

Evaluation of Federal Government of Nigeria Funding of Public-University Education for the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goal-4

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ABSTRACT

The development of a country depends upon the educational scenario of the country. Most often, sustainable development is understood to be growth that satisfies present requirements without jeopardizing the capacity of future generations to satiate their own development needs. The goal of higher education, like that of previous levels of education, is still to generate highly skilled workers who will drive the center of social, economic and scientific development through in-depth study. Ironically, the Nigerian universities funding model seems lob-sided, with the government taking the lion share. The great thing about Sustainable Goal 4 is that it calls on all United Nations members countries, including Nigeria to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote opportunities for lifelong learning for all” by 2030. While earlier studies mostly focused on funding of university education, very little research exists on the evaluation of Federal Government of Nigeria funding of public university education with an eye towards the attainment of sustainable development goal-4 target. The study adopts the institutional theory. Data for the study were drawn from participant observation and authentic secondary sources. The content analytical technique was used to review the literature on the subject matter. The study identified that financing of university education in Nigeria fall short of the benchmark of 26 % of the national budget as recommended by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Recommendations were made to prevent compromising the chances of delivery high quality university education in Nigeria by 2030.

Keywords: Education, Finance, Institutional Theory, University, Nigeria Introduction

Education builds human capital, which in turn promotes economic growth [1]. Over the years, the international community has consistently supported numerous initiatives and goals aimed at reaching various development goals. The United Nations (UN) campaigns “Education for all” (1978) and “Health for all” (1990) likewise sought to ensure that everyone has access to primary education and healthcare by the year 2000. On the other hand, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were designed to serve as a partnership between developed and developing nations through extensive and ongoing efforts to build a shared future based on a shared humanity in all its diversity. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a brand-new, global set of objectives, benchmarks, and metrics that UN member states are expected to use to guide their political agendas over the course of 15 years, from 2015 to 2030.

The SDGs are a follow up of the MDGs. The SDGs have become necessary because the deadline for MDGs has passed and poverty is still very high with over one billion people living

on less than \$1.25 a day [2]. While the MDGs focused solely on developing countries, the 17 SDGs are inclusive of developed countries, since concerted action among all countries is the only way to achieve prosperity without threatening planetary boundaries [3].

SDG 4-which emphasizes “Quality Education”-ranks highly among the 17 SDGs for altering the world by 2030, and for clear reasons. In essence, SDG 4 calls on all UN members, including Nigeria, to guarantee inclusive and equitable quality education and support opportunities for all people to make a living throughout their lifetimes through the Education 2030 Framework for Action (FFA). Nigeria is made up of 36 states and a Federal Capital Territory with over 200 million people scattered in six different regions. Nigeria is also made up of over 250 tribes with varying dialects.

According to Dike, Nigeria became aware of the high incidence of illiteracy spreading throughout its regions when the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared it to be the nation with the most out-of-school children in the world in September 2022 [4]. UNESCO,

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on September 14, 2022, released a report, indicating Nigeria had 20 million out-of-school children. It implied Nigeria had one of the highest OOSC in the world after India, with 32 million, and Pakistan, with 28 million. While poverty, corruption, and inadequate infrastructure had been the norm in Nigeria, schools all around the nation were in ruins. Nigeria needs to make sufficient investments in its education sector given that accomplishing Sustainable Development Goal 4 is at the core of this goal.

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Nigeria had a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$480.5 billion as of 2021, making it the largest economy in Africa and the 29th largest in the world. Unexpectedly, the country's rather sizable economy is supported by the poorly funded education sector [5]. Nigeria is a nation that seeks to run and maintain economic growth, manage industries within diverse sectors, provide for its over 200 million citizens, and compete favorably in the global market with graduates from the mysteriously underdeveloped education sector.

Education funding in Nigeria by the Federal Government is abysmal. Each year, the budget that is released is mainly focused on payment of salaries with no unique initiative to address the challenges facing the sector. According to Deji, the United Nations (UN) has issued a warning that if the federal government's current budget for education is not increased to 20% with clear accountability for delivery, Nigeria may not achieve the global agenda for her education by 2030 [6]. The federal budget for Nigeria for 2022 included an increase in education spending of 7%, but the review indicates that this should be increased to 20% with explicit delivery accountability. In relation to SDG-4 of her education, Nigeria is unlikely to achieve the global agenda for universal inclusive and equitable basic education for all school-age children by 2030 if the current very low public investment in the education sector remains the same. The evaluation indicates that the right policies (especially around free basic education and gender) are in place, but an increase in quality and access to education is critical.

