

## **Managing Educational Management Issues in Education for National Reconciliation, Integration and Economic Recovery: A Case of Delta State**

**OLOBIA, Oghenevwoke Rita**

Department of Educational Foundation and Administration,  
College of Education, Warri  
Email: olobia.rita@coewarri.edu.ng, ritafikime@gmail.com

**GBADAMOSI, Raliat Adetola**

Department of Educational Management and Foundations,  
Delta State University, Abraka  
Email: raliatadetola001@gmail.com  
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### **Abstract**

*The study examined managing educational management issues in education for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery: A case of Delta State. 180 three hundred level (300L) undergraduates in the Department of Educational Foundation and Administration, Faculty of Education, in the three public Colleges of Education in Delta State, comprised the study's population. Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample determination table was used to select 123 samples for the study. Data were collected using a questionnaire titled "Managing Educational Management Issues for National Reconciliation, Integration and Economic Recovery (MEMINRIER)". The instrument was validated by three experts to enhance the quality and credibility of the instrument by reducing bias, identifying errors or omissions and ensuring consistency. The reliability coefficient (0.77) of the questionnaire was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha. Data obtained with the aid of the instrument was analysed using weighted mean. A benchmark of 2.50 was used, thus, for any item with mean score of between 2.50 to 4.00, signified agreement, while below 2.50 signified disagreement for each of the items. The results revealed that lack of funding, insufficient infrastructure, lack of qualified and skilled lecturers, limited access to technology and digital resources, among others are the challenges faced by educational managers in managing educational institutions for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery. It was concluded that educational managers can play a crucial role in creating an inclusive educational environment that fosters national harmony and drives economic growth by acknowledging and addressing these challenges. It was thus, recommended among others, that educational managers should strengthen collaboration between educational stakeholders such as policymakers, educators, community leaders and parents to create a shared vision for educational management. Educational managers should also advocate for and allocate resources to bridge the digital divide, ensuring equitable access to educational technology and online resources for all students.*

**Keywords:** *Educational Management Issues, National Reconciliation, Integration and Economic Recovery*

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## **Introduction**

The role of education in national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery is crucial in fostering social cohesion, promoting understanding and addressing historical divisions. It plays a fundamental role in creating a shared sense of national identity, contributing to peacebuilding efforts, and facilitating the recovery process in post-conflict societies. The role of education in national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery is significant and multifaceted (Eide & Levine, 2018). Education plays a crucial role in fostering tolerance, empathy and understanding among different groups within a nation. By providing individuals with knowledge about different cultures, histories and perspectives, education can help break down stereotypes, reduce prejudice, and promote social cohesion. Education can also serve as a powerful tool in building social cohesion by bringing together individuals from different backgrounds and promoting a sense of belonging and shared identity (Kim et al., 2020). By creating inclusive learning environments, where diversity is valued and celebrated, education can help bridge social divides and promote national unity. Education can contribute to national reconciliation by including accurate and unbiased accounts of historical events, including periods of conflict or oppression. By acknowledging past injustices, educating about their causes and consequences, and promoting honest dialogue, education can help facilitate healing, understanding, and reconciliation among different groups.

Education has the potential to empower marginalized groups, including those affected by conflict or social divisions (Stojanovska & Popovska-Korobar, 2020). By providing equal access to quality education, irrespective of ethnicity, religion or social status, education can facilitate the inclusion and integration of marginalized communities into the national development process. Education plays a vital role in equipping individuals with critical thinking skills, enabling them to question, analyze and engage with complex societal issues. By encouraging active citizenship, education can empower individuals to contribute positively to their communities, promote dialogue and participate in decision-making processes. Education is essential for economic recovery, as it plays a crucial role in economic development and human capital formation (Findlay & Grauel, 2019). By providing individuals with the necessary skills, knowledge, and tools to participate in the labor market, education can contribute to economic growth, poverty reduction, and overall national recovery. In summary, education is a crucial element in national reconciliation, integration, and recovery. It promotes tolerance, understanding, and social cohesion, addresses historical injustices, empowers marginalized groups, fosters critical thinking and active citizenship, and contributes to economic development.

