



Qualitative Study of Privatization Policy on ... Onabe, M. L. (2025)

Qualitative Study of Privatization Policy on Access, Demand and Supply at tertiary level of Education in Nigeria: A Review

ONABE, Manus Lawal

Onabemanus17@gmail.com

+234-8160694555

Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Nasarawa State University, Keffi Nasarawa State Nigeria

Abstract

One of the rationale for privatization of higher education by the Nigerian government, is to expand access to the increasing population who, though, are ready for tertiary education but for whom the government could not readily provide this veritable social and constitutional service. This paper discussed the extent to which privatization policy has addressed access or rescue demand and supply of tertiary level of education in Nigeria. The concepts of higher education, privatization, privatization of tertiary education and demand and supply were discussed as well as the rationale and challenges embedded in the policy were highlighted and discussed. It was concluded that, 7.8% admissions in private universities, 9.4% in private polytechnics and 15.7 in colleges of education between 2011-2015 is grossly inadequate, therefore the extent to which privatization of tertiary education has rescue demand and supply of higher education in Nigeria is low. The paper recommended regulation of school fees in private higher institutions by the federal government which is one of the major challenges of privatization policy of higher education in Nigeria among others to increase access or demand and supply of higher education.

Keywords: Tertiary Education, Privatization, Demand and Supply.

Introduction

As human beings continue to exist, the significance of education keeps increasing. Growth, development, and quality of life require a sound quantitative and qualitative education. Education in the words of Joel, (2016) is a process of nurturing the people for the development and possession of necessary skills, information, knowledge which initiate them into their primordial setting. Education especially higher education is an indispensable tool to achieve as well as seen as a real instrument for enhancing socioeconomic, political and cultural development of any nation; and as such cannot be undermined. Higher education is education that is acquired or received after secondary education (National Policy on Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004: Section 8, No. 58, p.30). It is otherwise known as post-secondary education and comprises of Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, and Colleges of Agriculture etc. According to Joel, (2016) higher education prepares an individual to self-reliant and possessing the know-how to enhance the socio-economic development of his people/country.

The role higher education plays in facilitating the growth and development of a country's economy is significant (Ajayi & Ekundayo. 2018). However, one of the fundamental challenges of our time is access to higher education which has been a thorny issue in Nigeria's educational sector. From the day of independence till 1999, Nigerian government has conceived education as a public service that must not be controlled by the private individuals. During this period, the power to establish, own, fund, and manage education especially higher education such as universities, polytechnics, colleges of education and other tertiary institutions was under the concurrent list of both federal and state governments. Nevertheless, due to the continues increase in demand for higher education and increase in public spending against the dwindling state revenues, the government has now realized that the only way to sustain the tempo of education is to liberalize or open the door for private participation as privatization of education more especially higher education has become a phenomenon in the world in recent times. Privatization according to Belfied, (20014) is a process of allowing certain state's welfare services to be run by non-state or private parties. Privatization of higher education on the other hand, refers to the state's policy of allowing higher education to be run by non-state or private parties for monetary benefits (Kitaev, 2013). According to Olaniyan, (2017) privatization of higher education is seen as privatization, deregulation, public-private partnership, increasing the responsibility of parents in the management of education and private investment with the focus on cost recovery. Government realizing that the only way to sustain the tempo of education is to liberalize or open the door for private participation in education more especially higher education, led to emergence of private tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Today, there are 79 private Universities besides 20 recently approved by the Federal Executive Council (FEC), 61



Qualitative Study of Privatization Policy on ... Onabe, M. L. (2025)

private Polytechnics and 75 private Colleges of Education in the country. (Source; JAMB Brochure 2019/2020). It is against this backdrop; this work/paper tends to discuss how privatization of higher education has rescue demand and supply of higher education in Nigeria.

Concept of Higher Education

Higher Education is otherwise referred to as Tertiary Education. The National Policy on Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004: Section 8, No. 58, p.30) defines Higher or Tertiary Education as “the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, monotechnic including those institutions offering correspondence courses” Higher Education according to Olaniyan and Adedeji, (2015) refers to all organized learning activities at the tertiary level. From the above definition, The National Policy on Education (2004) categorized tertiary education to include, universities, colleges of education, polytechnics and monotechnic.

