



# **Management of Educational Triangle in Nigeria: Meaning, Challenges and Way Forward**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study examined the management of educational triangle in Nigeria with emphasis on the challenges and way forward. The educational triangles focus on three main educational stockholders who are parents, teachers and students; who must work together in order to achieve optimal educational goals and objectives. The failure of these three stakeholders to cooperate will lead to the failure of the educational system. Data for the study were collected from secondary sources among which are books, journals and internet materials. It was pointed out in the study that optimal educational goals and objectives can be achieved when parents, teachers and students work harmoniously and play their role effectively. The ways forward for a successful educational system from the cooperation of these stakeholders were discussed.

**Keywords:** Management, Education, Triangle, Nigeria, Challenges, Way Forward

## **INTRODUCTION**

Over the years, education has been known to be an indispensable tool needed for the transformation of the society. This essential social service contributes to the growth and development of individuals and the society at large. Education helps to harmonize the objectives of the different sectors of the economy and therefore contributes to the achievement of the goals and objectives of the different sectors of the economy. This has motivated the interest of the government, parents and other stakeholders to invest in this important sector of the nation's economy.

Educational triangle focuses on the major components of the school that contribute to the success and high performance of the students. This includes the parents, teachers and students. The concept 'triangle' simply refers to the three angles of the school that influence the positive performance of the students. The gear box of every educational institution be it primary, secondary or tertiary institution, always revolve within the educational triangle for effective and efficient attainment of educational objectives. The failure or inability of any of the angles to perform the duties expected can negatively affect the performance of the student. These three components of the school include the parents, the teachers and the students.

Parental involvement in the education of the student is as vital as the duty performed by the other stakeholders. In fact, the success of the student primarily starts with the role played by the parent. It is the responsibility of every parent to make the child available for formal education and in addition to this provide the basic resources needed for learning.

Nwadike and Godwins (2017) stated that one of the roles parents play in the education as well as performance of the student is by providing an enabling environment for learning both in school and at home. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure that the learning environment of the

child is free from distraction. The role of the teacher is very vital in the achievement of quality secondary education. Nwadike and Godwins (2016), The teacher is the first contact person that the student relates with in the classroom and this serves as a form of motivation to the student.. This has earned the teacher the nomenclature of an *in loco parentis*. The role of the teacher in the teacher-student relationship in the school also includes the ability of the teacher to motivate the students. Parents, teachers and the students are key components in the academic performance of students. The inability of any of these educational stakeholders to perform the duties expected of them can limit the success rate in the school.

The education triangle brings to the fore the need for parents to provide all learning materials for the students, the teacher providing the right teaching experience as well as the students utilizing available learning resources for better performance. The essential role played by these key stakeholders has given rise to the establishment of different social platforms such as the Parents Teachers Association (PTA), students clubs, Teachers-Students conferences and other social platforms for the parents, teachers and students to discuss way forward for the academic performance of students. The absence of the above statement brings negative impact to the educational system in the country. Therefore, there is need for proper management of Educational Triangle for a better and quality education.

