

An Analysis of Primary and Secondary School Enrolment and Inclusive Growth in Nigeria

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Abstract

Education is a key driver to the growth and development process of any economy. However, the development of the education sector has been a major constraint to many developing countries including Nigeria. Over time, economic activities in Nigeria have not been appreciable inclusive and this has affected the growth and development process of the country. In response to this challenge, this paper seeks to examine the impact of primary and secondary enrolments on inclusive economic growth in Nigeria. The time series data on school enrolment spanning the period of 1980 to 2016 were captured using the OLS econometric technique. The results of the analysis revealed that primary school enrolment is positive but statistically insignificant to economic growth, whilst secondary school enrolment is both positive and statistically significant to economic growth in Nigeria. The study recommends that education should be adequately and consistently funded at all levels. There should be concerted effort of every stakeholder towards getting every child of school age into school to give them education necessary for their effective participation in economic activities to make economic growth in Nigeria inclusive.

Keywords: Primary Enrolment, Secondary Enrolment, Education, OLS Model, Inclusive Economic Growth.

Introduction

The urgent need for inclusiveness in the process of participating in and benefiting from economic growth has been the major concern in the global space. This has resulted to series of initiatives and programmes geared towards achieving the concept of equality for all irrespective of age, race, or sex. Several policy measures have been put in place towards attaining this. Prominent among them is education which has been widely viewed as a crucial tool of achieving inclusive growth, especially in the developing nations. In the light of this, school enrolment constitutes a key factor considered by policy makers in the education sector.

The term school enrolment is used to denote the proportion of pupils in school attendance to the aggregate number of official school age population. Primary education is the first component of basic education which every nation has the responsibility to guarantee its citizens. It is the level of education for children age 6 to 11 years. On the other hand, secondary education is the level of education for children age 11 years and above.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), school enrolment has been identified as a key factor in achieving a desirable economic growth and productivity of the labour force in a given economy. This has attracted attentions of different economies of the world to ensuring education for all and sundry across primary and secondary education for children within the official schooling age. Jomtien (Thailand) World Declaration on Framework for Action on Education for all in 1990; New Delhi Declarations on Education of E-9 countries in 1994; Incheon Declaration on inclusive and equitable quality education 2015; Amman Declaration on the pursuit of goals of Jomtien in 1996; Dakar statement of commitment on Inter-African collaboration for the Development of Education in 1998; OAU Declaration for Education for all 1997-2006; Dakar Education for all in 2000, are some of the initiatives taken by world governments to ensure access to quality education (UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report, 2020).

Across countries of the world including Nigeria, education is considered as an instrument par excellence for national development and, the sector deserving of huge government expenditure (United Nations Children's Fund UNICEF, 2012). According to (UNICEF) report (2012), the introduction of universal primary education (UPE) programme in 1976 was a significant milestone in widening access to education particularly for the poor and rural dwellers. The UPE programme was school fees abolition (SFA) policy which gave rise to an unprecedented upsurge in school enrolment. However, due to poor planning precipitated by wrong statistical forecasts, the programme could not move Nigeria towards universal access to primary education. In 1999, there was a rebirth of SFA policy at the national level under the universal basic education programme (UBE). The UBE Act (2004) provides for free and compulsory education for every Nigerian child. It stipulates that 2% of the federal account shall be set aside as an intervention fund to assist the state government in implementing the UBE programme to ensure uniform development of basic education in the country. It stipulates appropriate sanction against parents who fail to enrol their children in school (UNICEF, 3: 2012).

In the attempt to catch up with the developed nations, the developing countries have enacted various laws and policies intended towards increasing access to quality education for their citizens. Despite this relentless effort, enrolment rate in primary and secondary schools has continued to record a slow-moving rise in many less developed countries including Nigeria. The issue of gender discrimination which led to awareness on the girl's child education by African countries with Nigeria actively involved specifically in 2001 has been elusive calling for pragmatic approach to redress the situation. This was one of the key observations made by (Smith and Todaro, 2011).

School Enrolment and Inclusive Growth Challenges in Nigeria

The report obtained from UNICEF (2020) points that one in every five of the world's out-of-school children is in Nigeria. Despite the fact that primary education is officially free and compulsory in Nigeria, about 10.5 million of the country's children aged 5-14 years are not in school. "Only 61 percent of 6-11 year-olds regularly attend primary school and only 35.6 percent of children aged 36-59 months receive early childhood education." In the northern Nigeria, the picture is even disparaging, with a net attendance rate of 53 percent. Getting out-of-school children back into education poses a massive challenge.