Tertiary education is aimed at:

- a) To contribute to national development through high-level relevant manpower training.
- b) To develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society.
- c) To develop the intellectual capability of individual to understand and appreciate their local and external environment.
- d) To acquire both physical and intellectual skills, this will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society
- e) To promote and encourage scholarship and community services.
- f) To forge and cement national unity; and
- g) To promote national and international understanding and interaction.

The establishment of tertiary institutions was to train various crop of people. Nigeria now has a crop of well-educated graduates despite the now popularly taunted falling standard is readily making contributions in all spheres of the country's development.

Tracing the history of establishment and development of tertiary education in Nigeria, Virginia (2003) recalled that colonial government having sensed the usefulness of the products of the schools established and run by church missions, started to show special interest in the educational works of church missions. The schools' products were to provide cheap labour force for government's own political career and administration (Virginia, 2003). The first institution of higher education was the Yaba Higher College, established in 1934. This became the nucleus of the first university college, established in 1948 at Ibadan. At independence in 1960 there was need for expansion on the recommendations of the committees for higher education; Eliot commission, June, 1943; Asquith commission August, 1943 and Ashby commission April 1959-September, 1960, the university of Nigeria Nsukka was established in 1960, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Lagos, and the University of Ife (all in 1962) and much later, the University of Benin (1970). These are known as the first-generation universities. In 1975, with the twelve states structure, and the agitation for more universities by Nigerians, the Federal Government established seven additional universities at Jos, Maiduguri, Kano, Sokoto, Ilorin, Calabar and Port Harcourt. These universities became known as the second-generation universities (Olaniyan and Adedeji, 2015). Virtually, all states have either a higher institution private or a Federal one located there.

Concept of Privatization

The term privatization is usually used to denote a process of selling shares of a public company's stock to individuals, i.e., private sector. In its broader sense, the term privatization refers to diminishing the role of state in the economy and promotion of methods and policies with an aim to strengthen free market economy (Kitaev, (2013). Kitaev (2013), further stated that, privatization includes the process of privatization of not just the company but the entire economy. According to Belfied (2014), privatization is a process of allowing certain state's welfare services to be run by non-state or private parties. The definitions mentioned so far, defines privatization from a standpoint of national economy as well as the standpoint of privatization of companies not considered to be manufacturers of goods, but providers of services considered to be public (school system, health care, public administration, etc.). The shift towards privatization reduces the role of the government and increases the role of the private bodies. The trend towards privatization is extremely strong: it is taking



Qualitative Study of Privatization Policy on ... Onabe, M. L. (2025)

place in many countries and within many sectors of the economy. Education sector in general (primary, secondary, and tertiary) is not left out often faces pressure for privatization.

Privatization of Tertiary Education in Nigeria

According to Belfied (2014), Olaniyan (2015) and Psacharopolous & Woodhall (2018) privatization of higher education is seen as privatization, deregulation, public-private partnership, increasing the responsibility of parents in the management of higher education and private investment with the focus on cost recovery. Privatization of higher education also refers to the state's policy of allowing higher education to be run by non-state or private parties for monetary benefits (Kitaev, 2013). From the day of independence till 1999, Nigerian government has conceived education as a public service that must not be controlled by the private individuals. During this period, the power to establish, own, fund, and manage education especially higher education such as universities, polytechnics, colleges of education and other tertiary institutions was under the concurrent list of both federal and state governments. Nevertheless, due to the continues increase in demand for higher education and increase in public spending against the dwindling state revenues, the government has now realized that the only way to sustain the tempo of education is to liberalize or open the door for private participation as privatization of education more especially higher education has become a phenomenon in the world in recent times.