### The Meaning of Educational Triangle

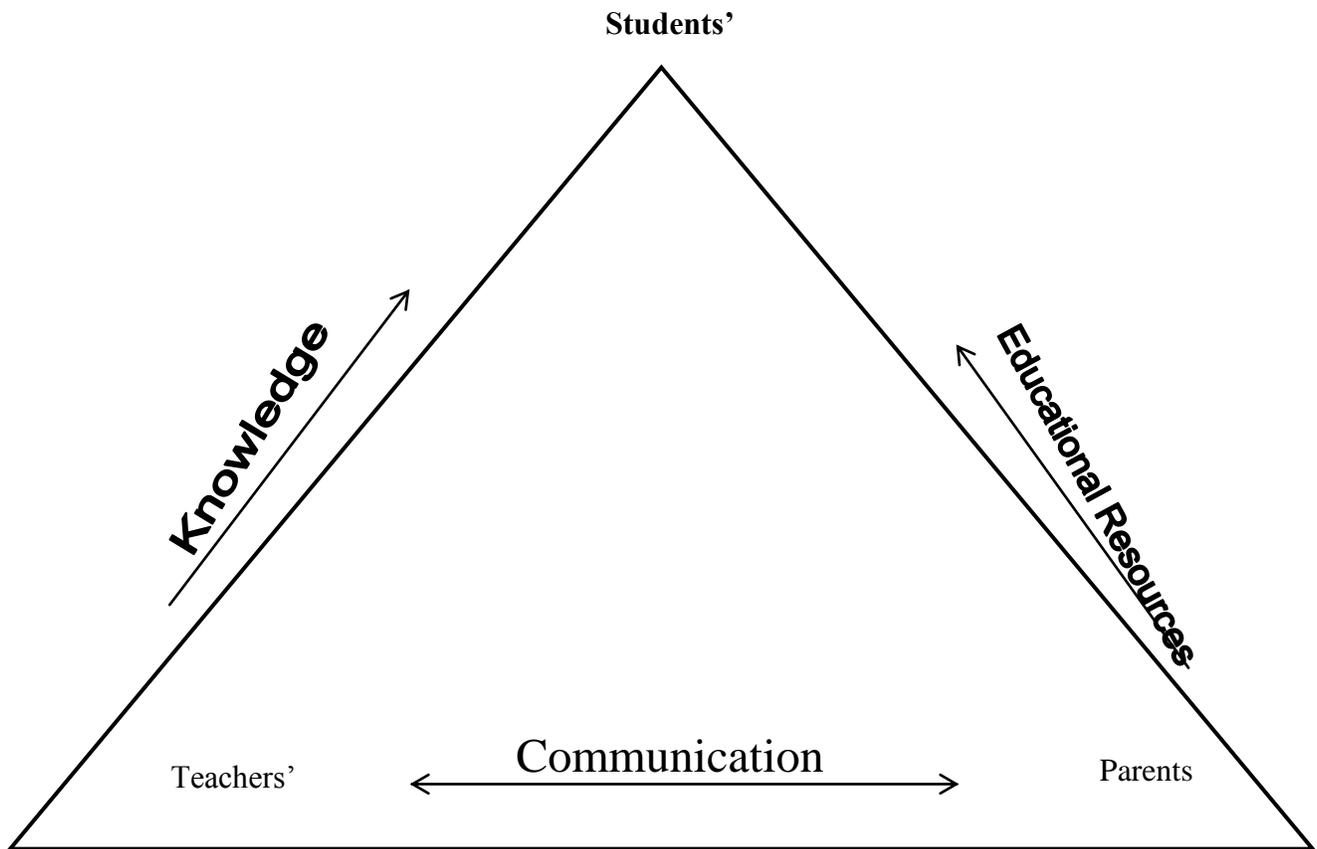
