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# Educational Wastage and Policy Planning

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**Abstract**

This paper focused on Educational Wastage and Policy Planning. It described Concept and Measurement of Educational Wastage, Causes of educational wastage and concept of policy planning. It highlights the importance and challenges of educational policy planning. The paper concluded that for the ultimate solution to reducing the wastage is by making educational policies that addresses some of the causes mentioned above. It recommended among others that, there should be a deliberate attempt by the government to meaningfully involve educational planners in making educational policies.

## Introduction

Paramount in the heart of educational planners is planning for an efficient education and educational system. This is because resources are scarce so also are educational resources while there are myriads of things contending for the available resources. This therefore, calls for judicious utilization of these resources. The resource that goes into the planning, administration and delivery of education is enormous. Educational resources range from human to material, non-material and financial. There are teaching and non-teaching staff with their relevant salaries and allowances, physical infrastructures like libraries, school building, laboratories etc. Also is the provision of books and other relevant teaching materials. All these resources are what should be in place for an appropriate and timely learning and teaching of students from start to finish or from the beginning to completion of individual learner. These are means put together for the achievement of an end which is the production and transformation of a graduate that will be useful to the society in the capacity with which he/she set out for at the beginning of the educational life. Anything short of the achievement of this end amounts to an educational waste.

Education is a production process and it involves productivity especially the transformation process of an individual. Students go through a transformation process to become graduates, which is the output of educational inputs. One of the central issues in the allocation, utilization and evaluation of the scarce resources is wastage. Wastage even though an economic concept, has gained its way into the educational system for the achievement of educational goals.

Educational wastage should be a great concern to the government, the society, the household and the individual who is the beneficiary of the product of education. Wastage is a sign of internal inefficiency and it spells a lot to educational planners. What is been wasted is human learning, the labor and effort of teachers, school building, equipment as well as the student effort.

Graduating at different levels of education, primary level, secondary level and tertiary level is important in and to social and national development. With completion of levels of education, individuals are empowered and they realize more productive lives, a sense of fulfillment, which culminates to national and economic development. When years of learning is wasted through loss of learning months, drop outs, repetition which occurs as a result of strikes, increase of examination failure etc. socio economic and national development is hampered. According to the Webster dictionary wastage is loss, decrease or destruction of something, especially wasteful or avoidable loss of something that is valuable. Education is a valuable product to the individual, family, the society and the world at large. The value of education in a society is as good as the development of that nation so its loss in whatever form must be avoided or reduced. Teachers and non-teaching staff are very vital in the processing and transformation process of the students, all these inputs cost money. Akinsolu (2017) emphasized that these costs in money can be expressed as expenditure per student/per year. Some of the noticeable signs of wastages include dropouts, repeater, premature withdrawals, misguided types of education, non-employment of school leavers and even brain drain.

Deribe, Endale and Ashebir (2012), repetition and dropout rates are the commonly used parameters to measure educational wastage. They believe when a child repeats a class more resources are utilized than that allocated to the individual student growth process and hinders the intake capacity of schools. They further said that dropping out of school before completion of a particular level of education is wastage of resources.

According to UNESCO (United Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization), educational wastage is perhaps the oldest and best-known problem and has lost none of its gravity. In Latin America as much as in Africa and Asia, and in the Argentina Republic a great many children continue to drop out of school, re-write the same examination do the same curricula over more than a year during their educational years. It's also observed that whereas the demand for education is growing more pressing and requires heavier sacrifices from the nations, the number of dropouts, repetition of class or examinations shows no sign of diminishing. In Nigeria, where repetition seems to have been overtaken by the establishment and proliferation of private schools and where parents demand value for money, disdain repetition, thereby making repetition of class an evil that must not be allowed to befall their children even when the child performs below the approved standard for promotion, the rate at which re-writing of external exams at the secondary level and tertiary level occurs is alarming.

Loxley (1987) reported that the overall primary school wastage rate for less developed countries is about 27% divided by regions as follows; Africa 34%, Latin America 28% and

Asia 22%. This compares to only 3% for the developed regions. Other names for educational wastage include failure in school, school dropouts, premature school leaving, continuing dropouts, pattern, repetition of educational stages, wastage from school examination failure, underperformance in education and educational underachievement. The nature of these wastages exists in different forms; failure of the system to provide a universal education, failure to hold children within the system, failure of the system to set appropriate objectives and inefficiency in the achievement of such objectives.