In Nigeria, gender, like geography and poverty, is an important factor in the pattern of educational marginalization. The north-east and north-west states have female primary net attendance rates of 47.7 percent and 47.3 percent, respectively, implying that more than half of the girls are not in school. The education deprivation in north of Nigeria is driven by various factors, including economic barriers, socio-cultural norms and selfish practices that discourage attendance in formal education, especially for girls. In the previous years, statistical records as noted by (UNICEF, 2012) have it that 24.7 million children enrolled for primary school while 10.9 million enrolled into secondary schools in Nigeria. Of the schooling age population, 29.6% of the primary school enrolment was not in the school while 26% of secondary school enrolment was found in schools in Nigeria.

Nigeria joined the African girls' education initiative and took the initiative of raising national awareness on girls' education through awareness campaigns, rallies, and seminars as a way of addressing discrimination in school enrolment (UNICEF, 2020). If not addressed, an inclusive education that respect the diverse needs, abilities and characteristics of learners and eliminating all forms of discrimination in the learning environment may be far from being achieved (UNESCO, 2020).

Recently, Nigeria joined the league of countries that adopted the concepts of inclusive growth. The worldwide clamour for an increase in the funding and access to education is because education is now seen as a key tool for generating desired human development and economic growth. In the light of the above, this study seeks to critically investigate the how school enrolment influences economic growth with reference to primary and secondary school enrolment rate between 1980 and 2016 in Nigeria.

This paper is unique as it delves into school enrolments rather than just education. While most of the findings focused on education and economic growth with little emphasis on enrolment, this paper centres specifically on school enrolments with emphasis on primary and secondary schools using large sample size. The contributions of this study on school enrolments in Nigeria regarding inclusive growth can never be overemphasized.

The subsequent aspects of this study will take the following sequential order of presentation; review of relevant literatures in Section 2. Section 3 contains a situation analysis. The theoretical framework and empirical review are the focus of Section 4 while section 5 presents the results, findings discussion, conclusion and recommendations for policy making.

Hypothesis of the Study

The main hypotheses of the study are as follows:

H₁: There is no significant relationship between primary school enrolment and GDP in Nigeria.

H₂: There is no significant relationship between secondary school enrolment and GDP in Nigeria.

Literature Review

In a recent conference on sustainable development, economic growth and economic development are opined as not synonymous since inequality can be a barrier for growth. Hence, tackling inequality was proposed as such that can be a stand-alone Sustainable Development Goal. Thus, economic development requires sound foundations which are not just inclusive of universal access to health services, access to financial services, new

technologies and affordable bank loans, gender equality and more equal distribution of resources but also of universal access to education since all can support economic development (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015).

The role of improved schooling has been a central part of the development strategies of most countries and of international organizations (Eric, 2013). A crucial fact that has been established in the literature reviews the pertinent role of enrolment in primary and secondary schools in ensuring the inclusiveness of economic growth across nations of the world most especially developing countries. The focus of inclusive growth is not limited to participation or sharing benefit but also taking active role on venturesome approach or participatory contribution in the development process. A careful examination of the United Nations' Development Programme (2015) will review the fact that, development notably can be inclusive and reduce poverty only if all groups of people contribute to creating opportunities, share the benefits of development and participate in decision-making. Thus, a framework or milieu offering opportunities, improving people's capabilities as expected by Sen (1985) capabilities approach is such envisaged or such that remains germane or is appropriate. In essence, the measures and principles of non-discrimination, accountability, fundamental human rights, and participation that are attainable through suitable and structured education are the principal focus of inclusive growth.

The need for positive behavioural changes in cognitive, affective, and psycho-motive development of individual is the prime rationale of any proper and focused teaching and learning activities. These activities do not take place in inadvertently but rather a well-structured and conducive environment which enhances adequate learning. Education at the primary and secondary levels provides the basic skills needed in the workplace such as numeracy, literacy, communication skills and social skills including working with teams. Technical skills and other work-related competencies can be learned in secondary and vocational education. Tertiary education prepares students for employment in industries using more sophisticated technology which are imported, adapted, and improved. Meanwhile, higher education provides support for the development of sciences that generates knowledge capital, and the development of technology and innovation. Hence, the case of social protection, establishing welfare provision structure complimentary to the capitalist approach in development process are such that are implied factors inherent as necessary in attaining or achieving or engendering inclusive growth through education.