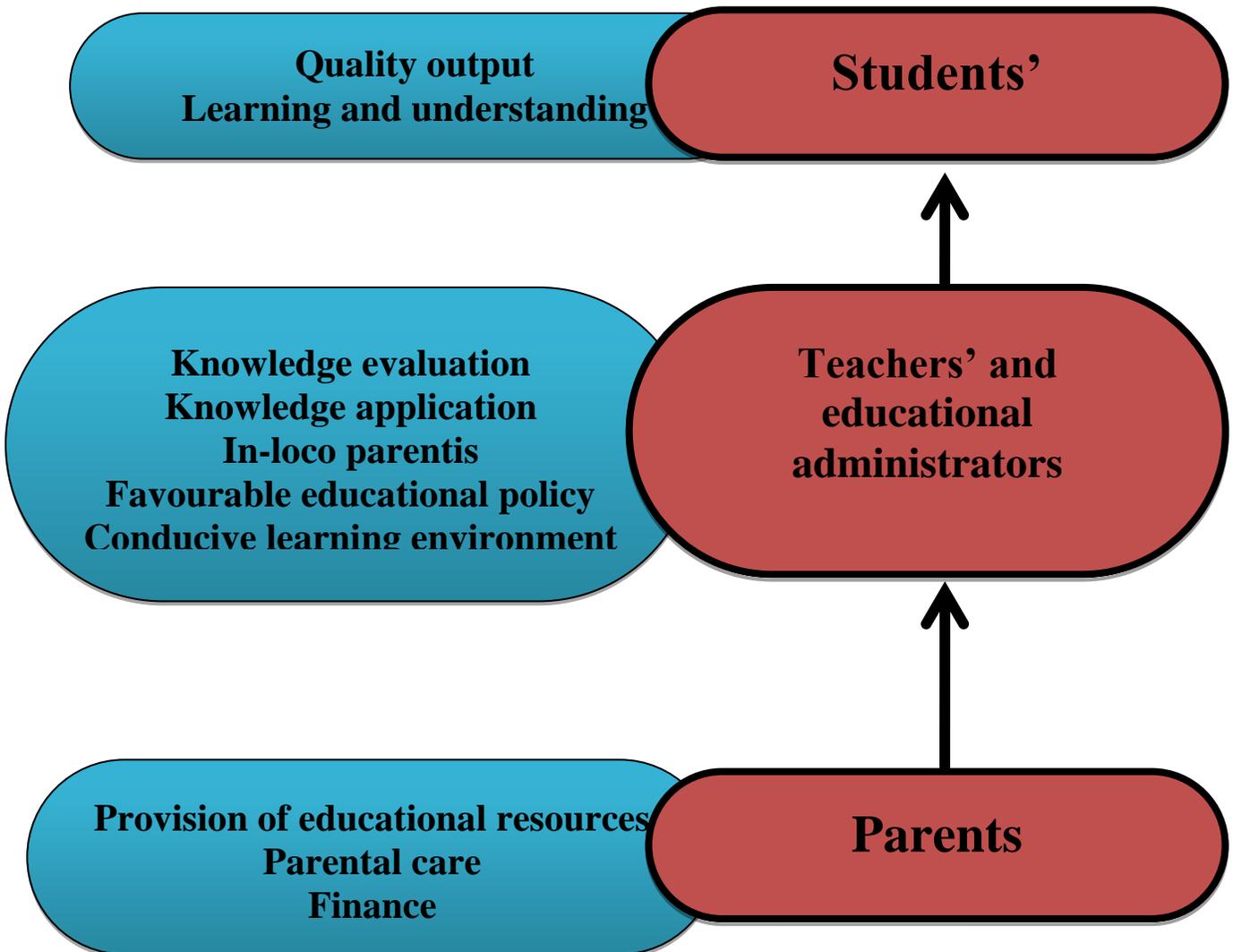