In Rwanda between 2016 and 2017, 6.85% of children in the education system in primary level have repeated at least once, in 2016 18% of children in upper secondary age had dropped out of school. Educational wastage is an implication of the inefficient use of educational resources. It is utilizing more resources allocated to the intake capacity of schools. It is an indication of an inefficient system, since an educational system is efficient when such system reduces wastage to the barest minimum.

Educational wastage is a deeply moral issue; it is one of the highly sinister policies of nations and includes exploitation of women, racial and class prejudice, abuse of labour and inadequate health and social services. There are obviously differences in rates and dispersions in educational wastage between countries. This suggests that each will formulate its own policy to eliminate, curb or reduce wastage in the future. David and Jefferson (2010) cited in Bernard and Orodho (2018) that between 2007 - 2008 period in the California, the department of education estimated that 98,420 public high school students dropped out of school. These data suggest that about 90 percent of California high school students in any ninth-grade class would likely dropout over a four-year period. This rate said was with schools' beer "no fun"; there was little hope of entering university and if they did graduate from the university, few prospects afterwards, youngsters admired those working in the city with most dropouts going to work soon after they left school and they were persuaded by parents to leave.

A situation policy analysis of basic education (UNICEF 2011) cited in Akinsolu (2017) revealed that educational wastage rate in Nigeria basic education system is about 17% between 2009 and 2010 on average. It is discovered that about 46.6% of the pupils who withdraw from the system are girls.

Educational planning policy stands out as a means of combating the challenges in the educational system. Educational policies give meaning to these challenges and provide a leeway for educational growth and progress that is efficient towards the attainment of national development.

Educational planning is the activity, which allows the public authorities to orient educational development, set priorities in consultation with other actors, identify priority, interventions and extend funding support to achieve the country's economic and social objectives. The education planning in Nigeria is associated with its own problems taking into consideration political, economic, social and technological changes going on in the society. An educational planner through policy-making and policy decisions direct and redirects educational objectives through

various educational activities. The act of policy- making and decision lies in the hand of the government of the day.

Nigeria presently is supposed to be using education through her educational policy to develop the attainment of vision 20:20. Vision 20:20 is a global world economic development by the year 20:20. The education sector through reform of policies hopes to achieve this vision. Vision 2020 stands out as one of the most topical issues in the Nigeria post-independence life; it is a call for Nigeria to become one of the twenty most developed economies by year 2020. It aims at moving Nigeria economy into the league of the world 20 largest economics by the year 2020 with educational system as a unit of analysis. It is however not obvious how close or far the educational sector is to this vision the hope is that one day we shalll get there

Therefore, developing a policy plan with a view to enhancing national development viz -a- viz the efficient administration of scarce resources is of great importance. The menace of poverty, unemployment, brain drain and other societal vices can be addressed with policies that reduce these wastages in all its forms.

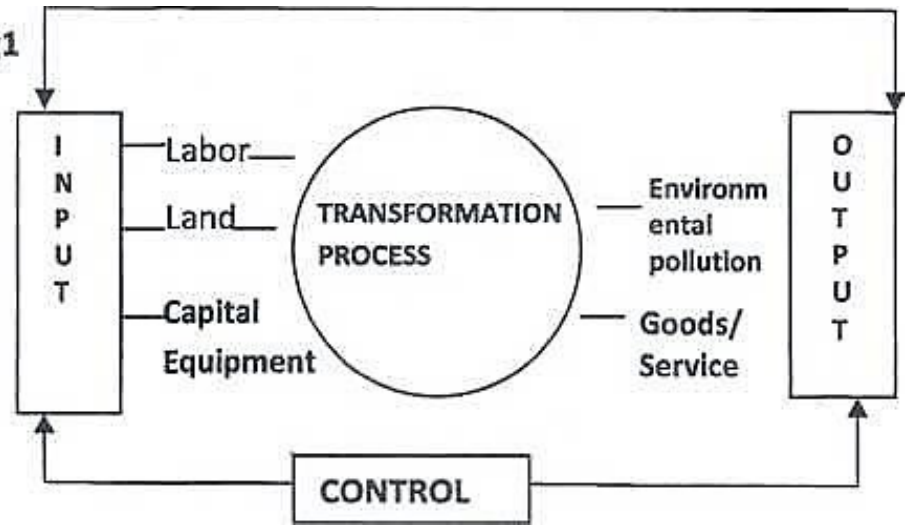
**Theoretical framework on education production**

