

**FUNDING AND GOVERNMENT POLICY AS FACTORS INFLUENCING THE
STUDENT TURNOUT RATE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IKEJA LOCAL
GOVERNMENT, LAGOS, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of funding and government policies on student turnout rates in public secondary schools in Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria. Against the backdrop of Nigeria's persistent underfunding of education falling below UNESCO's recommended 26% budgetary allocation the research investigates how financial constraints and policy instability exacerbate challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages, and high dropout rates.

Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to 86 teachers, administrators, and principals across three public secondary schools. The analysis employed Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and multiple regression models to test hypotheses on the relationship between funding, government policies, and student turnout.

Findings revealed a significant positive correlation between adequate funding and improved student turnout ($\beta = 0.59$, $p < 0.05$), attributed to enhanced infrastructure, teacher quality, and resource availability. Conversely, government policy alone showed no statistically significant impact ($p > 0.05$), though its combination with funding emerged as a critical factor.

The study concluded that while funding directly drives educational outcomes, sustainable improvements require stable, well-funded policies aligned with long-term goals. Recommendations include increasing education budgets to 15–20% of Nigeria's national allocation, fostering private-sector partnerships, and institutionalizing robust monitoring frameworks to ensure policy continuity.

Keywords: Funding, Government Policy, Student Turnout.

1. INTRODUCTION

Student turnout rates in Lagos' public secondary schools underscore a systemic crisis driven by chronic underfunding and erratic government policies. Despite programs like the Leave-No-Child-Behind Policy and the EKO Excellence in Child Education and Learning (EKOEXCEL) initiative designed to enhance enrollment through free education, teacher training, and technology integration (Ogundare, 2020; Olujuwon et al., 2021) public schools in Lagos remain plagued by overcrowding, dilapidated infrastructure, and insufficiently qualified teachers (Lagos State Ministry of Education, 2020). These challenges directly erode educational outcomes, including enrollment rates, academic achievement, and dropout figures, perpetuating a cycle where economic instability amplifies inequities for low-income communities (Kedir, 2016).

Nigeria's macroeconomic instability, marked by inflation, currency devaluation, and unemployment (CBN, 2020), exacerbates these educational deficiencies. Chronic underfunding of the sector is starkly evident in the government's allocation of only 6.3% of the 2021 national budget to education, a figure far below UNESCO's recommended 26% (Ayeni & Omobude, 2018; Udida et al., 2009). This underinvestment has left schools starved of critical resources, with incomplete infrastructure projects, outdated facilities, and a lack of instructional materials crippling their ability to deliver quality education (Akinola, 1990; Devanshi, 2016). Public institutions, heavily reliant on government funding, bear the brunt of this neglect, creating a vicious cycle: poor infrastructure and teacher shortages deter enrollment, while economic hardship forces families to prioritize immediate survival over schooling, further depressing student turnout (Adeyemi, 2016).

Government policies, though framed with transformative intent, often falter due to inconsistent implementation and financial shortfalls (Okeke, 2017). For example, the EKOEXCEL program's focus on technology-driven teaching and teacher development has struggled to scale effectively amid funding constraints (Olujuwon et al., 2021). Systemic issues, such as inequitable resource distribution, deepen disparities, leaving marginalized students underserved (UNESCO, 2019). Political volatility and shifting budgetary priorities further destabilize long-term educational planning, as seen in the erratic execution of free education policies that fail to address foundational resource gaps (Bellei, 2013).

This research consistently highlights the direct link between funding adequacy and educational student turnout rate (Kedir, 2016). Insufficient financial support undermines schools' capacity to retain students, train educators, and maintain facilities, directly influencing dropout rates and academic performance. In Lagos, these challenges are magnified. Overcrowded classrooms and inadequate infrastructure dissuade enrollment, while families in economically strained households often withdraw children to alleviate financial burdens (Nashayya, 2010). Without sustained funding and coherent policies, efforts to improve student turnout remain superficial rather than systemic.