Figure 2.1: Educational Triangle  
Source: Bernard (2015). *Educational Structure and Resource Management for Effective Implementation of Educational Goals*. p 102

**UPWARD CHAIN OF EDUCATIONAL TRIANGLE**



**Figure 2.2**  
Source: Researcher's Idea, 2019.

**Family + Teacher + Students**  
**Good Government Policy (GGP) = Successful Student**

This implies that, when the family + teacher + students' come together as a team under a good governmental policy, there will be a successful student for the society to consume.

Educational triangle can as well be seen as the 'golden triangle' in education. This simply means education as the case may be can be categorized into three (3) segments of a school system. These include: teachers, parents and students' each having a separate and important role to play so as to keep the triangle going. According to Bernard (2015) every educational institution be it primary, secondary or tertiary revolve around or within the triangle for goal achievement. Every unit of the triangle requires the other person's attention in its own unique way and ideas. If any of the triangular unit is ignored or over looked, the goals and objectives of a school system cannot be reached. Duncan (2017) the golden triangle is the hub of all educational institutions that is without it there won't be education. In agreement to that, Paulsy (2017) has it that, the teacher, the parents and the students' are the triple heads in education.

Glaringly, no one talks about education without questioning or carrying in mind the three components of educational triangle. The first side of the triangle is the teacher: teachers are in charge of day-to-day activities of a school system and also responsible for the important duty of teaching. Furthermore, they act as an in-loco parentis to the students which sometimes the teachers can be the greatest strength of a school vis-à-vis. Oko (2014), educational administrators and policy makers, work hand in hand with teachers in ensuring that favourable policies are made and implemented for the students. Government policies most times draw back the goals of education. Although government policies are meant to be implemented and obeyed, but there are laws in education that can be ignored for the betterment of the students.

Secondly, the golden triangle in the management of education has parents as its second phase. They have the capacity of influencing their children's academic performance either negatively or positively. The responsibility of providing both emotional and educational resources for the children is been bestowed on them. Most parents play the role of doctors, teachers and even pastoral service at home in ensuring that the child is well grounded academically and spiritually. Paulsy (2017), the beautification of education is the holistic support of parents to their children by providing all that they needed. Okoro (2014), students' learn more when both parents are together and in full support of their education. It's traumatizing and emotionally disturbing to any child whose parents are divorced or not living together. So also, in agreement with Paulsy, it is so beautiful and a thing of joy when the both parents jointly train their children. Okafor (2013) argued that, children who come from a more relaxed home often perform better than children from a separated home. In managing a child for a high quality performance in school, that means all the machineries like the government and their policies, the educational administrators, the teachers and also parents needs to come together to put in their respective contributions, ideals, knowledge, finance and proper care to the students. Finally, parents play a major role in the upbringing of a child. The educational objective cannot be fully achieved when parents seems not to be supportive or not assisting and providing for the child. Stakeholders in the educational institutions, needs to work in synergy for goal attainment.

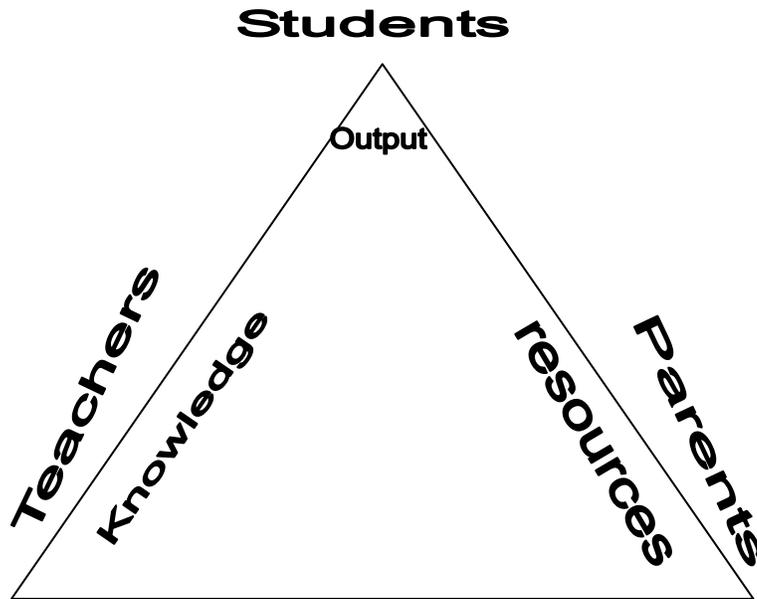
Lastly, the student is the final unit or segment in the educational triangle. Most times, the students tend to be at the mercy of governmental policies which is usually implemented by the school administration. On the other hand, the students are always at the receiving end. This means that, they witnessed and feels the teachers in the school daily and they learn the state-mandated curriculum every year. Ogwo (2010), generally the students should be respected and treated fine because they are the reason for the struggle. The apex level of the triangle is where the students' position is. It happens that the rest of the two angles are always working hard to ensure that they remain there with good academic performance. Most students like to be pampered at every giving time, while some do not want to be treated that way. For learning to be complete, there must be a

feedback from the students to the teacher. It is the duty of the teacher to always evaluate the students and also ascertain the level of understanding of the student, by so doing, the performance of the child will increase.