The study is guided by the theory of the production and production function. Shepherd R. (1964) in examining the theory of production states that "output is a function of input". Wastage in educational services depends on the fact that education is a product. Many scholars are in support of the theory: Ezekwesili (2006); Donald, Winker and Lars Sudergaad (2008); Agboola and Adeyemi (2012); and Durosaro (2012).

The educational production function includes inputs, the process and the output.

**Production Function**

Fig1




Source: Shephard (1967) "The notion of production functions"

Fig. 1 shows the production system which can be seen as consisting of three elements inputs; the transformation process and output, it takes the form of labour of all types the required raw materials and sources of energy. All these involve cost outlays; the productions system can be seen as a continuous smooth flow of resource. The production function theory gives the technological relations between quantities of physical inputs and quantities of output of goods: output is a function of inputs. It is a process of producing outputs from the inputs. Production uses resources to create goods and services that are suitable for use or exchange in a market economy. Production is a process and as such, it occurs through time and space. Because it is a flow concept, it is measured as a "rate of output per period of time". Production is a process of combining various materials inputs and immaterial inputs (plans, know-how) in order to make something for consumption (the output). It is the act of creating output (good or service) which has value and contributes to the utility of individuals. It relates physical output of production process to physical inputs or factors of production.

**The Education Industry**

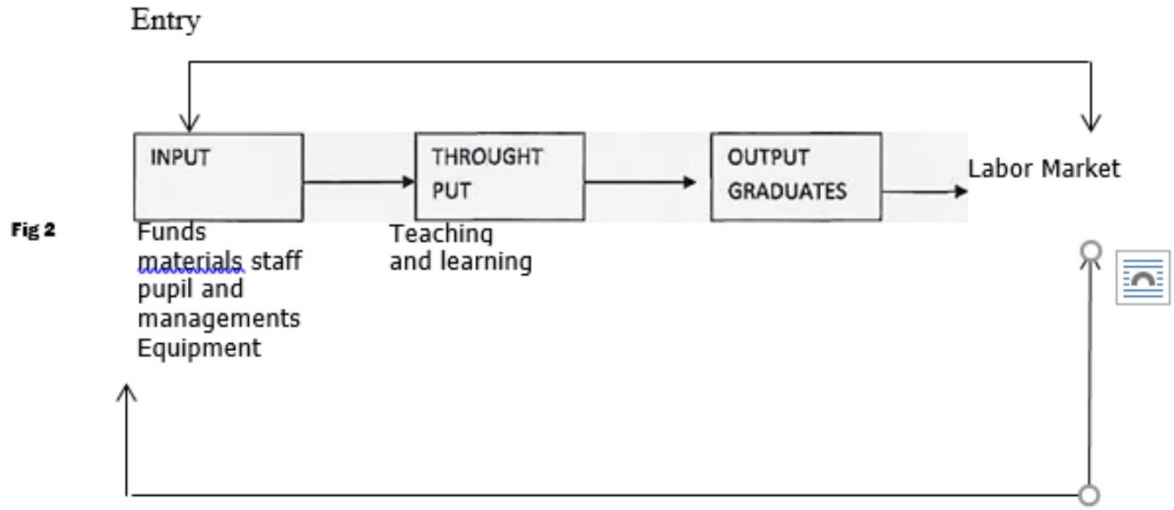


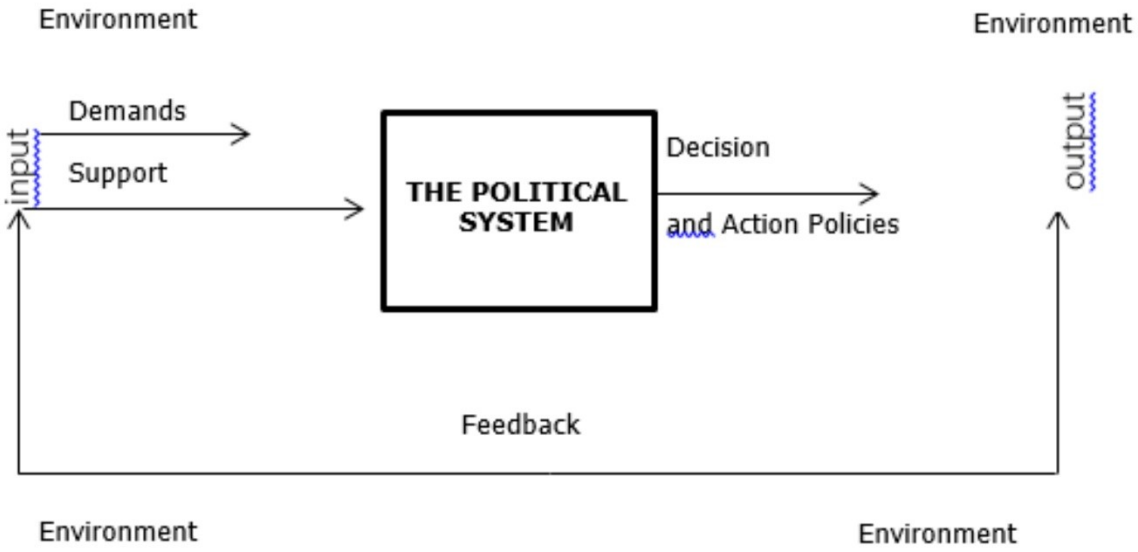

Fig 2

**Source:** Ezekwesili (2006). The Nigerian educational system should simulate a manufacturing model.

Fig. 2 shows the education industry consisting of three stages; the input, process and the output. The physical output, which is the graduate, is produced by a transformation process from combination of inputs such as teaching and non-teaching staff, school building, laboratories etc All these inputs goes through a transformation process of teaching and learning with the eventual output as graduates. There is the exit point which serves as a feedback to the system - in form of entry and causes the process to begin again. This constitutes the flow concept of the production function. The implication therefore from the above is that, if anything goes wrong with the factors mentioned above wastage is then inevitable in the educational system. Nigeria presently is in a crisis point of education wastage in the secondary and tertiary level of education.