Privatization of higher education is being canvas and encouraged by some educationists as a panacea to the lack of adequate public provision of higher education or alternative to failing public schools as to relief the government the heavy burden of public expenditure on education. To justify this option, Kitaev (2013), corroborated this position when he averred that if the government can cede higher education to the private sector; the burden on the state budget can be reduced and increase access to higher education as well as the quality of teaching can equally be achieved. On the contrary, privatization of higher education is against the opinion of the proponents of public school with fears regarding the quality of teaching, equal access to educational opportunities as well as the availability of free education. Disappearing from these arguments is the proof of the impacts of privatization of education, whether right or wrong on the people cum state as a whole (Raji, 2015). The onset of private incursion into the provision of higher education/university education in Nigeria however dated back to the year 1979 when the civilian government in power puts education on the concurrent legislative list between the state and the federal governments, which means that both federal and state governments can establish, fund and manage university. Consequently, Imo Technical University was established by Ukaegbu, an action that was challenged in court by the government in power. Following the Supreme Court's judgment in the case in favour of Ukaegbu, twenty six private universities emerged within six months of the ruling: National College of Advanced Studies, Aba, Imo State, Theological College sponsored by the Christian Association of Nigeria, Afro American University, Orogun, Bendel (now Edo) State, Uzoma University, Ajowa Akoko, Ondo State, Pope John Paul University, Aba, Imo State, University Courses College, Port Harcourt, Rivers State (National Universities Commission, 1987) to mention but a few.

The trend in the establishment of private universities coupled with the envisaged degradation in the quality of university education in Nigeria, prompted the Federal Military Government to abolish the already established private universities and prohibited the establishment of new ones, through Decree 19 of 1984. Consequent upon the agitations for the resuscitation of private universities, in view of the observed level of unsatisfied demand for admission, prompted Federal Government to repeal Decree 19 of 1984, which paved way for the agitations for re-emergence of private universities. This led to the establishment of three private universities (Babcock at Ilishan Remo in Ogun State; Madonna in Okija, Anambra State, and Igbinedion in Okada, Edo State) in 1999. Since then, private universities have continued to grow in quantity. As at December 2020, there were seventy-nine (79) approved private universities in Nigeria excluding the twenty (20) that has just been approved (National Universities Commission, 2020), Sixty one (61) private polytechnics (NBTE, 2020) and Seventy five (75) private Colleges of Education (NCCE, 2020).

Demand and Supply of Tertiary Education in Nigeria



Qualitative Study of Privatization Policy on ... Onabe, M. L. (2025)

Demand for higher education is the total number of individuals who are willing to pay for their higher education. While supply of higher education is the extent to which people have access to or unhindered opportunity to pursue higher education in Nigeria (Aderogba, 2016). Demand and supply of higher education therefore implies making “it possible for everyone who is entitled to higher education to receive it” (Okeke 2019). Demand and supply of higher education according to Enaohwo, (2018) is opportunity or means of making higher education available for the number of applicants within a specific period of time.

Theoretical Viewpoint on Privatization of Higher Education

Several theories have clarified the concept of privatization such as Radical-Marxist, Classical-liberal as well as neoliberal. Radical-Marxist theory was developed by Karl Marx (1848) in his work titled Communist Manifesto; the participation of the state in the delivery of goods and services is seen as complementary to the general development goals of the state. To classical-liberal theory, the involvement of the government in every activity is the beginning of inefficiency. To him, planned economy will always hamper efficiency and effectiveness. Neo-liberal theory only supports the classical theory by giving more recognition to privatization policy in contemporary time. The theory argued that the competitive forces that are in the market rather than government bureaucracy lead to a superior allocation of resources. Thus, privatization it is said will provide a better incentive for price maximization, boost more well-organized managerial supervision, and motivate better employee effort. (Ostrum and Ostrum 1991). It is against this backdrop; this work is situated.

Rationale for Privatization of Higher Education in Nigeria

Nothing could have come at the right time than the re-emergence of private universities in Nigeria in 1999. The first set of such universities emerged at a time when people had lost hope and confidence in the public universities due to the crises that characterized them. Many issues are presently at stake which calls for or resulted in the establishment of private universities in Nigeria. Some of them are listed as follows:

Unsatisfied demand and supply for admission into higher education

Nigeria is a nation of 150 million people with 45 % school age (primary, secondary and tertiary). Over 1 million candidates apply for admission to Nigerian higher institutions annually with only 13 % being offered admission into the available vacancies in the existing public institutions (universities, polytechnics and colleges of education). For instance, out of 1,046,940 candidates that applied for admission into Nigerian Universities in 2003/2004, 10.30% were offered admission. In 2004/2005, 838,305 candidates applied, 13.42% gained admission. While in 2005/2006, out of 917,960 applicants, 8.39% were admitted. Out of 912,350 candidates in 2006/2007, 12.94% were offered admission and in 2007/2008, 1,034,083 applied while only 4.59% were offered placement (National Bureau of Statistics, 2009). Specifically, in 2011/2012 academic session, University of Lagos was the most preferred first choice with 99,195 applicants but 6,106 (6.15%) were offered admission. This was followed by Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria with 89,760 applicants which admitted 6,068 (6.76%). University of Nigeria, Nsukka trailed with 88,177 and 5,970 (6.77%) were offered admission. This was the trend in higher institutions in Nigeria.

Obviously, the available public institutions are grossly inadequate for the need of the country judging by the demand for higher education in Nigeria. There is explosion in students' population in the existing Federal tertiary institutions and the facilities are over stretched (NUC, 2011). Ayeni et al. (2015) remarked that inadequate supply of higher education is a huge problem that the Nigerian higher education sector is faced with hence the need for private participation in the provision higher education.

Limited and decaying infrastructural facilities in public universities

Infrastructural facilities are very germane in educational institutions, particularly in the teaching-learning process (Monehin, 2012). It is unfortunate that inadequacy of infrastructural facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, libraries, staff offices, workshops among others characterized the public universities in Nigeria (Saint et al., 2017). To worsen the situation, most of the available infrastructural facilities are in deplorable condition, which has been having negative effect on the training of students in the universities. The situation could be attributed to the poor funding of the universities



Qualitative Study of Privatization Policy on ... Onabe, M. L. (2025)

by Government. Over the years, financial allocations to the universities are consistently inadequate in quantity and epileptic in supply thus making it difficult for the universities' administrators to put in place adequate and reliable infrastructural facilities for effective teaching of students as a result, many candidates are denied opportunities for admission annually as a result of the limited spaces

Strikes in Public Universities

Universities in Nigeria have over the years been engulfed in crises which have made them to graduate from being 'centres of academic excellence' and 'ivory towers' into 'centers of crises'. Without mincing words, there have been incessant strikes by staff of the public universities due to issues such as poor welfares, inability to implement past agreements, poor conditions of service, disparity in salaries and allowances, and the need for academic freedom among others (Obe, 2018; Odewunmi, 2017; Afolabi, 2013; Enomah, 2010). Due to the rampant cases of strikes in the campuses, academic calendar is often disrupted. These days, a student in any of the public universities including other tertiary institutions in Nigeria cannot predict the number of years to spend on a programme. Many students end up spending additional year (s) which they do not envisage and plan for; thus making many parents to spend extra money on the education of their children. Government has also been spending additional fund on the education of such candidates (Timilehin et al., 2010; Saint et al., 2003; Adewale, 2005).

High Cost of Tertiary Education

The fact that university education requires huge cost cannot be overemphasized. In Nigeria, most of these costs are borne by government being the major financier of the educational system. The cost of provision of university education for the citizens is however becoming a yoke for government alone to bear which is the reason why it is clamouring for increased participation of the private sector in the financing of the sector. Apart from the cost of salaries and allowances of the academic and non-academic staff, there is the cost of building construction as well as the overhead cost of maintaining the universities. Unfortunately, allocation to the education sector on which the funding of universities depends in Nigeria has been consistently low in quantity and erratic in supply (Akerle, 2001; Saint et al., 2003). Even though the universities receive highest percentage of fund among the other tertiary institutions annually, the fund being injected into the universities have proved to be inadequate for their needs.

Low ranking of public universities in Nigeria

Ranking of universities in the world is a regular and annual exercise which has been providing opportunity for the education stakeholders to know the quality of students, infrastructural facilities, kind of training being provided for students compared to the situation in other universities in the world. Unfortunately, public universities in Nigeria are ranked low among other universities in the world (Wasagu, 2018). As at 2012, only University of Ibadan ranked best among the universities in Nigeria but ranked 111th among the universities in the world. This has been a cause of concern to government and other stakeholders in education. It is thus expected that with the emergence of the private universities, the jinx would be broken.