Education plays a crucial role in the process of national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery as it serves as a tool for building a unified identity, fostering social cohesion and developing human resources necessary for national development. However, educational systems often face various management issues that hinder progress towards these goals. One of the major challenges in educational management is ensuring equitable access to quality education (Vernooy, 2021). In post-conflict and recovering societies, there may be disparities in access due to factors such as geographical location, socioeconomic status, gender or ethnic background. These

disparities can perpetuate divisions and hinder national reconciliation and integration efforts. Another management issue is the development and implementation of a curriculum that promotes national reconciliation, integration and recovery (Saleh, 2020). The curriculum should reflect the diverse histories, cultures, and languages of the nation, promoting values of peace, tolerance, and respect for diversity. However, curriculum development and content selection can be a contentious process, requiring careful negotiation and balancing of different perspectives.

Effective education management requires adequately trained and motivated teachers. However, post-conflict and recovering societies may face challenges in providing quality teacher training and professional development opportunities. Insufficient resources, trauma-related implications on educators, and the need for addressing the specific needs of a changing society can hinder effective educational management. Limited infrastructure and resources, particularly in remote or conflict-affected areas, pose significant challenges to educational management for economic recovery and reconciliation (Al-Ahmadi et al., 2018). Insufficient school facilities, lack of technological resources, and inadequate learning materials can hinder students' learning outcomes and inhibit social integration and national recovery. Successful educational management requires collaboration among various stakeholders, including government authorities, civil society organizations, community leaders and parents. Building partnerships and ensuring the active participation of all stakeholders is essential for fostering national reconciliation, integration, and recovery through education.

Managing educational management issues is critical to ensure that the educational system effectively contributes to national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery. Many nations face historical divisions based on ethnic, religious or socio-economic factors, which can persistently affect their social fabric. By managing educational management issues, such as curriculum development and textbook content, it becomes possible to address these divisions by promoting inclusive and tolerant perspectives. For instance, the study by Ichsan et al. (2020) highlights the impact of curriculum reforms in Indonesia, where the revised curriculum promotes diversity and history from different perspectives, fostering national reconciliation. National reconciliation and integration require individuals to develop a shared sense of national identity, regardless of their diverse backgrounds. Educational management must focus on promoting a common understanding of shared values, history and culture. Recent studies on the subject indicate that national identity education positively affects national integration (Brockington, 2019). The management of educational institutions can employ strategies such as implementing civic education programmes and encouraging inclusive co-curricular activities to foster mutual understanding and pride in national identity.

Another critical aspect of managing educational management issues is addressing disparities in access to education. National reconciliation and recovery demand an equitable distribution of educational resources and opportunities. Research by Ankomah (2018) emphasizes the importance of inclusive policies and budgetary allocations to ensure that marginalized groups are not left behind in the educational system, leading to social integration and national recovery. Effective educational management also involves supporting and empowering educators who play a pivotal role in shaping the values and attitudes of future generations. Investing in their professional development, providing resources, and creating supportive work environments are essential for promoting reconciliation, integration, and national recovery. Recent studies have shown that provision of teacher training and collaboration opportunities, such as co-teaching and

peer learning, significantly contribute to educational outcomes and national reconciliation (Priyanga et al., 2020). Managing educational management issues should also prioritize creating inclusive learning environments that embrace diversity, encourage dialogue and foster empathy among students. Schools and educational institutions need to promote intercultural understanding, respect for different perspectives and opportunities for peer interaction. The study by Al Dmour and Al Maani (2021) highlights the positive impact of diversity education programs in building an inclusive environment within Jordanian schools, aiding national reconciliation efforts.

Managing educational management issues is crucial for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery. By addressing historical divisions, cultivating national identity, providing equal opportunities, empowering teachers and building inclusive environments, education can play a transformative role in creating a more harmonious and united society. Although studies have been carried on managing educational management issues in education for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery, these studies were carried out outside Delta State. Thus, there is need to carry out a study on managing educational management issues in education for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery in Delta State in order to identify the challenges faced in educational management in relation to national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery and recommend strategies to overcome these challenges.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Education plays a vital role in fostering national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery in any society. Educational systems often face several challenges that impact national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery. These challenges include ensuring equal access to quality education, promoting inclusive policies, addressing the digital divide and developing robust management systems to facilitate effective education delivery. These issues can hinder the progress of a nation towards reconciliation, integration and economic recovery. The management of educational institutions and systems becomes essential in addressing various issues that hinder these goals. This article aimed to explore the challenges faced in educational management in relation to national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery. Additionally, this article provided recommendations to overcome these issues, ultimately fostering a harmonious and inclusive educational environment.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The study generally focused on managing educational management issues in education for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery: A case study of Delta State. The study was specifically designed to:

1. determine the key challenges faced in managing educational institutions for national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery;
2. determine how these challenges can be effectively addressed to create a conducive educational environment;
3. Determine the strategies that can be implemented by educational managers to facilitate national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by three research questions:

1. What are the key challenges faced in managing educational institutions for national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery?