**Types of Educational Triangle**

According to Bernard (2015), there are three main types of triangle in education namely (1) Equito triangle, (2) Isolet triangle and (3) skeletal triangle

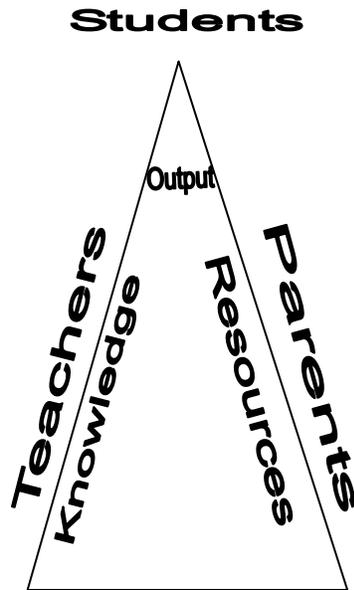
(1) **EquitoTriangle is as shown below**



**Figure 2.3**  
**Source: Researcher’s idea, 2019.**

This is the main golden triangle in education. Mufti (2018), the three tiers of the triangle works hand in hand and equally in one direction towards achieving set goals. This happens because the entire affected persons have a unique and outstanding contribution to make. Bernard (2015) stated that Equito triangle is equal in nature and it’s always seen as the hub or the heart of education. The students tend to be a completely baked product when there is a corresponding input from the side of the teachers and the parents. If a teacher can give full knowledge of what he has upstairs or all that he knows to the students, and the parents also can be able to procure, produce and provide all that the child needed to excel, there is no reason whatsoever that will make the student not to perform very well and at the same time be a quality output.

(2) Isolet Triangle



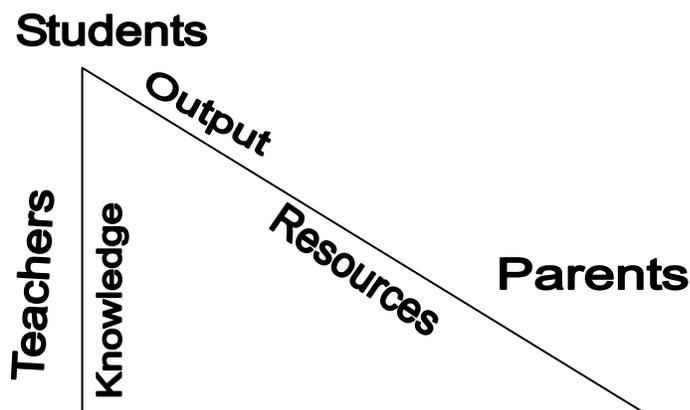
**Figure 2.4**  
**Source: Researcher's idea, 2019**

The name reflects the triangle and all that happens within the triangle. One side of the triangle is isolated from the other two. For instance, as shown in the diagram above if knowledge is less than resources, there will be a quack, low or poor output in the society. Graham-Kalio (2010) stated that, the provision of educational resources for utilization must be commensurate with number of teacher available vis-à-vis. Isolet triangle results to be when only two sides of the triangle are equal and the other side shorter than them. When this happens, ideas and knowledge seem not to flow in the same direction with other persons within the bars of the triangle. Egwu (2009), nothing works fine if the government, the school administrators, teachers and parents seem not to work in Synergy with each other in order to create a favourable atmosphere for the students. Nu Nu Win (2017), as the overall financier of education, government should dutifully make out time to checkmate the various schools and ascertain what is lacking and what is under-utilized. In so doing, proper allocation and utilization of educational resources by the government will be done. The major challenge that is facing this golden triangle is over utilization and under-utilization of educational resources.