According to Adio, 1, 854, 261 students enrolled in full-time undergraduate programmers in Nigeria's 170 universities in 2019 [7]. Of this number, 1, 206, 825 enrolled in 43 federal universities; 544, 936, in 48 state universities; and 102, 500, in 79 private universities. This means that despite constituting 46% of the universities in Nigeria, private universities had only about 6% of the total undergraduate student population in Nigeria in 2019; while state universities with 28% of total universities had 29% of the undergraduate student population; and federal universities with 25% of total universities had 65% of undergraduate student population [7].

Combined, the public universities state and federal ones had 94% of the undergraduate student population in Nigeria in 2019, and it is very unlikely that the situation has changed much by now. One way of reading this is that our public universities are over-stretched, which is a valid observation. The point here is that the institutions that account for 94% of the undergraduate population in the country remain too important to continue to trifle with. How do we ensure that such vital public institutions remain fit-for-purpose and that they are positioned to deliver

maximum value to the society? The key issue is that Nigerian universities devote between 90% to 95% of their resources to salaries as opposed to between 44% and 60% by their peers in the United Kingdom and the United States of America [7].

In contrast, many Nigerian institutions have long struggled with little finance, particularly public universities. It becomes difficult to create world-class graduates and offer adequate living conditions for students with school tuition of N25,000 (\$33) and residential fees around N90 (20 cents) per session, as found on certain Nigerian Universities. Limited research output, protracted union strikes, and disengaged and demotivated academics are all consequences of inadequate funding. Nigeria has produced some competent graduates in spite of these difficulties, but the quantity, quality, and caliber could have been far higher with proper finance [8].

In view of the need to resolving challenges in implementation of Goal 4, "transparency around education budgeting and spending needs to improve. The provision of education in Nigeria continues to be centered on governance challenges at the Federal, State, and Local levels [6]. The study is also concerned with how these strategic evaluations support the case for strengthening the Nigerian education sector and highlight the most effective ways for the government, development partners, and civil society to address systemic flaws and difficulties. While earlier studies mostly focused on funding of university education, very little research exists on the evaluation of Federal Government of Nigeria funding of public university education with an eye towards the attainment of sustainable development goal-4 target. Nigeria has started the pursuit of the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4)-Quality Education but it throws up a couple of questions; how are Public Universities funded in Nigeria? what are the pathways to sustainable funding of public universities education in Nigeria? We shall attempt to provide answers to the above questions. The general objective of the study is to evaluate Federal Government of Nigeria funding of public university education for the attainment of sustainable development goal -4. The specific objectives of the study are to; evaluate how public universities are funded in Nigeria; and to discuss the pathways to sustainable funding of public universities education in Nigeria. The study shall make a modest attempt to provide answers to the above questions with a view to developing insights on how to prevent compromising the chances of delivery high quality university education in Nigeria by 2030.

Methodology

The study used a qualitative descriptive approach. The study adopted direct observation of events and official documents from relevant agencies. Data for the study were generated through a careful review of relevant literature drawn from secondary sources such as: internet sources, journals, text books, UNESCO data base and other official documents relevant to the study. Each document was skimmed for relevance and then studied in detail after being deemed to be of potential significance. The qualitative content analysis method was adopted in this study. This method was considered appropriate because text data were obtained from print media such as articles, books, official document and manuals.

Literature Review and Theoretical Platform Sustainable Development

At the exit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in September 2015, the world leaders came together at the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGAS) in New York to sign a new global partnership for development tagged-SDGs. It consists of 17 goals and 169 targets to be achieved by the year 2030. While in Nigeria, the prospect of achieving SDGs is expected to be pursued in an inclusive and people centered manner, thereby focusing on institutional and policy strengthening supportive of the programmer and projects (Sustainable Development Goals [9]).