Theoretical Overview

Ever since the ground breaking literature by Schultz (1971) of which was a research focused on post-World War II Germany and Japan and thereby emphasizing investment in education for a highly educated population as education makes people productive, attention notably has been drawn to improving human resources for productive capacity enhancement in order to drive economic progress or process of growth. More so with Sen (1985) positing the Capabilities Approach to development, that people for the growth process should be endowed with opportunities to function, with being able to live long creative and productive life, a paradigm shift towards non-economic-growth development strategy has thereby included investment in human resources for human capital formation to drive growth. Thus, a stock of available and skilled individuals remains paramount to foster growth process.

A paradigm Shift from Economic Growth to Inclusive Growth

According to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2011), many developing countries such as China and India have over the past decades experienced rising inequality while their economies enjoyed fast growth. Serious inequality can erode human potential, impede a society's normal functions, discourage investment and jeopardize economic development and even trigger political conflict and turmoil. In recent time, there has been an increasing agitation for a better and equitable sharing of benefits among all to ensure long term sustainable growth. This is the main message of the Millennium Declaration that inclusive growth has become a new development paradigm in both the developed and developing world.

The UNDP International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG) (Technical Report, 2011) viewed inclusive growth as ensuring that everyone can participate in the growth process and making sure that everyone shares equitably the benefits of growth. Inclusive growth according to Ekpo (2013) is the rapid, sustained growth that is inclusive of a large portion of a country's labour force. It laid more emphasis of productive employment rather than income distribution. It can also be seen as output growth that is sustained over decades, is broad based across sectors, create employment opportunities for a great majority of the country's working age population and reduces poverty (Samans et al., 2015).

The concept of inclusive growth encompasses an outcome and a process, participation and benefit-sharing in development, income, and non-income dimensions. Participation without benefit sharing will make growth unjust and benefit-sharing without participation will make it a welfare outcome.

Growth cannot be achieved accidentally. It must be planned for and effectively executed. The growth process of a country usually starts with growth bias on agriculture which uses traditional technologies in agricultural and cottage industries. These production processes are uncomplicated and use unskilled up to semi-skilled workers to perform manual labour (Tullao and Cabuay, 2013). This stage requires little education and perhaps basic education is sufficient. As the economy develops, the share of agriculture in national income drops, while that of the industrial sector in generating income and employment begins to increase due to a higher population rate and structural changes in the economy (Tullao and Cabuay, 2013).

This change is accompanied by changes in technology as well as the types of workers needed in the economy. Unskilled workers that operate in traditional agriculture may no longer be applicable in mechanized and large-scale production. At this stage of development, the economy may have to borrow technology from more developed ones as it exploits opportunities in the manufacturing sector based on its resource endowment.

From the human resource perspective, borrowed technology may require middle-skilled and technical workers. This implies that graduates of secondary education and technical/vocational training should have the appropriate competencies and dexterity to operate improved production techniques.

The role of savings, investment, and population growth rates to achieving economic growth can never be overemphasized as postulated by Solow and Swan (1956) in their model called the Solow-Swan model. It assumes a positive relationship between saving, investment, and economic growth. On the other hand, increase in population growth has an unfavourable effect on economic growth. The law of diminishing returns set in when there is lack of

technological change and innovation to complement an increase in per capital worker. Hence capital deepening would reduce the rate of return on capital.

Inclusiveness of economic growth can be achieved by increasing average income and making the income distribution of a country more equitable (Anand, Mishra, and Peiris, 2013). Empirically, education appears to be a highly significant correlate for inclusive growth (Anna, Mishra, and Peiris, 2013; Barro and Lee, 2000), particularly the years of schooling in primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. A strong economy for knowledge has emerged globally, thus creating incentives for people to invest in their skills particularly through education (Gurria, 2012). Education makes available three linkages in attaining inclusive growth. This is evident through increases in productivity, greater employment opportunities, and enhanced entrepreneurship. If the enrolment rate into educational institutions is thus increased, this will lead to inclusive growth.