On over utilization; Agabi in Graham-Kalio (2010) stated that, when teachers are not posted to where their services are needed, thereby making it difficult for the few teachers available to cope. If there is lack of manpower in a particular school, the few ones available will always be out stretched and over laboured which will result in them been over used to do a job of many people. Under-utilization of resources: Going by the triangle, when the side of the teacher is higher than the students, there is always an under-utilized teacher in the school that come to work without doing anything. Maduagwu and Nwogu (2006) has it that resource allocation should be based on need and specialization. Transferring teachers where their services are needed will help curtail the problem of under-utilization of manpower resources. In the same way also, setting up a school or other school plants in the area that is not well populated by a reasonable number of student, will amount to physical facilities being under used.

Finally, isolated triangle should not be practiced or allowed to exist because it pose more harm than good to education in the country. At every point in time, there should always be a corresponding connection between the three tiers of educational triangle in every institution of learning.

(3) **Skeletal Triangle**



**Figure 2.5**  
**Source: Researcher’s idea, 2019.**

This can as well be seen as a situation where nothing is happening. Skeletal triangle means that there is no equal side among the triangle and this hampers the activities of the school. When the knowledge, resources and output in education are not equal or do not exist, it makes the educational institution to be skeletal (without flesh). Ogu (2000), submitted that having one student, one teacher and one classroom or no class at all makes mockery of education. Lack of educational triangle in education brings down the aims and objectives of education. Government is usually responsible for this type of uncircumcised learning.

The inability of policy makers to enact policies that can favor education starting from recruitment of staff to sitting of school plants is a major challenge. Under this structure, everything is lacking and nothing seems to be working effectively, even the parents would not want their children to go to school because the teachers are not there or there is no money to perfect their payment as a result of government not implementing the universal Basic Education (UBE) act. On the other hand also, the students on their own can decide not to attend school because there is lack of physical facilities in school that can enhance learning. Ogwo (2010) posited that people behave the way they do in school because of lack of supervision. In agreement to this, when nothing seems to be working in any school environment, the teachers tend not to come to school at all.

**The Challenges of Educational Triangle**

In every problem there must be a solution. Therefore, educational triangle has some challenges that is facing the actualization and attainment of educational objectives. Amadi (2015) stated that the problem of educational triangle is synonymous to the problems of education. There are no differences between the two problems. The problem of education is too numerous but same time too easy to solve if the government wants. In agreement to that, there is no problem in education that is too big for the government to solve; rather the real problem is politics, personal interest and corruption. The problems of educational triangle are as follows:

### **1. Lack of Fund**

Fund can be referred to as funding which is the act of providing resources usually in form of money. Also it is the supply of money to be used for a specific purpose. In that case, fund can be seen as money provided or meant for school activities in the country either by the government, cooperate bodies or an individual in other to actualize the goals of education. The major post independent issues in educational management is the shortage of funds which the public sees the government as not doing enough to ensure that schools are adequately funded.

In managing educational triangle for a positive output, funds must be readily available in order to enable the educational administrators to properly manage the three segment of the triangle. Not only the school administrator alone, both the teachers, parents and students all need funds to help them carry on with their personal needs so as to meet up with the expectations of the administrators. Government as the major financier of education has the obligation of providing funds to not only the school alone but for the society at large.

#### **Importance of Funds to Education**

Money plays a major role in education at all levels. Funds are necessary with the following points: (A) Funds are very important for the procurement and provision of substantive instructional materials for the actualization of educational objectives. Without the provision of these types of materials, learning will be in a mess. (B) Funds are essential in the employment and payment of staff in the school. Funds are also needed to plan and organize interviews for staff to be employed. It is a fact that without funds it would be difficult to provide for the welfare of the staff in an educational organization (C) Funds in education serves as a motivational factor among staff. This means that when money is made available as at when due, in order to solve a particular problem in school environment, teachers are being motivated to put in their very best on knowing that the management will come to their aid and assist them in getting a problem solved.