The new agenda is a comprehensive, integrated, and revolutionary vision for a better world, according to the UN Secretary-General. It is an agenda for the world, our common home, an agenda for the people, to end poverty in all of its forms, and an agenda for shared prosperity, peace, and partnership. It makes clear how urgent climate change action is. It is founded on respect for everyone’s rights and gender equality. It promises to leave no one behind above everything else. These fundamental components make up the collection of 17 goals, 169 targets, and 230 indicators. Below are the proposed 17 goals.

Table 1: The Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 1: Poverty	End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2: Food	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3: Health	Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all levels
Goal 4: Education	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 5: Women	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 6: Water	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
Goal 7: Energy	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
Goal 8: Economy	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work
Goal9: Infrastructure	Build resident infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 10 Inequality	Reduce inequality within and among countries
Goal 11 Habitation	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Goal12: Consumption	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Goal 13: Climate	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact

Goal 14: Marine	Ecosystem conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
Goal 15: Ecosystem	Protect, restore and sustainably use of terrestrial ecosystem, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and half and reverse land degradation
Goal 16: Institutions	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Goal 17: Sustainability	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Source: Nigeria Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Indicators Baseline Report [9].

The SDGs are broad objectives that touch on all aspects of human existence, and it is abundantly obvious from Table 1 above that achieving them will significantly improve human lives and advance development in all of its manifestations. However, achieving these objectives in Nigeria may be challenging due to the lack of basic infrastructure such as education, standard roads, Information Communication and Technology (ICT), an efficient waste management system, uninterrupted power supplies, and portable water [10].

Although global in scope and applicable to all nations, the 169 targets that go along with the 17 SDGs also take into account various national realities, capacities, degrees of development, policies and priorities. There is little question that the SDGs align with Nigeria’s existing national goals of attaining inclusive growth [11]. But it is true that Nigeria’s economy is currently going through difficult times, and any effort to achieve the SDGs must concentrate on addressing these difficulties. Technically the economy is in recession with negative GDP growth, rising inflation, dwindling external resources, falling government revenue, infrastructure deficit and security challenges coupled with the threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Theoretical Platform

The theoretical framework is institutional theory of Scott Richard [12]. This theory is a more resilient aspects of social structure. It considers the processes by which structures, including schemes, rules, norms, and routines, become established as authoritative guidelines for social behavior. Different components of institutional theory explain how these elements are created, diffused, adopted, and adapted over space and time; and how they fall into decline and disuse. The key idea behind institutionalism is that much organizational action reflects a pattern of doing things that evolves overtime and becomes legitimate within an organization and environment [13]. Institutions, according to Scott (1995), are social structures that have reached a high level of resilience [12]. Together with related activities and resources, these institutions’ cultural-cognitive, normative, and regulative components give social life stability and purpose. Institutional theory has arguably become a popular and powerful explanatory tool for studying various organizational issues, including those

in the context of higher education. Institutional theory explains the actions of both individuals and collective actors. It stresses both the dependency of actors' actions on institutions and the role of human agency in institutional change.

The essential implications of modern institutionalism are clearly reflected in North's definition of an institution, which states that it incorporates formal or written norms as well as social game rules and human-made limitations that govern human interaction. Because of this, "they structure incentives in human exchange, whether it be political, social, or economic" [14]. To this extent, institutions are created from both formal and informal sources: the first includes those consciously created conditions, such as statutes, laws, regulations formal organizational structures, while the second includes conventions, norms of behavior and self-imposed order of conduct which evolve over time to attain a "taken-for-granted" status. A derivative element common to both forms become their enforcement characteristic: the ability of rules of behavior to be explicitly or implicitly enforced [15,16].

