



## Impact of Managing Functional Education in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

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**Key words:** Impact, managing, functional Education and Tertiary Institutions

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**Abstract:** This study observed that there are numerous impacts of managing functional education on tertiary institutions in Nigeria. It noted that functional education comes with quality and standard education and the combination of the 3 concepts would bring about Nigeria's national development. The quest for the internationalization of Nigeria's education is worthwhile but needs doubled efforts by the Nigerian government and the Nigerian people. This research was carried out in Imo State, Nigeria. four thousand, four hundred and eighty staff formed the population of the study. Ten percent of the total population 448 was selected through a purposive sampling techniques for the study. Four hundred and forty one staff gave valid responses while 7 was still null and void. The study was concluded and some recommendations were given.

## INTRODUCTION

This study is interested in unraveling the various impacts of functional education on tertiary institutions in Nigeria using Imo State as a case study. Nigeria since independence on October 1, 1960 has never been liberated from the negative effect of British colonialism thus the concept of neo-colonialism. This is why Moja<sup>[1]</sup> pinpointed that "Nigeria is currently anticipating another "independence" following the end of British colonialism in 1962. The country's populace now looks forward to liberation from a long history of authoritarian and rapacious military regimes that have ruled the country- except for brief intervals of democracy- for most of the intervening four 'plus' decades". Functional education has been perceived to be the solution to Nigeria's fallen standard in all sectors of the economy. This paper would contain background of the study, research questions, hypotheses, purpose of the study, significance of the

study, scope of the study, conceptual clarification, research methodology which would contain research design, research locale, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, method of data collection, method of data analysis, limitation of the study, hypotheses testing, conclusion, recommendation and references.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Background of the Study:** Nigeria's education needs to be functional before it can be referred to as quality and standard. The much preached about internationalization of Nigeria education system begins with its functionality. Functional education in Nigeria would bring to a large extent, national development, nation-building, citizenship education, youth mobilization, value-orientation and reorientation and so on. Udoh and Akpan<sup>[2]</sup> have noted that the role of "functional" education as the bedrock of social, economic, political and cultural development can

never be overemphasized” in Nigeria. This means that the usefulness of every nation’s educational system depends on its functionality. This is why Nwokolo<sup>[3]</sup> posited that “functional education should be capable of producing Nigerians who can manufacture raw materials, machines and tools needed for local international markets, invent new designs, discover drugs capable of curing diseases hitherto incurable and transform the nation from a consumption to a manufacturing status”.

These Nigerians produced by Nigeria’s functional education, should also be able to convert the manufactured raw materials into finished goods and products, operate the machines and tools needed for international and local markets, utilize the invented new designs for the comfort of the nation’s citizens and so on. The overemphasis on functional education is mainly done by countries of the world that are still developing, underdeveloped or undeveloped. This is done to bring the country's educational system to standard of international repute and make of high quality. The management of functional education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria would not be an easy task. Knowing individuals that would be involved is also a scholarly act. This paper would look at how managing functional education would impact on Nigeria's tertiary institutions using tertiary institutions in Imo State as case study.

**Statement of the Problem:** Nigeria, over the years has been facing a lot of challenges with its educational system that have led to the regular use of words like quality education, standard education, effective and efficient education and now functional education. The extent to which the Nigerian government has gone in the process of attaining the above mentioned statuses in its educational system is still unknown by the Nigerian people let alone managing functional education if at all functional education can be attained in the Nigerian context. Several debates have ensued on the best nomenclature for the Nigerian education. Udoh and Akpan<sup>[2]</sup> averred that "the debate over the relative importance of aims and objectives of education that is more or less skill-oriented, (process) or knowledge (content or concept) oriented is long standing. Process-based view of functional education considers 'content' or 'concept' as having a second order importance. It (process-based view) emphasizes that students should acquire problem-solving skills and scientific attitudes as a priority. Scientific attitudes are attributes scientists have and usually would display when carrying out the process of science". All these are based on the fact that functional education has not been achieved in Nigeria. And this is a problem for the Nigerian government, the Nigerian people and the Nigerian education system. This study therefore, unravels the impact of managing functional education on tertiary institutions in Nigeria with Imo State as a point of emphasis.