Globalization

In many advanced countries in the world such as United States of America, Britain, France, and Canada among others, both private sectors and government are involved in the provision of university education. Many notable universities in the world today are owned by private individuals. It is not a doubt that such universities have been contributing immensely to the training of skilled manpower for the development of their respective countries' economies. Nigeria thus needs to move forward in line with global development in the provision of university education.

Challenges of Privatization of Tertiary Education in Nigeria

Privatization of higher education in Nigeria to help in solving the lingering crises especially in the area of access or demand and supply of higher education, the following challenges are threatening the rationale for privatization of higher education.

High fees being charged students by private higher institutions

The fees being charged the students in private higher institution with particular reference to private universities in Nigeria are very high (Etuk, 2005). Data in Table 1, below show the fees being paid by students in selected private universities as at 2012. As indicated in Table 1, fees within the range of three hundred and forty thousand and one million, five hundred



Qualitative Study of Privatization Policy on ... Onabe, M. L. (2025)

thousand naira (N340, 000 to N1,500,000) are being paid per academic session in the selected private universities, apart from others that must be borne by parents/guardians in the course of educating their children/wards. In a country whose majorities of its citizens are poor (UNESCO Institute of Statistics in 2007; Obadan, 2010). Such fee is too high for children of the less privileged parents to afford. The high fee will widen the gap between the rich and the poor in the society (Obadan, 2010).

Table 1: Tuition fees in selected private universities in Nigeria.

Name of university	Fees (N)
American University of Nigeria	1,500,000
Achievers University, Owo, Ondo State	380,000-420,000
Adeleke University, Ede	350,000
Babcock University, Remo Ogun State	340,000-620,000
Bowen University, Iwo, Osun State	650,000-750,000
Covenant University, Ogun State	432,000
Crawford University	450,000-480,000
Igbinedion University, Okada, Edo State	514,000-648,000
Joseph Ayo Babalola University, Ikeji, Osun State	397,500-436,000
Redeemers University, Lagos State	541,000-571,000

Source: www.toscanyacademy.com/blog/education/fees

Lack of Adequate Facilities Provided by Private Higher Institutions

The provision of educational facilities is crucial to bringing education to the doorstep of all. Nwaeke (2006) posits that the school facilities constitute the essential requirement for effective functioning of the school system. However, these school facilities such as classrooms, and classroom furniture, laboratory, libraries, equipments, instructional facilities and other teaching and learning facilities are conspicuous lacking or inadequate in most private higher institutions in Nigeria. Ene, (2017), classify most private higher institutions as glorified secondary schools. This according to Ene, (2017) has resulted in limiting the carrying capacity of these institutions.

Proliferation of private higher institutions (universities, polytechnics and colleges of education)

It is now a political issue which is obvious that private higher institutions are springing up daily in Nigeria. Many wealthy individuals both in government and other sectors including those with questionable sources of wealth wish to establish universities and other higher institutions. These individuals because of their influence in the society set up these higher institutions especially universities that are not well planned and based on effective school mapping procedures.

Shortage of Staff in Private Universities

It is a fact that private universities are established for profit making. The proprietors of private universities have the ultimate goal of making much profit from their investments. As a result, recruit few number of academic staff to manage a few number of students admitted. Many lecturers in the private universities are part-time and those on sabbatical leave and 'retirees' who may be too old to carry a large number students there carrying capacity of these universities. Ajadi (2010) confirmed that the private universities in Nigeria operate with limited number of academic and administrative staff and can't afford to admit many students.

Absence of education in the curriculum of private universities

As indicated in the National Policy of Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004), Faculty of Education and Institutes of Education of Universities; Colleges of Education, National Teachers' Institutes as well as the School of Education of Polytechnics is an integral part of higher education to produce professional teachers in Nigeria. As at today, most of the approved private universities do not have education in their curriculum. Programmes in most of the private universities are mostly science and technology based with little devoted to the humanities. According to Ige Akindele, (2015), more applicants would have access to university education if there were education in the curriculum of private universities. Statistics according to JAMB annual report 2015 shows that about 33% applicants applied to study education in public universities and only about 15% were admitted.