Overview of School Enrolment

In the work of Babatunde and Olukayode (2014), the increasing rate of school enrolment and years of schooling was exclusively stated has increasing on the high side across majority of the global nations. As such, this can be noticeably credited to parental investment in children's education within the limit of a stable household income. This has eventually resulted to the disparity in schooling gender and country wise both internally and externally. School enrolment which is also referred to as gross enrolment is the total enrolment in a specific level of education (primary or secondary), regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education in a given school year (UNESCO, 2009). It is basically meant to show the overall level of participation in a given level of education. It specifies the capacity of the education system a country to enroll students of a particular age group at a point in time. Over time, it has been used as a complementary indicator to netenrolment rate (NER) by indicating the extent of over-aged and under-aged enrolment.

Symbolically, it can be calculated as:

$$GER_h^t = \frac{E_h^t}{P_{h,a}^t}$$

Where:

GER_h^t = Gross Enrolment Ratio at level of education 'h' in school year 't'.

E_h^t = Enrolment at the level of education 'h' in school year 't'.

$P_{h,a}^t$ = Population in age group a which officially corresponds to the level of education 'h' in school year 't'.

Evidence from the literature have shown a situation of insignificant and inconsistent trend of school enrolment rate in the country. Explicitly, the record of enrolment rate in primary and secondary schools in Nigeria over 30 years (1980 to 2010) reveals an unstable trend of the growth.

School Enrolment and Inclusive Growth

Education is a medium through which human beings and societies attain their fullest potential. It is critical for promoting sustainable development and improving the competence of people to resolve environmental and developmental issues. To achieve environmental and

ethical awareness, values, and skills consistent with sustainable development and effective public participation in decision-making and development process, the role of education can never be overemphasized. These are part of the key determinants of inclusive growth.

Education (at the primary and secondary levels) is a key lever of sustainable development. This is premised on a vision of inclusive economies in which all citizens have equitable opportunities to access effective and relevant learning throughout life. This is supported by Hanushek and Woessmann (2015), who posit that a clear and measurable sustainable development goal is that all youth obtain basic skills. This goal, which directly promotes inclusive growth and development, incorporates two components: full enrolment of youth in secondary school and achievement that provides a basis for economic and social participation. In Nigeria, primary school enrolment was observed by Babatunde and Olukayode (2014) as a very pertinent tool for ensuring sustainable economic growth.

Empirical Review

Investing in education plays a key role in meeting the World Bank's social development objectives, which support inclusive growth, social cohesion, and accountability in development (Lal, 2011). This is further supported by Sen (1985) who opined that education is an important parameter for any inclusive growth in an economy. The policies should focus on inclusive rather than divisive growth strategies.

With primary and secondary school enrolment rates in focus, various findings have empirically been put forth to support the positive relationship between investment in education and economic growth. Education appears to be a highly significant correlate for inclusive growth (Anna, Mishra, and Peiris, 2013; Barro and Lee, 2000), particularly the years of schooling in primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education.

Using 1974/1975 data from the former Mid-western Nigeria, Akangbou (1983) calculated the crude private average rates of investment return on education for secondary and post-secondary levels. The estimated crude private rates of returns were 13.4 percent for lower secondary school level, 11.9, 11.2 and 17.2 percent for secondary technical, upper secondary and university levels, respectively. He also computed the crude social average returns to be 12.3, 11.0, 10.4 and 12.7 percent for lower secondary school, secondary technical, upper secondary school, and university levels, respectively. The general conclusion of his findings is that no matter the magnitude of monetary resources expended on education, the private and social returns are always profitable and justifiable. Thus, investment on education positively affects the economy.

Similarly, Irughe et al (2020) analyzed the long-run relationships and short-run dynamics interactions between education captured by school enrolment and completion rates and growth. The result of their findings revealed that the flow of resources devoted to human capital formation at the different levels of education has positive effects on overall growth in Nigeria. Primary and secondary levels were significant while the tertiary level had an insignificant effect on overall economic growth. A little deviation can be observed in the work of Psacharopoulos (1994) that summarizes the results on return to human capital from more than 55 wages studies from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. These summaries present a consistent pattern of very large returns to primary education and somewhat smaller returns to secondary and post-secondary education.