Adepoju (2000) cited in Akinsolu (2017) described the production function as the maximum level of outcome possible from alternative combination of inputs. He stressed further that school system consist of four major components; the inputs are pupils, teachers' facilities and

funding; the procedure throughout is the processing stage the student achievement the output of schooling, the evaluation is the feedback. Oluchukwu (2011) in Akinsolu (2017) stated that the measurement of efficiency of the school system involve queries on the inputs and output from education. The outputs of the school system are graduated students.
Gbadamosi (2013) in Akinsolu (2017) reported a high rate of attrition in Nigerian secondary school with a call on educational planner to intervene.




**Political System Easton**

Source: Easton David (1965). A system analysis of political life. New York: 32

**Theoretical framework on policy planning**
The theory of policy planning is hinged on Easton's political system model (1965). Easton views the policy process as a political system responding to the demands arising from its environment. The identifiable and interrelated institutions and activities in a society that make authoritative decisions or allocation of value that are binding on society. He explains further that the environment provides inputs to the decision process/political system in the form of demand and supports (pressure groups, social groups, consumer group etc. These environmental inputs are converted, through the political system into output or policies. This applies in education planning.

Inputs come from students, teacher parents, community and other stakeholders who consume the education industry. It comes as conflict, demands, support, agitation passed on by institutions like UBEC, NUC, ANCOPSS etc, it goes through a legislative process as seminars, committees, conferences and may eventually emerge as a decision (output) or policies. It is

with the aid of these policies educational planners set a roadmap for the growth of the education in the society.

Educational wastage is the effects of the associated problems of repetition and dropout. Adeyemi (2010). Wastage in education cannot be divorced from the concept of efficiency. It is related to repetition, dropout, attrition, withdrawal, even unemployment and underemployment. He further said that the measurement of wastage in the system is very important in determining the degree of internal efficiency. Internal efficiency is the relationship between the output and input of an education system. An internally efficient education system is such that produce graduates without any waste in student-year or without dropout or repeaters.