2. How can these challenges be effectively addressed to create a conducive educational environment?
3. What strategies can be implemented by educational managers to facilitate national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery?

### **Methodology**

The study was carried out in Delta State. Delta State is located in South -South geo-political zone of Nigeria. The state has 25 Local Government Areas (LGAs). The study was conducted in three Colleges of Education in Delta State namely; College of Education, Warri, College of Education, Agbor, and College of Physical Education, Mosogar. The study adopted descriptive survey design. A descriptive survey is a systematic research method for gathering information from a sample of entities for the purposes of constructing quantitative descriptors of the attributes of the larger population of which the entities are members. Surveys are conducted to gather information that reflects population's attitudes, behaviours, opinions and beliefs that cannot be observed directly (Osuji, 2017). The study's population comprised three hundred level University Undergraduates in the three aforementioned Colleges of Education in Delta State. Specifically, 180 undergraduates in the Department of Educational Foundation and Administration, Faculty of Education, comprised the study's population. Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample determination table was used to select 123 samples for the study.

Data were collected using a questionnaire titled "Managing Educational Management Issues for National Reconciliation, Integration and Economic Recovery (MEMINRIER)". The instrument was carefully and specially designed by the researcher in order to obtain necessary information from the research subjects. The questionnaire consisted of thirty items on managing educational management issues for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery. The questionnaire consisted of three parts. Part 1 contained demographic data of the respondents such as students' name, college of education, faculty and department. Part 2 contained ten items on key challenges faced in managing educational institutions for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery. Part 3 contained ten items on how these challenges can be effectively addressed to create a conducive educational environment and part 4 contained ten items on the strategies that can be implemented by educational managers to facilitate national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery. Items in part 2 and 4, were framed on four-point likert scale of: Strong Agree (SA); Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). Items in part 3, were framed on four-point likert scale of: Highly Effective (HE); Effective (E), Slightly Effective (SE) and Not Effective (NE). The instrument was validated by three experts to enhance the quality and credibility of the instrument by reducing bias, identifying errors or omissions and ensuring consistency. The experts comprised two Educational Foundation and Administration lecturers and one measurement and evaluation lecturer in College of Education, Warri. Each expert was given document containing the research topic and questions, along with a copy of the questionnaire. They were asked to vet the questionnaire for clarity of sentences used, suitability of the rating scale, and the relevance of the items to the topic under investigation and write their comments and suggestions inside the questionnaire, which were later used for the final editing of the questionnaire.

The reliability of the questionnaire was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha. The choice of Cronbach Alpha is predicated on its appropriateness for establishing the reliability coefficient of polytomous items. The instrument was administered to thirty 300level undergraduates in Michael



and Cecilia Foundation College of Education, Agbarha-Otor, Delta State. The responses of the students were scored and subjected to analysis through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) using Cronbach Alpha. On Analysis, a reliability coefficient of 0.77 was obtained. 123 copies of the questionnaire were administered to 123 300level students in the three public Colleges of Education in Delta State, with the help of three research assistants who were briefed on administration and retrieval of the copies of the questionnaires. One research assistant each were deployed to the three Colleges of Education. This was to ensure full coverage of the area of study. Data gathered were collated and analysed using weighted mean. A benchmark of 2.50 was used, thus, for any item with mean score of between 2.50 to 4.00, signified agreement, while below 2.50 signified disagreement for each of the items.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What are the key challenges faced in managing educational institutions for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery?

**Table 1**

### Mean Rating of Respondents on Challenges Faced in Managing Educational Institutions for National Reconciliation, Integration and Economic Recovery

S/n	Items	Mean	Remark
1	The lack of funding poses a significant challenge to managing educational institutions for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery.	3.91	SA
2	Insufficient infrastructure (e.g., classrooms, libraries, laboratories) hinders the effective functioning of educational institutions in achieving national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery.	3.73	SA
3	The lack of qualified and skilled lecturers impedes the progress toward national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery in educational institutions.	3.79	SA
4	Limited access to technology and digital resources creates obstacles for educational institutions in fostering national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery.	3.69	D
5	Political interference and external pressures affect the management of educational institutions towards achieving national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery.	3.95	SA
6	The lack of appropriate curriculum and educational materials that address national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery goals limits progress in educational institutions.	3.68	SA
7	Inadequate training and professional development opportunities for lecturers hinder their ability to effectively contribute to national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery efforts.	3.61	SA
8	Inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems hinder the successful management of educational institutions in achieving national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.82	SA

