (UBE) programme in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(11), 66-75.
47. Ogonnaya, N. O. (2017). Issues and challenges in the implementation of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 8(9), 39-45.
48. Ogundiya, I. S. (2010). Democracy and Good Governance: Nigeria's Dilemma. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 4(6), 201-208.
49. Ojogbane, A. E. (2017). Assessing the Impact of Student Union Government on University Governance in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 8(16), 169-174.
50. Okebukola, P. (2013). The state of university education in Nigeria. National Universities Commission.
51. Oketch, M., McCowan, T., & Schendel, R. (2014). The Impact of Tertiary Education on Development. Institute of Education, University of London.
52. Ololube, N.P (2017). Educational management, planning and supervision: Model for effective implementation (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). Pearl Publishers.
53. Omoregie, R. O. (2005). Religion and Education in Nigeria: Illustrations from Christianity, Islam and Traditional religions. *Confluence Journal of Religious Studies*, 1(1), 36-50.
54. Oyewo, O. (2016). The Judiciary and Governance in Nigeria. *Journal of Law and Judicial System*, 1(2), 13-22.
55. Pateman, C. (1970). Participation and democratic theory. Cambridge University Press.
56. Pitkin, H. F. (1967). The concept of representation. University of California Press.
57. Przeworski, A. (1991). Democracy and the market: Political and economic reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America. Cambridge University Press.
58. Rawls, J. (1971). A theory of justice. Harvard University Press.
59. Schmitter, P. C., & Karl, T. L. (1991). What democracy is... and is not. *Journal of Democracy*, 2(3), 75-88.
60. Schultz, T. W. (1961). Investment in human capital. *The American Economic Review*, 51(1), 1-17.

61. Smith, D. J. (2007). *A Culture of Corruption: Everyday Deception and Popular Discontent in Nigeria*. Princeton University Press.
62. Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP). (2020). *Corruption in Nigeria: Patterns and trends*. SERAP.
63. Tamanaha, B. Z. (2004). *On the rule of law: History, politics, theory*. Cambridge University Press.
64. Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund). (2012). *TETFund 2011 annual report*. TETFund.
65. Transparency International. (2019). *Corruption Perceptions Index 2019*. Transparency International.
66. Trilling, B., & Fadel, C. (2009). *21st century skills: Learning for life in our times*. Jossey-Bass.
67. UBE. (2004). *Compulsory, Free Universal Basic Education Act*. UBE Press.
68. UN. (2015). *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. United Nations.
69. UNDP. (2014). *Governance for sustainable development: Integrating governance in the post-2015 development framework*. UNDP.
70. UNESCO. (1990). *World Declaration on Education for All: Meeting basic learning needs*. UNESCO.
71. UNESCO. (2000). *The Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All: Meeting our collective commitments*. UNESCO.
72. UNESCO. (2012). *World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education*. UNESCO.
73. UNESCO. (2013). *Policy guidelines for mobile learning*. UNESCO.
74. UNESCO. (2015). *Education for All 2000-2015: Achievements and challenges*. UNESCO.
75. UNESCO. (2015). *Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*. UNESCO.
76. UNESCO. (2015). *Rethinking Education: Towards a Global Common Good?* UNESCO Publishing.
77. UNESCO. (2016). *Education for People and Planet: Creating Sustainable Futures for All*. UNESCO Press.
78. UNESCO. (2017). *Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives*. UNESCO.
79. UNICEF. (2015). *Advancing WASH in Schools Monitoring*. UNICEF.
80. United Nations Development Programme. (2002). *Human development report 2002: Deepening democracy in a fragmented world*. Oxford University Press.
81. Universal Basic Education Commission (UBE). (2004). *The compulsory, free, universal basic education act*. Abuja, Nigeria: UBE
82. USAID. (2020). *Northern Education Initiative Plus*. USAID.
83. Verba, S., Schlozman, K. L., & Brady, H. E. (2015). *Voice and equality: Civic voluntarism in American politics*. Harvard University Press.
84. World Bank. (2013). *Nigeria - Learning from local success: A study of school-based management in Nigeria*. World Bank.
85. World Bank. (2019). *Nigeria: Basic education public expenditure review*. World Bank.
86. World Bank. (2020). *World Development Report 2020: Realizing the Promise of Education*

for Development. World Bank..

87. Yusha'u, M. A., Tsafe, A. K., Babangida, S. I., & Lawal, N. (2013). Role of traditional rulers in conflict prevention and mediation in Nigeria. *Journal of Social Science*, 9(2), 101-109.