The educational system is the bedrock of growth and development in every country including Nigeria, but due to various changes in government policies and poor funding and it has impacted

the educational system negatively thereby affecting the outcome of education. This study aims to investigate the impact of the funding on educational institution, one of the goals of education according to the National Policy on Education (NPE) (2013) is to provide equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education, within and outside the formal school system. However, School drop-out has become a major problem in Nigeria due to inadequate funding caused by lack of prioritization of the educational system.

Many children are forced to drop-out of school at one level or the other either because their families are not able to provide the tuition fees needed for their schooling or the school cannot afford the necessary infrastructures or quality teachers to provide quality education.

The current situation of secondary school student drop out in Nigeria is that children drop out of school principally to fulfil their financial needs. Currently the Nigeria economy has been going through massive recession due to inflation, low GDP, high exchange rate and unemployment and this has had a massive negative impact on educational institutions leading to high rate of drop-out and low students turnout in schools.

According to UNESCO, Nigeria has one of the highest school drop-out rates in West Africa, with approximately 10.5 million children out of school. Government policies are meant to be a yardstick for the development of the educational system in Nigeria but, it has been a limitation to the growth of the educational institution. When you consider the annual yearly budget allocation to the educational system, it is discouraging and it is below the percentage which UNESCO advises all developing country to allocate to the educational system. Developing countries like Ghana try to meet the benchmark of UNESCO by allocating between 15% to 20% of their annual budget or 4% to 6% of their GDP, meanwhile Nigeria allocation for the past five years has been as follows; 2024: 7.9% of the total budget is allocated to education, 2023: 8.7% of the total budget was allocated to education, 2022: 7.9% of the total budget was allocated to education, 2021: 5.7% of the total budget was allocated to education, 2020: 6.7% of the total budget was allocated to education.

Due to this government policy and the meager funding, the educational system has faced many problems and this policy is just one of many which has impacted the educational system negatively. It has caused a decline in the quality of education given to the citizens, insufficient teacher training, while the quality of education is been compromised. Short-term political gains are frequently given precedence over long-term educational growth in government policy, and this has caused demotivation and high turnover rates between the teachers and staffs.

Funding and government policies are deep rooted problems negatively impacting the educational institutions in Nigeria, it has led to increased poverty levels thereby forcing many students to drop out of school. Students in public school's struggle with academic achievement due to inadequate resources and lack of motivation. With the above listed challenges, the study seeks to understand how government policies and funding affect public secondary schools in Ikeja, Lagos.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypothesis was tested during the study

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between funding and student turnout rate in public secondary schools in Lagos State.

Ho2: Government policy does not affect student turn out rate in public secondary schools in Ikeja, Lagos state.

Ho3: Government policy and funding are not factors influencing school turn out rate in public schools in Ikeja, Lagos State.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research Design: The research design adopted for this study is a descriptive survey research design will be used measure its level of accuracy. This design included the collection of secondary quantitative data and numerical data through a closed ended questionnaires administered to respondents, in order to find solution to the research problem. In this respect, the survey research design will be adopted for this study where a sample of the population will be selected and used as respondents.

Population: The population of the study was made up of School administrators, principals and teachers from public secondary schools in Ikeja, Lagos state, Nigeria. The study comprised of 3 public secondary schools. The total population for this research is 86

S/N	Name of public secondary school	Population size (Teachers)	Population size (Administrators)	Total	Research population
1	Ikeja senior high school	35	3	38	30
2	Ikeja junior high school	41	3	44	35
3	Ikeja state secondary school	20	7	27	21
	Total			109	86

Sampling and Sampling Techniques

A random sampling technique was adopted to select participant from the three public secondary institutions to enable each public school among the selected schools in Ikeja, Lagos state to have an equal chance of being selected. Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size of the participants for the study.