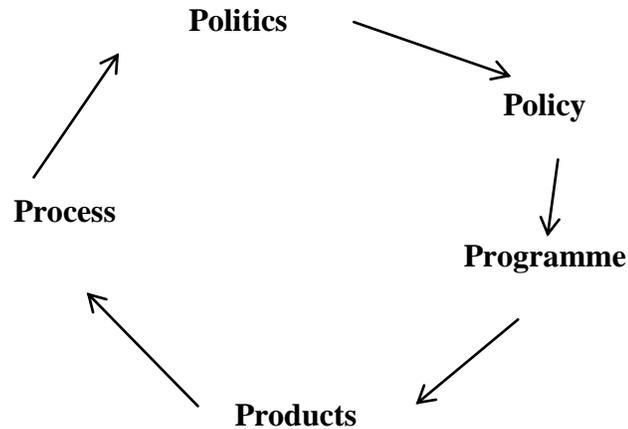
#### **Ways of Sourcing Funds in Managing Educational Triangle**

Agabi (2002) stated that funds can be sourced through different means if the government is not providing enough for the educational institutions.

- (A) Contribution by parents' teachers association (PTA): Parents are the immediate beneficiary of education through their children. They should be made to contribute a little towards the funding of education despite buying of textbooks, feeding, accommodation and provision of basic materials for their children. Little amount should be collected as equipment or developmental fees from parents.
- (B) School fees: Fees are made up of a small proportion of the funds needed to fund and finance a school. It is the government approved sum that every child must pay.
- (C) Private contributions: big organizations like churches, companies, should be informed of their need to render help in funding education.
- (D) Sale of school farm produce: Some schools use the agricultural science department of their school to establish farms, poultries, fish ponds etc. which at the end of the day the produce are harvested and sold. The money is being used to solve some pressing needs and procure materials in the school.
- (E) Endowment: Is a way of raising money by inviting individual to an organized occasion in the school. During inter-house sports, the school goes as far as inviting some notable person and they make some donations for the school.
- (F) Bob-A-Job: Teachers and students could be organized to do a bob-a-job in and around the host community, companies and home. Such good services are usually appreciated by members of the public.
- (G) Budgeting allocation: public owned schools are financed by government through grants or subventions. Such grants usually cover both current and capital expenditures of the school which government must see to.

### Causes of Underfunding Schools in Nigeria

There are five (P<sup>s</sup>) that contributes to the causes of underfunding a school in Nigeria which over the years have been a reoccurring factor and they include:



**Figure 2.7**

**Source: Researcher's idea, 2019.**

**Politics:** Is a major factor which implies that the government of the nation keeps having rotational government through politics (APC today, PDP tomorrow) and whereby the students or the parents are against the government that is in power, the administration will likely not be interested in funding education.

**Policy:** When a new government enters through politics, they seem to have or introduce policies that may not be favourable to the educational sector. For instance, government all through their stay in power don't allocate reasonable amount of money to education in their budget thereby making it an automatic underfunding.

**Programme:** Too many programmes without achieving one. Government always introduce programmes that they cannot finance for instance, the introduction of free education when it's not free, the introduction of free feeding in schools. All these are government programmes which they never finance.

**Process:** Here corruption comes in. The process by which the little money that is allocated to education comes in is very bad. The politicians most times hijack or embezzle the money making it look as if education is underfunded.

**Product:** Most times the people that are leading seem not to understand the value of education because they are not a product of education. Bad leaders contribute negatively to the funding and financing of schools in Nigeria.

### The Negative Impact of Underfunding Schools

When schools in a country are underfunded or not adequately financed, the following things seem to be happening to the students, the teachers and the school at large.