**Research questions:** This study intends to find answers to the following research questions:

- Does managing functional education impact on tertiary institutions in Nigeria?
- Who is qualified to manage functional education in Nigeria's tertiary institutions?
- What are the numerous impacts of functional education on tertiary institutions in Nigeria?

**Hypotheses:** The following tentative statements need to be statistically analyzed. They include:

- There is no significant difference between managing functional education and its impact on tertiary institutions in Nigeria
- There is no significant relationship between the qualifications of individuals that manage functional education and its impact on tertiary institutions in Nigeria
- There is no significant difference between the numerous impacts of functional education and tertiary institutions in Nigeria

**Purpose of the study:** The purposes of the study are:

- To investigate how managing functional education has impacted on tertiary institutions in Nigeria
- To examine the qualities and qualifications of individuals that manage functional education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria
- To explore the numerous impacts of functional education on tertiary institutions in Nigeria

**Significance of the study:** This study would benefit the Nigerian government in a way that it would give directions on what are needed to achieve functional education in Nigeria. It would also give idea on the reforms and innovation needed for functional education to be achieved. Furthermore, this study would benefit other researchers, teachers, students, head teachers/principals/vice chancellors/rectors/provosts and the general public. This study would also be important to education policy makers, inspectors and supervisors of schools. It would expose professionals on how best to manage functional education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

**Scope of the study:** This study is limited to tertiary institutions in Imo State, Nigeria which include Imo State University; Owerri, Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Imo State Polytechnic, Umuagwo and Federal Polytechnic, Nekede. Generally, primary and secondary schools (lower basic, middle basic, upper basic and senior secondary schools) would also benefit from this study.

**Conceptual clarification:** Conceptual clarification is an essential part of every write-up. This is the part that explains the various concepts used in the write-up to the numerous readers. Nwamadi<sup>[4]</sup> noted that "in as much as it is not easy to make every individual reading a write-up to understand it (the write-up), it is essential for a large number of readers to have the same frame of mind with the writer(s)". Anugom and Mezieobi<sup>[5]</sup> also supported when they noted that "it is important to conceptualize every term that make up a writing. This is to enable the readers understand the intentions of the writer(s) and their context". On this note, 4 concepts need to be clarified. They are: impact, managing, functional education and tertiary institutions.

**The term: Impact:** For the purpose of this research, impact would mean effect of managing functional education on tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

**The concept: Managing:** Managing means the process of planning, coordinating, organizing and directing the facets of quality education to make it functional, effective, efficient and achievement oriented. For Babarinde (2001:43), management "is the utilization of physical and human resources through cooperative efforts and it is accomplished by performing the function of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling".

**The terminology: Functional education:** For Geddes and Grosset and Quirks, functional has to do with practicality and having useful purpose. Ali on his own part noted that "functional education will ensure the availability of food for people, creation of jobs, provision of services, etcetera". Obanya sees functional education as "education that comes from the child's needs and that uses the child's interests as a mechanism for activating him towards his desirable activities". Abraham agrees that "... functional education enables the learner to gain thinking habits and develop the technical means needed in solving practical problems". In furtherance to the above definitions of functional education, one can say that functional education is that kind of education that is all encompassing. This means that it engages the child in activities that can help in developing the child's mental, physical and social capabilities for better living in the society. Functional education preaches various branches of education like technical and vocational education, inclusive and special education, peace education, citizenship education, science education and teacher education.

**The concept: Tertiary institution:** Tertiary institution is that institution an individual attends to acquire higher degrees. In the Nigerian context, such institutions are universities, polytechnics and colleges of education.

Individuals acquire bachelor's degrees, masters degrees, doctoral degrees, Higher National Diploma (HND), National Diploma (ND), National Certificate in Education (NCE) and so on in tertiary institutions as the case may be.

**Research methodology research design:** The design adopted for this research is the descriptive survey design.

**Research locale:** The study locations are tertiary institutions in Imo State, Nigeria, Imo State is one of the 36 states of Nigeria, located in the South-East geographical zone.