Privatization, Demand and Supply of Higher Education

Qualitative Study of Privatization Policy on ... Onabe, M. L. (2025)

For better understanding of how privatization has rescue the demand and supply of higher education in Nigeria it is necessary to present statistical data of demand and supply of university education.

A situational analysis of demand and supply of higher education between 2011 to 2015

Table 2: Demand and Supply of University Education in Nigeria from 2011 – 2015

YEAR	APPLICATIONS	ADMISSION	%	TOTAL UNPLACED	%
2011	1,575,522	192,779	12.2	1,382,743	87.8
2012	1,452,874	386,308	26.5	1,066,566	73.5
2013	1,668,224	262,510	15.7	1,405,714	84.3
2014	1,576,257	359,559	22.8	1,216,658	77.2
2015	1,424,628	384,442	26.9	1,040,186	73.1

Source: JAMB Annual Report 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015.

Table 2 above shows that over 1 million candidates apply for admission to Nigerian universities annually with only 20.8% being offered admission into the available vacancies in the existing universities (public and private) From the table out of 1,575,522 candidates that applied for admission into Nigerian Universities in 2010/2011, 192,779 (12.2%) were offered admission. In 2011/2012, 1,452,874 candidates applied, 386,308 (26.5%) gained admission. While in 2012/2013, out of 1,668,224 applicants, 262,510 (15.7%) were admitted. Out of 1,576,257 applicants in 2013/2014, 359,559 representing 22.8% were offered admission placement and out of 1,424,628 applicants in 2014/2015, 384,442 (26.9 %) candidates were offered admission placement (JAMB Annual Report 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015).

The number of unplaced or UN-admitted applicants within the period under review indicates 1,382,743 (87.5), 1,066,566 (73.1), 1,405,714 (84), 1,216,658 (77.2), 1,040,186 (73.1) in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 respectively.

Table 3: % rate of admission in public and private universities 2011-2015

Year	Public Universities admission	%	Private Universities admission	%
2011	184,683	8.0	8,096	4.2
2012	355,017	18.4	31,291	8.1
2013	247,547	10.0	14,963	5.7
2014	325,401	13.3	34,158	9.5
2015	340,616	16.5	43,826	11.4

Source: <http://www.nuc.edu.ng/pages/universities.asp>:NUCwebsite, 2015

From the analysis above, admitted applicants within the period under review indicates private universities accounted for 4.2% out of the 12.2 % in 2011, 8.1% out of 26.5 in 2012, 5.7% out of 15.7% in 2013. In 2014 and 2015 it was 9.5% out of 22.8% and 11.4% out 27.9% respectively (see table 3 above)

Summary of statistics of demand and supply of polytechnics and Colleges of education

Table 4: Cumulative analysis of admission rate in Polytechnics and Colleges of Education in Nigeria 2011-2015

Institutions	Polytechnics	%	Colleges of Education	%
Federal/State	71	34.3	67	37.2
Private	18	9.4	42	15.7
Total	89	43.7	109	52.9

Source: NBS, 2015

Table 4 above shows the cumulative percentage of demand and supply of polytechnics and Colleges of education in Nigeria within the period under review indicate that, out of 43.7% and 52.9% admitted applicants, private polytechnics and Colleges of Education accounted for 9.4% and 15.7% respectively. (Nigeria's National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) 2015). The percentage figure above of admitted applicants; shows that, private universities account for 7.8% and public universities 13.2%. (See table 3). It is also evidence that, private polytechnics and colleges of education account for 9.4% and 15.7% of admitted applicants respectively. (see table 4). The statistics/analysis of the summary also shows 79.2% of un-admitted applicants in both public and private universities. Implication of the analysis above of admission rate within the period under review is that, the extent to which privatisation of higher education in Nigeria has recue demand and supply of higher education is relatively low with 7.8%, 9.4% and 15.7% of private universities, polytechnics and colleges of education respectively. Also, 79.2% of un-admitted applicants in both public and private universities is very high.