9	Insufficient emphasis on values education and promoting peacebuilding in educational institutions poses a challenge for achieving national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery goals.	3.58	SA
10	The prevalence of violence and conflict within or around educational institutions creates obstacles for national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.94	SA
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.77</b>	<b>SA</b>

**N=123 Criterion Mean = 2.50**

**SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree**

Table 1 shows a grand mean of 3.77 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50. This implies that the responses of the majority of the respondents are of agreement that all the items are the challenges faced by educational managers in managing educational institutions for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery. Hence it can be concluded that the challenges faced by educational managers in managing educational institutions for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery include lack of funding, insufficient infrastructure, lack of qualified and skilled lecturers, limited access to technology and digital resources, political interference and external pressures, lack of appropriate curriculum and educational materials, inadequate training and professional development opportunities for lecturers, inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems, insufficient emphasis on values education and promoting peacebuilding in educational institutions and prevalence of violence and conflict within or around educational institutions.

**Research Question 2:** How can these challenges be effectively addressed to create a conducive educational environment?

**Table 2**

**Mean Rating of Respondents on Effectively Addressing Educational Management Issues**

S/n	Items	Mean	Remark
1	The educational institution supports research and scholarly activities that contribute to the understanding of the challenges faced in managing educational institutions for national reconciliation and economic recovery.	3.88	HE
2	The educational institution incorporates inclusive teaching practices that promote national reconciliation and integration.	3.81	HE
3	The educational institution encourages dialogue and open communication among diverse student groups.	3.72	HE
4	The educational institution offers specialized programmes that address the needs of marginalized communities.	3.68	HE
5	The educational institution actively promotes partnerships with organizations that support national reconciliation and economic recovery efforts.	3.72	HE

6	The educational institution integrates peace education within its curriculum to foster values of tolerance, empathy, and conflict resolution.	3.79	HE
7	The educational institution provides resources and support for students to engage in community service activities aimed at reconciliation and integration.	3.72	HE
8	The educational institution promotes economic development by equipping students with relevant skills and knowledge that contribute to local and national economies.	3.61	HE
9	The educational institution continuously updates its curriculum to address the changing needs and challenges of national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.82	HE
10	The educational institution collaborates with other institutions and stakeholders to exchange best practices and resources in managing the challenges of reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.66	HE
Grand Mean		3.74	HE

**N=123 Criterion Mean = 2.50**

**HE = Highly Effective, E =Effective, SE = Slightly Effective, NE = Not Effective**

Table 2 shows a grand mean of 3.74 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50. This implies that the responses of the majority of the respondents are of agreement that all the items are effective ways of addressing educational management issues (challenges) for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery. Hence it can be concluded that educational management issues can effectively be addressed to create a conducive educational environment for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery if educational institution supports research and scholarly activities, incorporates inclusive teaching practices, encourages dialogue and open communication, offers specialized programmes that address the needs of marginalized communities, actively promotes partnerships with organizations that support national reconciliation and economic recovery efforts, integrates peace education within its curriculum, provides resources and support for students to engage in community service activities, promotes economic development by equipping students with relevant skills and knowledge that contribute to local and national economies, continuously updates its curriculum to address the changing needs, and collaborates with other institutions and stakeholders to exchange best practices and resources in managing the challenges of reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.

**Research Question 3:** What strategies can be implemented by educational managers to facilitate national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery?



**Table 3**

**Mean Rating of Respondents on Strategies that can be Implemented by Educational Managers to Facilitate National Reconciliation, Integration and Economic Recovery**

S/n	Items	Mean	Remark
1	The inclusion of diverse perspectives in curriculum can promote national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.85	SA
2	Providing opportunities for dialogue and discussion among students from different backgrounds can foster national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.74	SA
3	Encouraging understanding and appreciation of different cultures and traditions can contribute to national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.80	SA
4	Promoting social cohesion through community service projects can support national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.79	SA
5	Developing educational programmes that focus on the consequences of past conflicts can aid in national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.82	SA
6	Teaching conflict resolution and mediation skills can play a role in national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.79	SA
7	Providing resources and support for students from marginalized backgrounds can help promote national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.50	SA
8	Collaborating with local businesses and organizations can foster national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.75	SA
9	Creating inclusive learning environments can support national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.66	SA
10	Encouraging partnerships between schools from different regions can promote national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery.	3.78	SA
Grand Mean		3.75	SA