- i. When teachers are frequently owed of their salaries, the result is that they will be demoralized from teaching and teaching their best which boils down to motivation. The students are the major recipient of this impact.
- ii. Lack of funds leads to examination malpractice, reason being that when the necessary facilities needed to run a school are not there, the school can secretly embark on serious exam malpractice just to raise money.

- iii. In the triangle, fund controls everything and once its missing even the student will find it difficult going to school to learn.

## 2. Lack of Trained Manpower:

Manpower represents a major component of the school system which can be seen as the employees of the educational institution. For example teachers, students, non-teaching staff, inspectors and supervisors. These are major challenges in educational triangle, because when the head is unfit to carry the body, everything seems to be shaking, teachers all over the world are the head that carries the burden and when there are unqualified teachers inside the triangle the students suffers. Teaching is not just a matter of teachers talking and students listening, effective teaching requires interaction or communication between the mentor and mentee in a skillfully directed pattern.

### Factors that are attached to Manpower in Education

Manpower in education is something that can either go up or comes down. Here are some factors that are linked to manpower in education: (i) proper utilization (ii) underutilization (iii) brain drain (iv) brain gain

- i. **Proper utilization:** When a teacher is properly assigned to a duty based on need and specialization in a particular school, that teacher is most likely to work very well and the school will also utilize his input.
- ii. **Underutilization of teachers:** Over population of teaching personnel is one of the most serious and evident problems in developing countries which greatly and adversely affect the educational system of that country. When the number of teachers required for a particular job is higher than the job itself, the students suffers. Most times the teachers don't enter the classroom just because they are looking for who will go and teach first. The reason for this occurrence is that government seems not to consider allocation of manpower based on needs, that is what the school really wants and the number of person the school needs.
- iii. **Brain drain:** Government harsh policies sometimes contribute to the draining of staff out of the country. Brain drain is a situation whereby qualified teachers relocate to other countries where they will be valued the more. When there is brain drain in the country, obviously there will be lack of trained manpower in the country which will make the performance of secondary school students to nose dive which is negatively bad.
- iv. **Brain gain:** Importing or inviting some qualified teachers to come and teach the students as expatriates is also an issue. This is because the foreigners will not treat or handle the students like their own and in turn, the students might not like them and when a student is said to hate a teacher automatically, the child will not have interest in that particular subject

## 3. Gender Inequality

This is a major challenge in education. In some parts of Nigeria, some parents prefer to send their female child to school and ask their male child to venture into business. The parents believe that the male child should go make money and come take care of the family. These usually cause the children to willingly dropout of school and when this happens, the shape of the triangle will not be complete because the students are not there. The children should be given equal right be it male or female simply because it's their constitutional right to attend school

### WAYS OF FIXING THE SHATTERED AND BATTERED TRIANGLE

Being the heart of education, there is always needs to have a futuristic plan that can give a relief to the various triangles in education.

1. Good governmental policy: Having a futuristic educational policy by the government acts as a boosting element towards the amendment of the existing triangle.
2. Allocation and re-allocation of resources; There is always need for allocation of educational resources based on need so as to stimulate and harmonize any gap between the school and the resources.
3. Full implementation of policies: When the policies are fully implemented, education flourish. For instance, the (UBE) act made it possible for government to be in charge of basic education among pupils in the country. This means that early child education is free and compulsory. With this, parents who have no money will gladly encourage their children or wards to attend school. All these are ways by which errors in the educational triangle can be corrected without stress in the society.
4. Communication: Proper communication between the three persons involved is very necessary.

### CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the meaning of educational triangle, challenges and way forward as well as the importance of the major stakeholders (the Parents, Teachers and Students) in education were examined. It was noted that without the jointly cooperation of the three angles which forms the triangle, the objectives of education in Nigeria will not be achieved. Therefore, there is need for the teacher who doubles as an *in-loco* parents to the students to always ensure the right thing is done. Also, the parents not only providing the necessary resources needed by the child, should also ensure that proper home training is given to the child. When all the needed materials are available, the students excel and performs well academically.

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