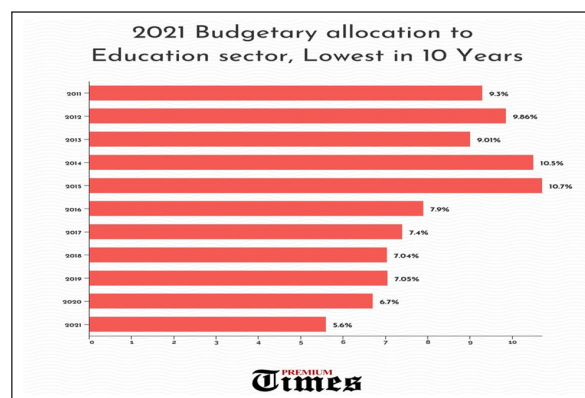
Hence, the theory is relevant to this study because tertiary institutions are social structures that support members of the society to attain high degree of resilience (socio-economic empowerment) and consequently will aid the researcher to investigate the assumptions of the theory. The theory also, places emphasis on the formal and legal measures taken to address the issues of funding Public Universities in Nigeria. Poor institutions such as the government, Ministries of Education, Local Government Education Authority (LGEA) make it impossible for states to properly fund public education. This is due to the fact that the battle against corruption is greatly hampered by weak institutions and bad policy decisions, which has caused Nigeria to make two forward steps and four backward steps in her education sector. Conspicuous consumerism, a lack of devotion to the state, oppressive and corrupt governmental institutions, to name a few, are the end results that are pervasive in Nigeria public universities today. Additionally, robust institutions in Nigeria would hasten the pursuit of sustainable development goal-4 and reduce uncertainty in the fight against poor funding university.

Findings and Discussion

Funding of Public Universities in Nigeria: An Evaluation

The N21.83 trillion appropriations bill for 2023 was signed into law by the Federal Government of Nigeria. This was President Muhammadu Buhari's current administration's eighth and final yearly budget. The approved budget has continued to provoke conflicting responses from various stakeholders. The allocations to critical sectors of the economy such as infrastructure, health and education are the source of conflict. Nigeria's contribution to the education sector has fallen short of the recommended benchmark of 26% for developing countries for the last eight years. For instance, the sector received N1.79 trillion in the 2023 budget, which is 8.2% of the appropriation bill approved. This budget has continued to provoke conflicting responses from stakeholders. The issue of inadequate funding of public institutions in Nigeria is evidence in 2021 budget as shown in figure 1 below:

Figure 1: 2021 Budgetary Allocation to Education sector



Source: Olufemi [17].

As we can see, the sector received N393.8 billion in 2011, or 9.3% of the total budget, N468.3 billion in 2012, or 9.86% of the total budget, N499.7 billion in 2013, or 10.5% of the total budget, N494.7 billion in 2014, or 10.7% of the total budget, and N484.2 billion in 2015. The allocation for the education sector in 2016 was N369.6 billion, or 7.9% of the total budget; in 2017, it was N550.5 billion, or 7.4% of the total budget; in 2018, it was N605.8 billion, or 7.04%; in 2019, it was N620.5 billion, or 7.05 percent; and in 2020, it was N671.07 billion, or 6.7% of the appropriation bill [17].

The education sector's inadequate budget has contributed to the appalling condition of federal institutions, many of which require restoration and renovations. The sector received N1.79 trillion in the current fiscal year's 2023 budget, or 8.2% of the total allocation bill, as previously mentioned. More specifically, N103.29 billion was allocated for the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), N248.27 billion was transferred to the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) for infrastructure projects in tertiary institutions, and N470 billion was set aside for the revitalization of tertiary education and salary increases [17]. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO) recommended that member nations should earmark four to six per cent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or 15 to 20 of public expenditure (annual budget) to fund education.

According to Suleiman, the National Universities Commission stated that there are currently 258 universities in Nigeria; 50 federal universities, 60 state universities and 148 private universities [18]. University education is the highest level of tertiary institution in Nigeria, with most students sitting the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) opting for the universities, rather than the polytechnics or colleges of education.

The 2023 allocation to the sector was an increase from that of last year's budget which gave education N923.79 billion representing 5.4 per cent of the N17.13 trillion budget [18]. First, some improvement in budgetary allocation to the education sector is observable. As against the 5.4% allocated to education in the last budget, the allocation for the year 2023 is about 8.2%, indicating an increase of about 2.8% [18].

According to UNESCO, the number of children and youth not in school is estimated to be 20.2 million in Nigeria, 10.5 million in

Ethiopia, 5.9 million in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and 1.8 million in Kenya [19]. The argument being made here is that Nigeria has the third highest rate of youth and children who do not attend school globally and in Africa.