The formula is $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$

Where n = required sample size from the population

N = the whole population under study

E = the sample error which is 0.05

Calculation

$$N=109/1 + 109 (0.05)^2 = 86$$

For each school

$$38/109 * 86 = 30$$

$$44/109 * 86 = 35$$

$$27/109 * 86 = 21$$

Instrument: The instrument that was used in this study was a self- structured questionnaire designed for data collection. A self -generated questionnaire of four (4) sections was used to elicit responses from respondents on the subject of the study. The questionnaire included four (4) sections: section A, B, C and D.

Section A of the instrument included the demographic data of the respondents such as sex, age, status, qualification, years of experience, type of educational institution, name of school and role in the educational institutions.

Section B, titled ‘Funding’ was carefully arranged to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. Example of questions in this section is Poor funding render education curricular inadequate when instructional materials needed to implement the curriculum are not available leading to low student’s turnout rate.

Section C, titled ‘Government policy’ was carefully arranged to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. Example of a questions in this section is ‘Most of the policies by the government has failed due to poor strategy and implementation plan.

Section D, ‘Funding and government policy impact on student’s turnout rate was carefully arranged to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. Example: Student retention rate has greatly diminished due to lack of proper funding and the inability of the government to implement a policy and getting a positive outcome.

The Likert rating scale was used to measure the opinions of the respondents ranging from Strongly Agree = 1 to Strongly Disagree = 4.

Data analysis: Descriptive statistics was used to test the demography data of the respondents, multiple regressions and Pearson product moment correlation was used to analyze and test the collected data, to know if there’s any statistical impact between the variables in the study. The variables in the study are funding and government policy (independent variables) and student turnout rate (dependent variable). This is used to test the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables.

3. RESULTS

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Data of the respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (N=86)	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	32	37.2
	Female	54	62.8
Years of Experience	Less than 5years	12	14.0
	5-10years	17	9.8
	11-20years	42	48.8
	21-30years	9	10.5
	More than 30years	6	7.0
Status	Teacher	72	83.7
	Administrator	9	10.5
	Principal	5	5.8
Educational Institution	Junior Secondary School	43	50.0
	Senior Secondary School	43	50.0
Marital Status	Single	22	25.6
	Married	64	74.4

Table 1 shows the socio characteristics of the respondents. Most of the respondents, 62.8%, were female while 37.2% were male. It was further revealed that majority of the respondents were teachers 83.7%, while 10.5 were administrators and 5.8% were the principals. The years of experience indicated that most of the respondents work experience of were less than 5years (14%), 5-10year (9.8%), 11-20years (48.8%), 21-30years (10.5%) and 5.8% work experience was within 30years and above. It was also indicated that most of the respondents were majorly married with a percentage of 74.4% while 25.6% were singles.

Table 2: Summary of Pearson Moment Correlation on the influence of funding on student turnout rate in public secondary schools

Variables	Mean Score	R	P-Value
Student turnout rate	19.20	0.568	0.000
Funding	19.40		

Table 2 demonstrated that funding significantly affects student turnout ($r = 0.568$, $p = 0.000$). This suggests that the null hypothesis, which claims that there is no meaningful correlation between funding and academic performance in public secondary schools in Lagos State is disproved. Funding therefore has a big impact on the quality of education in public secondary schools in Lagos State.

Table 3: Summary of Simple linear Regression on the effect of government policy on student turnout in public secondary schools in Ikeja, Lagos state

Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	14.690	2.467		5.954	.000
Government Policy	.225	.122	.197	1.839	.069

Table 3 showed that Government Policy does not significantly affect student turnout ($\beta=.197$; $t=1.83$; $P>0.05$). This implies that the null hypothesis which indicates that: Government policy does not affect student turn out rate in public secondary schools in Ikeja, Lagos state is accepted. Hence, there is no significant effect of government policy on student turnout in public secondary schools in Ikeja Local Government, Lagos State.

