

## **The Position of Primary Education System; In Depressed Economy, Problems and Prospects: A Case Study of Kumbotso Local Government Area, Kano State, Nigeria.**

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### **Abstract**

*Education is one of the fundamental factors for nation growth. The provision of education to the Nigerian citizen has adopted the social demand approach. This has contributed significantly to massive expansion of the system without a corresponding increase in funding. Hence, increasing budgetary allocation has always fell short of the expected turnaround revolution in education in the area of economic growth, skilled manpower needed for development and equal educational opportunity for all. Effective and stimulating education in our primary schools is fundamental for both future of science and ongoing development of global knowledge. Yet the overall level of science literacy is very poor and children are not being attracted to the scientific studies and eventful career as a scientist right from primary school level as a result of so many factors. Primary education is the foundational level of education that needs to be well funded, controlled and managed. Adequate provision of education to the citizens contributes greatly to the socio-economic development of the country. Therefore good administration of primary level education is required to faster natural growth and scientific development. However the quality of our primary education has dropped drastically and passed through different challenges. This paper examined the position of primary education system; problems and prospects in a depressed economy through the use of questionnaire and simple interview. The research restricts itself to primary school in kumbotso local government Area of Kano state. Kumbotso local government area, has a total number of 65 primary schools (in which 12 are nomadic primary schools, 1 model primary school, 1 orphans boarding primary school and 51 conventional primary school that makes up a total number of 65 primary schools) with students enrolment, 216,334. Moreover kumbotso local government area has 2,337 total numbers of staff and 11 wards. The analysis sampled 11 primary schools in kumbotso local government area, from eleven respective wards; the result shows that inadequate facilities, poor management, poor parental guidance and also inadequate funding are the major contributing factors to the poor quality of primary education system within kumbotso local government area.*

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*Key words; Education, Economic depression, Primary Education*

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### **Introduction**

Education is an avenue of training and learning, especially in schools or colleges, to improve knowledge and develop skills. The ultimate purpose of education is to empower an individual to excel in a chosen field of endeavor or career, and to be able to positively impact his/her environment. Education constitutes the foundation of meaningful socio-economic, political growth and development of any nation. The financing of education is at the heart of the educational crisis in many countries of the world. These appear to be perennial crisis of

funding and lack of definite structure and strategies in the funding of education and running the educational programs. The challenges in education in general and its funding in particular could be traced to policy and strategy instability and consistency and also inefficient management. Alaba,(2010). Mountain evidence shows that the skills acquired in school are what drive growth and equip individual for work and life. Without learning, education fails to deliver fully on its promise as a central driver of poverty elimination and shared prosperity. Schooling without learning is not just a wasted opportunity, but an injustice to the children who need it most.

### **Economic Depression**

Economic depression brought about by the oil glut of the 1980s till date still has its grip on the educational sector. Indisputably, the sector has not recovered fully the undying effect it had. Since then, there has been increasing evidence of financial constraints coupled with the proportion of government budget and GNP available to education financing to these, is the escalating cost of financing education which has placed the government in a sort of serious dilemma. It will expose the various factors militating against governments' intention to provide free education from primary to university levels. The expansion witnessed in the last two decades in the Nigerian education system has no equal. This was as a result of increased number of schools, size of schools, physical facilities, enrolment, curriculum, personnel and policy decisions. Seemingly, the financial resource allocation to the primary education sector is nominal in terms of naira and kobo. This is because, the business of education had been based on the view that education is an investment yielding dividend by way of producing the much needed manpower and other national benefits accruing to an educated person. However, financial resources available to the government have failed to cope with the growth and demands of the sector in recent times. Therefore, concerted efforts in research and analysis of alternative methods of financing education are needed in the face of declining government funds and increasing unit cost of education.

### **Primary Education**

Primary education is the foundation of formal education. It is an essential component in the echelon of educational system of every nation. In order to qualify for other levels of education one must first pass through primary schools, as such it is an institution upon which all other levels of education and educational achievements are built. It prepares the mind and trains the child for higher academic pursuits. Most of our primary schools in Nigeria are being confronted with a lot of problems. Some of the problems include; Unqualified teachers, Problems of school dropout, as a result of poor parental guidance and their socio-economic background/standard. Poor implementation of primary school objectives, poor management of primary schools and also funding problems.

From the view of, Umar (2000), Egwu (2009) and David Olabanji (2010) they explained that primary education in Nigeria is facing many challenges and enumerated the various problems militating against primary education. The problems include; physical and infrastructural facilities in primary schools in Nigeria, are in the state of bad condition, schooling is irregular, teachers' salaries are often unpaid, pupils morale are low and there are clear indication of continuing deterioration. They also identified the problems of quality of manpower even though; the primary education is the basic foundation necessary for acquaintance with high level of teaching, it is the education that prepares a child to the world of science and technology. Teboho (2000) stated that teachers are generally dissatisfied with their basic conditions of employment and their working conditions. This has resulted in low morale and low esteem of the profession. The situation has improved slightly following the

transfer management of federal allocation of primary school teacher's salaries and operational costs of schools to the national primary education commission (NPEC) and the state universal primary education boards (SUPEBs). However Sa'ad (2012), in his research stated some challenges facing primary education in Nigeria which include the huge disparity between expected school enrolment and the actual enrolment figure. Poor management of information in terms of gathering accurate data, recording and retrieval of data leads to conflicting statistics about the number of enrolled pupils and new applicants in the system. This means that these vital information are not readily available when needed, thereby creating a vacuum for policy makers, stakeholders and researchers to carry out their functions efficiently. The researcher was initiated to identify the problems and prospects of primary school education system. On the basis of data collection, the questionnaires were administered, data analysis techniques were based on simple percentage, the results were discussed and conclusions were made.