**Population of the study:** There is a total of 9 government approved tertiary institutions in Imo State. They are: Imo State University, Owerri, Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Federal Polytechnic, Nekede, Imo State Polytechnic, Umuagwo, Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri, Eastern Palm University, Ogboko, Ideato, Technological Skills Acquisition Institute, Orlu, Federal College of Land Resource Technology, Oforola, Owerri and Imo State College of Health Sciences and Technology. The total number of staff that work in the 9 tertiary institutions in Imo State is 4,480 which would form the population of this study (Statistics unit, Ministry of Education, Imo State).

**Sample and sampling technique:** Four hundred and forty eight staff of the nine tertiary institutions put together was selected for the study through a purposive sampling technique. The number selected forms 10% of the total population.

**Method of data collection:** A structured self-administered questionnaire was used for data collection. The researcher through the help of 2 research assistants distributed 448 questionnaires, waited for the questionnaires to be filled and retrieved the questionnaires after they have been filled.

**Method of data analysis:** The chi-squared cross-tabulation was used in analyzing the data.

**Limitation of the study:** The main challenge that limited the study is financial problems on the part of the researcher.

## RESULTS

**Hypothesis testing:** The hypotheses were tested using chi-square at 0.05 level of significance. Any value less than 0.05 level of significance would not be used, therefore, the null hypothesis would be accepted. While in a case where the value is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis would be rejected.

Table 1: H01: There is no significant difference between managing functional education and its impact on tertiary institutions in Nigeria

Quality education	Academic achievement	Students performance	Quality students	Adequate financing	Total	$\chi^2$	Significant
Quality teacher	40	41	190	100	371	61.696	0.000
Available instructional materials	10	10	5	5	30		
Appropriate teaching methods	4	3	4	9	20		
Use o ICT	8	2	6	4	20		
Total	62	56	205	118	441		

Table 2: H02: There is no significant relationship between the qualities of individuals that manage functional education and its impact on tertiary institutions in Nigeria

Quality of individuals that manage functional education	1	2	3	4	5	Total	$\chi^2$	Significant
Effective communication	21	16	20	15	10	77	65.54	0.72
Well trained teachers	12	15	25	20	10	82		
Possess good inter personal skills	17	14	35	10	15	86		
Knowledge of ICT	14	12	15	15	15	61		
Possess teaching qualification	5	12	35	20	5	77		
Others	1	3	29	20	5	58		
Total	60	72	159	100	50	441		

SPSS output result

Table 3: H0<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant difference between the numerous impacts of functional education and tertiary institutions in Nigeria

Quality education	Impacts of managing functional education					Total	$\chi^2$	Significant
	1	2	3	4	5			
<b>Impacts of functional education</b>								
Standard education	20	10	120	19	25	194	11.784	0.659
Value-oriented education	12	30	22	18	20	100		
Total	52	80	200	59	50	441		

SPSS output result

Table 1 above shows that the chi-square value at 61.696 with a significant value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 level of significance. This means that the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 2, the chi-square value of 65.54 and significant value o 0.72 showing that there is no significant relationship between the quality of individuals managing functional education and its impact on tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Table 3 above, chi-square value of 11.784 with a significant value of 0.659 shows that the null hypothesis is rejected.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The findings show that there are several impacts of managing functional education on tertiary institutions in Nigeria, Imo State as a case study. The quest to understand whether functional education is properly managed or not can be satisfied through looking at the caliber of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The Nigerian government and the Nigerian people need to put hands together to achieve functional education in Nigeria.

It would also be recommended that:

- Only individuals with teaching qualifications should be engaged to teach in all levels of Nigerian educational system

- Education policy makers should be individuals that have teaching qualifications and experiences
- Foreign/international initiatives, reforms, ideas and ideologies on education should be tried and implemented in Nigeria to see how well they can fit into the Nigerian context
- The government should invest in Nigerian education because quality, standard and financial education breed national development
- Nigerian schools and students should be given priority attention by the Nigerian government and the general public
- Practicalizing teaching should be encouraged in all levels of Nigerian education
- Innovations in education should be accepted and practicalized
- Archaic educational practices should be discarded
- Use of varieties should always be encouraged especially in this era of ICT, digitalization, modernization and globalization
- Teaching in Nigeria should be declared a full profession like medicine, law, engineering and so on

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