Unfortunately, educational facilities in Nigeria are in terrible shape, including those at primary, secondary, and higher institutions. Visitors, students, and the entire university community have expressed worry about the poor infrastructure in Nigeria's public tertiary institutions [20]. Due to the Federal Government's unwillingness to adequately fund universities, the field observation demonstrates that the majority of restroom facilities at public institutions are hardly fit for human use. Many students choose to defecate in the open in nearby bushes on occasion because the bathrooms in some campuses are so unclean. While visitors to the hostels are frequently met by a stench oozing from poorly-managed garbage and unwashed toilets. This unhealthy environment pollutes the university atmosphere.

The researchers also noticed that most of the congested hostels that lacked running water and regular power supply on government-owned institutions lacked window louvres and planes. It was furthermore, observed that regular supply of water is not guaranteed for most students in government-owned institutions. To learn and study, undergraduates are compelled to endure unpleasant conditions, yet they have no option but to adjust and endure unpleasant learning condition till graduation.

The implication is that no one should be surprised that our public universities are in a terrible situation. The lecturers are paid meagerly. The highest paid professor (on CONUASS Grade 7 Level 10) receives a net pay of N416, 743 per month, or approximately \$1000 at the official exchange rate. For someone at the pinnacle of their profession, this is still pitiful. The critical infrastructure for teaching and learning is grossly inadequate: the classrooms are overcrowded; the libraries, laboratories and technological backbone are behind time; and the hostels are cramped and mostly inhospitable. In addition, the schools are afflicted by a host of other ailments that constrain their capacities to deliver cutting-edge learning in the knowledge age [7].

The federal government has set aside N230.9 billion for 14 federal universities in Nigeria in the budget for 2023, with University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN) receiving the largest allocation. The amount allocated for spending by President Muhammadu Buhari for the upcoming year has increased from N19.76 trillion to N20.5 trillion. The government would borrow N8.80 trillion to cover the N10.78 trillion deficit in the budget. The University of Nigeria Nsukka, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Benin, and University of Ibadan would receive the N230.9 billion. Others include Nigeria Open University (NOUN), Federal University of Technology, Owerri, FUT Akure, Minna, University of Calabar, and Universities of Lagos, Jos, Ilorin, and Lagos.

According to the budget breakdown for 2023, Ahmadu Bello University received N25.8 billion, University of Lagos earned N22.3 billion, and University of Nigeria, Nsukka, received N29.3 billion. University of Calabar earned a N21.5 billion allocation, followed by University of Benin with N19.5 billion, University

of Ibadan with N19.2 billion, and Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka with N18.3 billion. The budget allocated N18.1 billion to the University of Ilorin, N16.3 billion to Obafemi Awolowo University, and N14.2 billion to the University of Jos. Federal Technology Universities received funding of N14.3 billion for FUTO, Owerri; N8.4 billion for FUTA, Akure; and N7.2 billion for FUT, Minna. In the meantime, the budget will allocate N10.7 billion to the Nigeria Open University (NOUN) [21].

The implication of the practice of not adequately funding the public university has contributed to strikes by various academic bodies including the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). In 2022, lecturers under ASUU embarked on an eight-month strike to protest poor funding of tertiary institutions and better working conditions. In spite of this disturbing reality, annual allocation to the education sector remains low. With the current budget, it means Buhari has allocated a total of N6.47 trillion to the education sector in the last seven years [21]. The highest education allocation under his administration was in 2019 when he earmarked N745.53 billion of the year's N8.9 trillion budget which represents 8.4 per cent. The intervention budget for Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) from 2010 to 2021 showed there is no significant increase in allocation for research and infrastructure projects despite a rise in the number of public universities in the country [21]. As of 2020 and 2021, the intervention for 79 universities across the country stood at N71.6 billion respectively. This shows more investment is needed for universities in Nigeria to function optimally.

According to the breakdown of the budgetary allocation to the education sector above, the system's financial problems has led to the higher education sector in Nigeria losing facilities, deteriorating equipment, and unfinished projects. Once more, due to inadequate attention being paid to the education sector and a lack of qualified teachers and instructional materials, standards are alleged to have fallen during the past eight years, with some graduates being deemed unsuited for employment. This depressing condition compromises the provision of high-quality education while maintaining infrastructure inadequacies in Nigeria's educational system.