### **Research Methodology**

In this section, questionnaire was used as an instrument for appropriate collection of data from respondents and analysis. The data collected was analyzed using simple percentage in a tabular form for easy calculation and verification.

### **Research Questions**

- What are the current problems of primary school education in kumbotso local government area?
- What are the factors responsible for current status of primary school education in kumbotso local government area?
- What are the roles of parents in finding solutions to those problems?
- What consequence does poor primary school education has on the individual, family and society in general?
- What are the possible solutions to the current problems facing primary school education in kumbotso local government area?

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Data from questionnaires was compiled, sorted, edited, classified and analyzed using simple percentage in a tabular form.

$$p = f \times 100/n$$

Where: P: percentage, f: frequency, n: the total number of questionnaire retrieved

### **Result and Discussion**

This section presents the data obtained from the study and analysis of the result. The analysis of the result is limited to the 11 sampled schools. Related findings were used to justify the findings of the result. The presentation of data related to the variables under study is in line with the research questions that guided the researcher to execute. One hundred and fifty four (154) questionnaires were administered in the sampled schools, while one hundred and forty eight (148) were retrieved, six (6) questionnaires were missed. Five research questions were tested and analyzed. The result is as follows.

#### **Table 1:**

This table presents the analysis based on the percentage of the respondents on each item from the Questionnaire (i.e. the problems of primary school education in Kumbotso Local Government Area).

	Items	% of respondents Agreed	% of respondents Undecided	% of respondents Disagreed
1	Poor funding	66	7	27
2	Unqualified teachers	42	15	43
3	Inadequate facilities	74	12	14
4	Poor management of primary schools	61	7	32

**Source (field study 2017).**

From the above table, the result indicates that the major problem of primary school education in kumbotso local government area is inadequate facilities. That has the highest percentage of respondents (74%).

**Table 2:**

This table presents the analysis based on the percentage of the respondents on each item from the Questionnaire (i.e. factors responsible for current status of primary school education in Kumbotso Local Government Area).

Items	% of respondents Agreed	% of respondents Undecided	% of respondents Disagreed
Lack of government concern	73	5	22
Poor parenting/guidance	76	4	20
Poor management of primary schools	29	20	51
Lack of qualified teachers	26	28	46
Poor implementation of primary school objectives	69	5	26

**Source (field study 2017).**

From the above table, it indicates that, the major factor responsible for current status of primary schools education in kumbotso government local area is poor parenting/guidance. That has the highest percentage of respondents (76%).

**Table 3:**

This table presents the analysis based on the percentage of the respondents on each item from the Questionnaire (i.e consequences of poor primary school education on the individual, family and society in general).

	Items	% of respondents Agreed	% of respondents Undecided	% of respondents Disagreed
1	Producing half-baked school certificate holders.	80	8	12
2	Falls of educational standard	96	2	2
3	School dropout	62	12	26

**Source: ( field study 2017).**

From the analysis falls of educational standard is the major consequence of poor primary school education on the individual, family and society in general. That has the highest percentage of respondents (96%).

**Table 4:**

This table presents the analysis based on the percentage of the respondents on each item from the Questionnaire (i.e roles of parents in finding solutions to those problems).

	Items	% of respondents Agreed	% of respondents Undecided	% of respondents Disagreed
1	parental guidance	89	1	10
2	Provision of basic needs for children	95	0	5

**Source: (field study 2017).**

Moreover the analysis shows that provision of basic needs for children is the most significant role of parents. That has the highest percentage of respondents (95%).

**Table 5:**

This table presents the analysis based on the percentage of the respondents on each item from the Questionnaire (i.e the possible solutions to the current problems facing primary education in kumbotso local government area).

	Items	% of respondents Agreed	% of respondents Undecided	% of respondents Disagreed
1.	There is a need for government to provide working facilities.	99	1	0
2.	Teacher's welfare and good management must take in to consideration.	98	0	2
3.	In case of unqualified teachers seminars and workshops should be organized regularly.	55.4	5.4	39.2
4.	Prompt payment of primary school teachers' duty post allowances.	98	2	0
5.	Better monitoring strategy should be adopted for the money allocated to primary education sector.	96	0	4

**Source (field study 2017).**

Broadly, the findings of the study revealed that there are inadequate facilities in the primary schools within kumbotso local government area and also there is a problem of funding. Other findings from the study discovered that poor parental guidance and lack of government concern are major factors responsible for current status of primary school education in kumbotso local government area.

## Conclusion

From this study, it can be deduced that, the path to a dynamic and smooth running of primary school education in kumbotso local government area has been faced with a great suffering and slow progress with so many factors. These problems are mostly on provision of instructional facilities and disbursement of enough funds. The study as such supposes that if adequate human and material resources with sufficient funds are earmarked and provided for primary education system there will be remarkable improvement in higher level of education and will help the child to choose his/her career right from the grass root.

## Recommendation

1. Provision of qualified personnel; Government should employed adequate qualified teachers that will effectively manage the system.
2. Provision of teaching aids; teaching aids should be provided to ease the teaching and learning activities. This should come from both sides i.e the government, schools, societies and other supporting bodies.
3. Provision of conducive atmosphere; the classes should be well equip with facilities that can facilitate teaching and learning effectively.
4. Funding; Government should allocate adequate fund in order to run the system, in addition teacher's salary should be reviewed and other entitlement so as to boost the teachers morale to discharge their duties effectively.

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