Durosaro (2012) said that educational wastage implies the inefficient use of educational resources. Educational wastage as an economic term is the total number of pupil year spent by repeaters and dropouts (Loxley 1987). It can be converted into a percentage of the total number of pupil years according to the student cohort. A cohort in a school system refers to a group or set of student that arrived into the grade one of the school system in the same year. Deribe, Endale and Ashebir (2012) Repetition and dropout rates are the commonly used parameters to measure educational wastage. They believed when a child repeats a class more resources are utilized than that allocated to the individual student growth process and hinders the intake capacity of schools. They further said that dropping out of school before completion of a particular level of education is wastage of resources.

$$\text{Wastage ratio} = \frac{\text{Actual Input-Output Ratio}}{\text{Ideal input - Output Ratio}}$$

There is no-wastage ratio value less than 1.0

A wastage ratio of 1:0 is a perfect efficiency

**Sources**: Adeyemi, Babalola, Ogundiran, & Awe (2010).

**Causes of educational wastage**

It is important to note that causes of educational wastage may have slightly variation from one country to another. In Nigeria, some of the major causes are ‘

- Poverty/ child abuse
- Absence of school facilities
- Sex discrimination
- Health related issues
- Family structure/support
- Teenage pregnancy
- School location /distance
- Insecurity/ family instability
- Peer pressure
- Truancy/indiscipline
- Lack of student interest in school
- Poor academic performance
- Absence of school facilities and infrastructure

**Poverty**: poverty has continued to be a major problem in the developing countries like Nigeria. The inability of parents to provide school fees and other related fees, makes children to drop out of school or have consistent repetition of classes; sometime these children go out on errands for the family to make ends meet and ultimately can no longer cope with academic work. They become economic access to the family and earn money to keep their family going.

**Sex discrimination:** This has to do with societal preference for the male child due to cultural and traditional value system. Although the preference seems to be decreasing slowly especially with educational acquisition and qualification, it is still a challenge to the female gender. Some families will rather send their male child to school than the female child on the pretense that she will take the benefit of her achievement to her husband house. This is a conservative attitude.

**Absence of school facilities and infrastructure**: This has to do with inadequate and absence of proper building, provision of clean water, poor sanitation and sanitary system and poor transportation system. The non-availability or inadequacy of some of these facilities affects the morale of the students and parents, which may eventually lead to a withdrawal from school. A good school environment enhances good academic performance.

**Health related issues:** This could be due to mal-nutrition, sickness of the child or the parents, inadequate health facilities and ultimate death of one or both parents of the child.

**Family structure/support**: A child from a polygamous home has a higher risk to drop-out of school or repeats the class as the case may be. Unlike a child from a monogamous home who dearly enjoys the monitoring of both parent at school all things been equal. Psychological support of family members to stay in school especially at time of academic, social and family challenges is also important and cannot be overlooked.

**Teenage pregnancy:** this is an incidence mostly found in secondary schools. Teenage pregnancy leaves the girl child out of school or an eventual repetition after delivery depending on the social and family support she may access at such a time.

**School location/distance:** The closer the school is to a child the lesser the friction of getting to school. Schools located on hills or areas prone to flood or with no easy access by road are

bound to suffer patronage, and as well makes schooling undesirable for children, hence, the incidence of dropout and repetition may become inevitable.

**Peer pressure:** According to Barongo (2013), peer social influence have indicated that whenever a pupil finds it difficult to fit in a peer group, he may not be able to adjust to school activities and may eventually exhibit a lot of delinquent behavior while in school which invariably affect his/her commitment to academic work. He/she may feel less competent than others and may end up not valuing education and school friendship. It therefore means that with a negative peer influence, student may not like to retain school until completion while with a positive peer influence a child develops a sense of security and friendship, high self-esteem and affiliation, which pulls up a child into academic completion.

**Drugs:** Drugs and alcohol abuse are negative influence that has a great impact on school age youth. There is a high rate of substance use in our secondary school as well as the tertiary institution. Marijuana, Tramadol and Codeine have become commonly used drugs among students. These are significant barriers to their educational achievement. Some of the children dropout of school unknown to their guardians and parents, keep staying in one class or writing one exam for longer than necessary and this culminate to educational wastage.