Table 4: Summary of multiple regression on the influence of Government policy and Funding on Student turnout rate

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	201.550	2	100.775	20.006	.000
Residual	418.090	83	5.037		
Total	619.640	85			
Model Summary	R= .570a R= .325 R(Adj) = .309; Std Error= 2.244				

The researcher used multiple linear regression analysis at 95% confidence intervals to examine the hypothesis. With $F_{(2,83)} = 20.01$, $P = 0.000$, $P < 001$, $Adj R^2 = 0.57$, and R^2 change = 0.33, the study demonstrated a satisfactory model fit. Funding was found to have a considerable impact on student turnout based on the analysis ($\beta = 0.59$, $t = 5.94$, $P < 0.05$). Thus, the hypothesis was disproved. Additionally, the study demonstrates that government policy has no discernible impact on student turnout ($\beta = -0.52$, $t = -0.53$, $P > 0.05$). Additionally, there is no indication of multicollinearity in the dataset as revealed by the value inflation factors (VIF) results.

4. DISCUSSION OF FINDING

This study looked at how government policy and funding affected the number of students attending public secondary schools in Ikeja local government area of Lagos State. The outcome of the first hypothesis showed that funding significantly affects student turnout in public secondary schools. This result was in line with those of studies such as Nelson (2024), who found that resource funding significantly affects student success, retention, and equity in the Nigerian educational system. According to Akinwunmi et al. (2019), Nigeria's present funding policies are inadequate to meet schools' and students' educational demands. Additionally, the results showed that the availability of government scholarships has led to an increase in the percentage of students continuing their education in secondary school (Ngasura et al., 2023). Accordingly, the results indicate that funding

is a major determinant of student attendance in public secondary schools since it impacts a number of important areas, including infrastructure, instructional materials, and teacher quality.

Inflation has increased the cost of constructing educational resources and infrastructure, as well as the quality of education, teacher performance, student enrollment, and learning results. This study supports the findings of Ejiofor and Okonkwo (2013), Ahmed and Tochukwu (2024), Giami (2023), Ogunode and Ukozor (2023), who discovered that inflation affected educational production, increased educational resources, and decreased enrollment in educational institutions.

According to the second null hypothesis, the government policy has no effect on the student turnout rate in public secondary schools. After this hypothesis was put through the proper significance test and found to be supported by the data, it was concluded that government policy had no effect on the student turnout rate in public secondary schools. In light of this, it may be concluded that government policies do not always have an impact on school attendance rates. In fact, their influence is negligible in comparison to other factors. The results were consistent with those of Olawuyi et al. (2023), who found that while government policy plays a role in determining student retention and graduation rates in public secondary schools, it is not a significant factor because other factors have a greater impact. According to the statistics, only one respondent agreed that government policy has the least impact.

Finally, the third null hypothesis stated that Government policy and funding are not factors significantly influencing school turn out rate in public schools in Ikeja, Lagos State. Hence this means that the combination of funding and government policy are significant factors influencing student turnout in public secondary schools in Ikeja local government, Lagos State. This hypothesis was subjected to appropriate test of significance and the results were significant results leading to the conclusion that Government policy and funding are factors significantly influencing school turn out rate in public schools in Ikeja, Lagos State. This finding was in line with Ngasura et al (2023) finding which states that government subsidy impacts student retention rate significantly. Githaka et al. (2017) found that the implementation of educational subsidy programs has raised the student retention rate in public secondary schools, which is in line with this finding. The results were consistent with those of Sivili et al. (2024), who also found that financial influence has an impact on student retention.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that government policy alone does not affect student turnout rate in public secondary school in Ikeja, Lagos state while funding alone significantly influence student turnout rate in public secondary school in Ikeja, Lagos State. However, a combination of funding and government policy isa factor which has a significant influence on student turnout rate in public secondary school in Ikeja, Lagos State.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The government should allocate a minimum of 15–20% of the national budget to education, in line with UNESCO recommendations.
2. Policies should be backed with proper funding and a long-term implementation strategy.
3. Invest in building and maintaining school infrastructure, such as classrooms, laboratories, and libraries.
4. Provide financial aid and scholarship programs for students from low-income families.

Implement strict monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure funds are used efficiently.

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