Pathways to Sustainable Funding of Public Universities education in Nigeria

The fact that education costs money can hardly be denied. Quality education requires quality infrastructure, excellent and well remunerated teachers, adequate curriculum development and planning, amongst others. Most Nigerians demand the best quality education, even though they are also aware that quality education is most expensive [22]. In order for us to better appreciate the inadequacy of funds allocated to tertiary education, the following pathways are proffered:

University Autonomy

University autonomy implies the freedom to design their own curriculum and syllabus, to choose how to distribute any funding that is made available to them among their various activities, and to choose how to select their own students and staff members. This clarification demonstrates that the university as an institution does not claim autonomy in all fields, but just in certain. Legislative authority or executive suasion tied to financial power are common examples of government influence.

Executive influences can be exerted by government through appointment of vice-chancellors, members of the governing councils and on matters of salaries and conditions of service/funding. However, university autonomy can only be meaningful in terms of a university carrying out its functions of research and teaching where it is allowed to govern itself, secure from the day to interference of the state and the interplay of politics.

Due to their lack of financial independence, many Nigerian universities are unable to compete with those outside in the recruitment of the best professors and lecturers, some of whom are currently dispersed abroad but are originally from Nigeria. Even though a university may be publicly owned, this does not mean that the government must pay all of its expenses going forward. Universities must have the resources, freedom, and financial independence to continuously scour the world for the best talent and hire them in order to stop the flow of this brain drain. A university's ability to fly is restricted in the absence of financial autonomy, and it is left to crawl or, at most, walk. Federal Government needs to let go of public universities. Part of letting go is the need to remove the stranglehold of uniformity and over-regulation. Let each university have full autonomy over its curriculum, its admissions, its structure, and its conditions of service and remuneration.

In a setting where universities operate independently, prospective vice chancellors, pro chancellors, or presidents, as the case may be, will need to lay out their plans and visions for how they intend to cover staff salaries, support research and innovation, and generally guide their institutions toward greater efficiency and higher rankings during their terms in office. Academics will also do more work, encouraged by greater positive incentives and constrained by more corporate penalties, in a same vein. What is more, even students will no longer take their studies for granted since university education will, in such a world, bear a respectable and non-negligible cost [23].

Grants, Alumni & Business Ventures

The universities can also generate considerable amount of money from other sources, particularly from their alumni, including grants, consulting work, business ventures, and returns on investments. Many of our colleges are skipping out on a lot of money when it comes to alumni support. Universities in the West keep a close eye on their graduates, offer them ongoing value, and frequently solicit their assistance. Our own colleges are so dependent on federal funding that they not only overlook their former students but also subject them to terrible hardships for something as simple as transcripts, which can be lucrative and which you can obtain from well-run institutions on the day of graduation.

Availability of Scholarship

Many parents, however, are unable to pay the requisite fees needed for famous institutions due to Nigeria's economic reality, where the minimum wage is N30,000 and the per capita GDP is less than \$2,000 per year. We must come up with plans to enhance the number of student scholarships made possible by benefactors. While Nigerians take pleasure in being their brothers' keepers, our tradition of supporting educational causes pales in comparison to that of North America. Additionally, Nigeria has not yet adopted the student loan programs that have been effectively implemented in several Western nations to solve

this issue. The student Loan Scheme Act, which was recently signed, is a beginning, but it needs to be amended for it to have the desired effect. For instance, there shouldn't be any distinction made between students attending public or private institutions; rather, the amount that each student can access should be limited to the maximum. Other private sources of funding should be added in addition to those mentioned in the law.

Conclusion

The campaign for sustainable development goals against the most especially among developing nations, since the launch of the SDGs in 2015 is on the increase. This paper focused on the evaluation of Federal Government of Nigeria funding of public university education for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal-4. The study demonstrates that the public Universities in Nigeria where under-funded based on the benched mark recommended by United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization. For sustainable development goal-4, there must be adequate and quality educated personnel to produce and maintain infrastructure. Therefore, it is recommended that courses that address national challenges and promote sustainable development goal-4 should be mounted by the universities. All stakeholders should be involved in funding university education while university autonomy, effective alumni partnership, scholarship and institutional accountability should be promoted and enforced if need be.

Author contributions

All authors listed have made a substantial, direct, and intellectual contribution to the work and approved it for publication.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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