**Truancy/indiscipline:** Truancy is an intentional unauthorized or illegal act of absence from compulsory schooling; it may also refer to classes. Gab (1997) views that a truant student leaves home but does not get to school, or escape for any other activities that catch up his imaginations. A truant child most often than not drops out of school or repeats the same class or examination excessively. They become either social misfit or hoodlums.

**Insecurity/family instability:** The menace of Boko-Haram, Kidnapping and other criminal activities in Nigeria has caused many families displacement; moving out of their place of residence or community to IDP camp (internal displaced person) temporarily or even permanently. A whole lot of these children leave school with the hope of going back home whenever their family regains stability, for some this become a mirage even when they know time had been wasted. Insecurity can affect the emotional behavior of student. Fear, panic, criminal involvement, which consequently breeds poor academic performance, is therefore inevitable and this may lead to repetition or dropout. The traumatic experience of some of the children has impeded on their academic pursuit. In the words of one of the children, she says, “I will never go back to school”

## The Concept of Policy Planning

Educational planning is the process of getting out in advance strategies, policies procedure, programme and standard that allows a set of educational objectives to be achieved. It is the activity that allows the public authorities to be oriented educationally, set priorities in consultation with other actors, identify priority interventions and extends funding support to achieve nation economic and social objectives.

Osman F. (2002) public policy making is not merely a technical function of government, rather it is a complex interactive process influenced by the diverse nature of socio-political and other environmental forces. The environmental forces that form the policy context lead to the variation in policies and influence the output and impact due to the contextual difference. He noted further that public policies of the developed countries significantly differ from those of

the developing countries. According to him, although the policy of developed countries has proved their effectiveness in many cases; these cannot be applied in understanding the dynamic of the policy process of developing countries. Furthermore, he established that public policies in the developing countries possess certain peculiarities of their own by virtue of being influenced by an unstable socio-political environment and face various problems and challenges.

This invariably is not untrue in Nigeria and in the educational sector. There are challenges educational planners face in policy making which if addressed is capable of reducing educational wastage.

The importance of educational policy planning in Nigeria:

1. It serves as a guide for educational activities that assists in making educational decision. It defines the area of operation for education planners.
2. It provides direction for educational activities without which teachers, pupils and other stakeholders will not be able to adapt and adjust to the educational environment in which they may find themselves. A system that is without a concise direction collapses or ends up in a chair.
3. Educational planning polices give room for policy implementation, without a policy guides that will not be anything to implements
4. An educational planning policy act as a basis or backing for educational planners and does not make them look like stand alone or at variance with the society or the government of the day.
5. Educational planning policy is a way to know whether there is a gap between the policy objective and the eventual policy result attainment

**Challenges of Policy Planning in Nigeria**

- Shortage and inaccurate statistical data
- Political interference Political instability
- Lack of proper knowledge of the planners on the subject matter which occurs when round pegs are put in square holes.

**Conclusion**

The inevitability of having educational wastage in all levels of education and its impact on educational, socio economic and national development cannot be overemphasized. The rate of unemployment, underemployment, brain drain etc is an indication to this fact. Indeed, there is no system that is completely devoid of wastage but it can be mild or severe. The severity of wastages in Nigeria educational system is becoming alarming. The ultimate solution to reducing the wastage is by making educational policies that addresses some of the causes mentioned above. Therefore, awareness should be created by all educational stakeholders and through their demand and support put in place all that it takes to assume degrees in the educational system.

**Recommendations**

1. Dropouts through a monitoring system should get involved in skills acquisition as to annex the knowledge acquired gainfully. These vocation Centers should be made functional.
2. There should be sensitization of girl-child and even the boy-child on the consequences of teenage pregnancy.
3. School should be located in a place where students can easily reach them and the school should be made functional, that is, teacher should be available with other good physical infrastructures
4. There should be a deliberate attempt by the government to meaningfully involve educational planners in making educational planning policies.
5. The public, parents, students and other stakeholder in education should be sensitized on the economic loss involved in educational wastage not only to the government but also to individual party.

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