Qualitative Study of Privatization Policy on ... Onabe, M. L. (2025)

Conclusion

Nigeria has encouraged the participation of the private sector in the provision and management of tertiary education to increase access to higher education, enhance sustainable national development, improve quality, and reduce the government involvement especially at this time of global economic recession and many more. However, evidences abound that, one of the basic reason for privatisation of higher education in Nigeria to increase access to higher education has not met the desire result. This paper noted the increasing demand for access to higher education in Nigeria and presented a statistical analysis of application and admission from 2011 – 2015 and it shows that, demand and supply of private universities, polytechnics and colleges of education is 7.8, 9.4 and 15.7 respectively within the period under review. This shows a worrisome situation that; privatisation of higher education has not really rescued or addressed the issue of demand and supply and a lot needs to be done.

Way Forward

Regulation of fees in private universities/higher institution

The issue of high school fees charged by private universities/higher institutions should be addressed by the Federal government. The NUC and federal government should intervene so that their school fees could be reduced even though such universities are meant to make profits to create chance for the poor and average Nigerians to have access to private university/institutions. There should thus be a benchmark that should be approved for all private universities in Nigeria. Any private university or institution that charges more than the approved fee should be sanctioned. Again, Federal government should try to argument the funding of these in form of grant to private universities/higher institutions to reduce high charges.

Implementation of School Mapping Procedures by private universities

The federal government through the National Universities Commission and regulatory agencies in charge of the approval of establishment of private universities/higher institution to address the issue of lack of adequate facilities should ensure that these institutions are established based on effective school mapping procedure which stated clearly the required facilities for any higher institution especially universities to accommodate a considerable number of applicants. Alternatively, government should set up universities and other higher institutions with adequate facilities before handing them over to private individuals. As noted by Nwaeke (2006) adequate school facilities guarantee access to university education.

Again, let there be increase in the capital base of private higher institution with reference to university from the current two hundred million to between five hundred and one Billion (NUC, 2019). This will increase funding of private universities so that necessary facilities in terms of classroom, instructional materials, staff equipment, library resources and other infrastructural facilities could be provided for sound university education.

Employment of adequate Staff in Private Universities

To address the issue of shortage of staff especially academic staff, I still call on the federal government because they are the one empowered by the constitution to regulate education to put politics aside and ensure private higher institutions especially universities employ the required number of staff with the necessary prerequisite qualifications to be able to meet up with the carrying capacity of the institutions.

Introduction of education into the curriculum of private universities

Faculty of education in most public universities seem to be the largest in terms of the number of applicants, I stand to be corrected. There is need for a change in the policy of the private universities in Nigeria which does not support the inclusion of education courses in the curriculum. Proprietors of private universities should introduce education into the curriculum of the universities for more access and quality teachers to be produced for the educational system.

Establishment of more public universities

Away from privatisation of higher education, the high demand of the university education calls for the federal government to establish more universities in the country and to fund them adequately. Government must not shy away from the primary



Qualitative Study of Privatization Policy on ... Onabe, M. L. (2025)

responsibility of providing tertiary education as specified in the national constitution and the national policy on education. Publicly funded universities must continuously exist and be made accessible to all students motivated and talented to enrol in any programme. This is necessary because the increase in private universities will not make any significant impact on the access to university education because average qualified Nigerians cannot afford their money.

Open and distance learning programme

Lastly, open and distance learning programme in both private and public universities should be encouraged. This will enables a large number of people to have access to university education

Acknowledgement

The author sincerely thank all the lecturers in the department of educational management, Faculty of Education, Nasarawa State University, Keffi for their inputs and validation of the research instrument. The authors also wish to acknowledge the Chief Editor and the Editorial Board of Zamfara International Journal of Education (ZIJE), Federal University, Gusau, Zamfara State, Nigeria for vetting and making inputs in improving the quality of article in line with international best practices.