**N=123 Criterion Mean = 2.50**

**SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree**

Table 3 shows a grand mean of 3.75 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50. This implies that the responses of the majority of the respondents are of agreement that all the items are the strategies that can be implemented by educational managers to facilitate national reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery. Hence, it can be concluded that the inclusion of diverse perspectives in curriculum, providing opportunities for dialogue and discussion among students from different backgrounds, encouraging understanding and appreciation of different cultures and traditions, promoting social cohesion through community service projects, developing educational programmes that focus on the consequences of past conflicts, teaching conflict resolution and mediation skills, providing resources and support for students from marginalized backgrounds, collaborating with local businesses and organizations, creating inclusive learning environments, and encouraging partnerships between schools from different regions are strategies that can be

implemented by educational managers to facilitate national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery.

### **Discussion**

The study revealed that lack of funding, insufficient infrastructure, lack of qualified and skilled lecturers, limited access to technology and digital resources, political interference and external pressures, lack of appropriate curriculum and educational materials, inadequate training and professional development opportunities for lecturers, inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems, insufficient emphasis on values education and promoting peacebuilding in educational institutions and prevalence of violence and conflict within or around educational institutions are the challenges faced by educational managers in managing educational institutions for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery. This finding corroborates that of Eimuhi (2018) who reported that education sector is faced with a depressed economy that affects its proper funding; hence, the possibility of Government control measures such as cutting down expenditure which may affect the statutory allocation to the education sector.

The study again revealed that educational management issues can effectively be addressed to create a conducive educational environment for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery if educational institution supports research and scholarly activities, incorporates inclusive teaching practices, encourages dialogue and open communication, offers specialized programmes that address the needs of marginalized communities, actively promotes partnerships with organizations that support national reconciliation and economic recovery efforts, integrates peace education within its curriculum, provides resources and support for students to engage in community service activities, promotes economic development by equipping students with relevant skills and knowledge that contribute to local and national economies, continuously updates its curriculum to address the changing needs, and collaborates with other institutions and stakeholders to exchange best practices and resources in managing the challenges of reconciliation, integration, and economic recovery. This finding supports that of Stojanovska and Popovska-Korobar (2020) who explored the impact of education on national reconciliation and reported that inclusive and transformative education can facilitate the healing process and integration in divided societies. This finding further agrees with that of Kim et al. (2020) who examined the role of education in promoting social reconciliation in the Philippines and highlighted the importance of inclusive educational policies and practices in fostering integration and peace.

The study further revealed that the inclusion of diverse perspectives in curriculum, providing opportunities for dialogue and discussion among students from different backgrounds, encouraging understanding and appreciation of different cultures and traditions, promoting social cohesion through community service projects, developing educational programmes that focus on the consequences of past conflicts, teaching conflict resolution and mediation skills, providing resources and support for students from marginalized backgrounds, collaborating with local businesses and organizations, creating inclusive learning environments, and encouraging partnerships between schools from different regions are strategies that can be implemented by educational managers to facilitate national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery. This finding lends credence to that of Findlay and Grauel (2019) who argued that education in post-conflict settings can contribute to national recovery by empowering youth, facilitating their involvement in peacebuilding activities, and promoting inter-group understanding. This finding further supports that of Marfo and Chilisa (2013) who examined the role of indigenous knowledge

systems in post-colonial Africa and how they can contribute to national reconciliation and integration through culturally relevant education.

### **Conclusion**

Managing educational management issues for national reconciliation, integration and economic recovery is a complex endeavour faced by many challenges. However, by acknowledging and addressing the challenges discussed above, educational managers can play a crucial role in creating an inclusive educational environment that fosters national harmony and drives economic growth. By implementing appropriate strategies, educational institutions can become catalysts for positive societal change.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following were recommended:

1. Educational managers should strengthen collaboration between educational stakeholders such as policymakers, educators, community leaders and parents to create a shared vision for educational management.
2. Educational managers should invest in teacher training programs to enhance their capacity to address diverse student needs, embrace inclusivity and foster reconciliation and integration.
3. Educational managers should advocate for and allocate resources to bridge the digital divide, ensuring equitable access to educational technology and online resources for all students.
4. Educational managers should establish systems for monitoring and evaluation of educational institutions, promoting transparency, and accountability.
5. Educational managers should foster partnerships with relevant institutions and organizations to leverage resources, expertise, and support for educational management initiatives.

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