References

- Afolabi, S.O. (2003). ASUU on one Hand: SSANU and NASU on the other Hand: The Acrimony between these Unions. Paper presented at the National University Stakeholder Consultative forum organized by Federal Ministry of Education. 31st October.
- Ajadi, T.O. (2010). Private universities in Nigeria: The challenges ahead. *Am. J. Sci. Res.* 7:15-24.
- Ajayi, I. A. (2008). The deregulation of university education in Nigeria: Implications for quality assurance. *Nebula*, 212-224.
- Akerele, E. A. (2001). Deregulating the provision and management of Education in Nigeria. In G. O. Akpa, S. U. Udo & E. O. Fagbamiye (Eds) *Deregulating the provision and management of Education in Nigeria*, Jos: The Nigerian Association for Education Administration and Planning (NAEAP).
- Ayeni, A. A., Atanda, A. I. & Akinsolu, A. A. (2005). The need for private sector participation in the provision and management of education of Nigeria. In Akpa, G.O., Udoh, S.U. & Fagbamiye, E.O. (eds.) *Deregulating the provision and management of education in Nigeria*. The Nigerian Association for Educational Administration and Planning. 130-133.
- Belfield, C. R. (2014). Modeling school choice: A comparison of public, private and home schooled students. Occasional paper. No. 49. National Centre for the privatization of education.
- Ekundayo, H. (2008). The deregulation of university education in Nigeria: Implications for quality assurance. *Nebula* 212-224.
- Enaohwo, J. K. (2018). Access, cost and quality in Nigeria education. In B. G. Nworgu & E.I. Eke (Eds). Access, quality and cost in Nigerian education. Proceeding of the 23rd Annual Congress of the Nigerian Academy of Education. 3-19
- Etuk, G. K. (2005). Sustaining the Nigerian university under deregulation. In G.O Akpa; S.U Udoh & E.O Fagbamiye (Eds). *Deregulating the provision and management of Education in Nigeria*. Jos, Nigeria: Ginac Concept Limited.
- Ene, A. C. (2007). Access to and Equity in University Education in Nigeria Issues and Trends. In J. B. Baholola, G. O. Akpa, A. O. Ayen & S. O. Adedeji (Eds). *In Access, Equity and Quality in Higher Education*. P.56-62
- Enomah S (2010). Joseph Omoregbe's Philosophy of Civil Disobedience and the imperativeness of the 2009 ASUU Strike: Implications for a sustainable Higher Education in Nigeria. *Cont. J. Arts Humanit.* 2:32-37.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2007). *Statistics on Education*. Abuja: Ministry of Education – Minor Amendments have been made to the Original Publication from other Sources.
- Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (2004 - 2009). *Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination*. Abuja: Federal Republic of Nigeria www.jamb.org.ng
- Kitae, I. (2013). Higher education in the Baltic States: Between crisis and renewal. *IIEP Newsletter*, XXI (1). January-March, 2013, 6-7.



- Qualitative Study of Privatization Policy on ... Onabe, M. L. (2025)*
- National Bureau of Statistics (2010 – 2015). Annual Abstract of Statistics. Federal Republic of Nigeria. 17. *National Policy of Education* (2004). Federal Ministry of Education. Lagos. NERDC.
- Nwaeke, S. N. (2006). *A Handbook on Educational Administration*. Owerri: Cajec Publishers.
- Odewunmi, B. A. (2017). Access Quality and cost in Nigeria Education. Proceeding of 23rd Annual Congress of Nigerian Academy of Education. 30-60
- Okeke, E.A.C. (2011). Access in Nigeria Education. In B.G. Nwurgu & E. I Sile (Eds). Access, Quality and Cost in Nigerian Education. Preceding of the 23rd Annual Congress of the Nigerian Academy of Education. 20-34
- Olaniyan, D A, Adedeji (2015). Financing Education in Federal State: The Nigerian Experience. *Journal of Sociological Education. Africa (JOSEA)* 6:2 Kampala.
- Saint, W., Hartnett, T. A., Strassner, E. (2003). Higher education in Nigeria: A status Report. *High. Educ. Policy* 16:259-281.
- Temilehin, E. H. (2015). The university and the development of Nigerian society. A Paper presented at the universities' stakeholders' forum at Abuja, Nigeria. 31st March.
- Virginia, A.M. (2003). *A Concise History of Education in Nigeria: Issues and New Challenges*, Lagos: DMMM.