Ishola and Alani (2012), observed that education, measured by literacy rate, had a positive relationship with economic growth. The coefficient of literacy rate obtained was 2.465. Thus, a 1% increase in literacy rate resulted in a 2.465% increase in the growth rate of GDP. Therefore, an investment in education is worthwhile venture. The result shows the significance of education to growth in Nigeria. Despite low budgetary allocation to education, its impact on economic growth was still felt over time. Babatunde and Adefabi (2005) examined the long-run relationship between education and economic growth in Nigeria using the Johansen co-integration approach as a framework of analysis. The results of the co-integrating technique suggest that there is long-run relationship between enrolments in primary and tertiary levels of education and the average years of schooling with output per worker. The study concluded that a well-educated labour force possessed a positive and significant impact on economic growth.

Omojimite (2010), conducted a finding on the relationship between education and economic growth using Nigerian data. The results of the findings show that there is cointegration between public expenditures on education, primary school enrolment and economic growth.

Situation Analysis

Primary and Secondary Schools Enrolment in Nigeria

We adopts a graphical representation of the three economic indicators used in this study. Primary school enrolment rate is represented with (PSENR), secondary school enrolment rates with (SSENR) and Gross Domestic Rates with (RGDP).

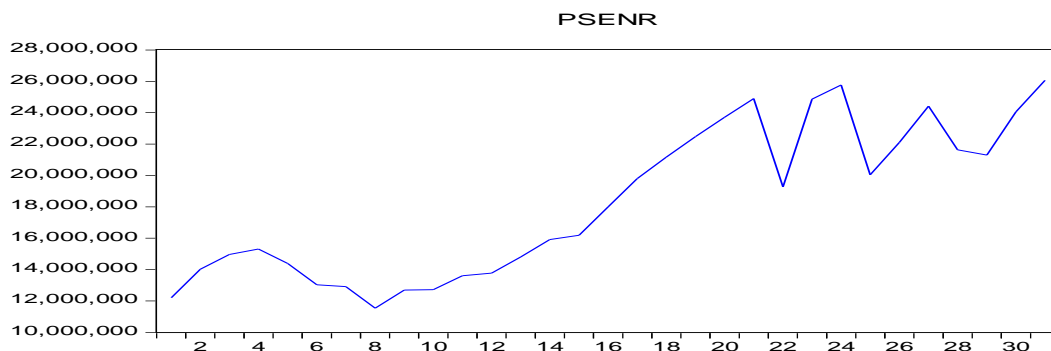


Figure 1: Primary school enrolment

The analysis of the current situation as indicated above reveals that primary school enrolment rates in Nigeria was 26,064,512 as of 2010 while over the past 30 years this indicator reached a maximum value of 25,768,046 in 2003 and a minimum value of 11,540,178 in 1987.

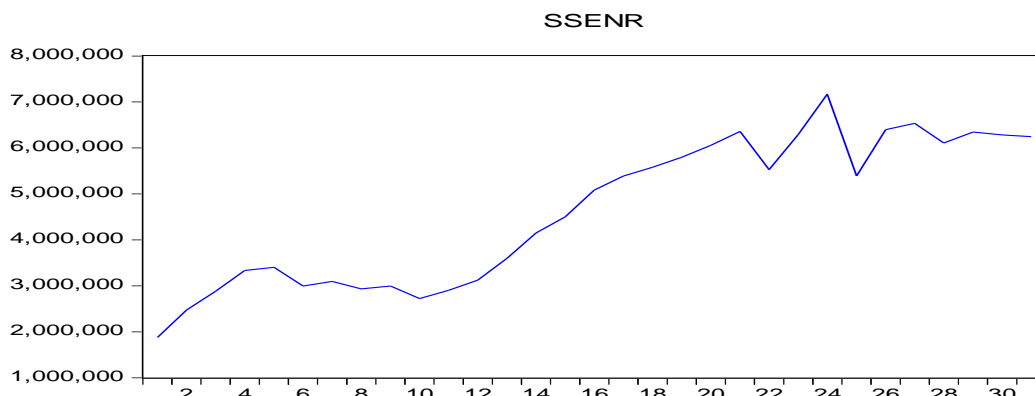


Figure 2: Secondary school enrolment

The analysis of the current situation as indicated above posits that secondary school enrolment rates in Nigeria was 6,246,512 as of 2010 while over the past 30 years this indicator reached a maximum value of 7,171,304 in 2003 and a minimum value of 1,877,057 in 1980.

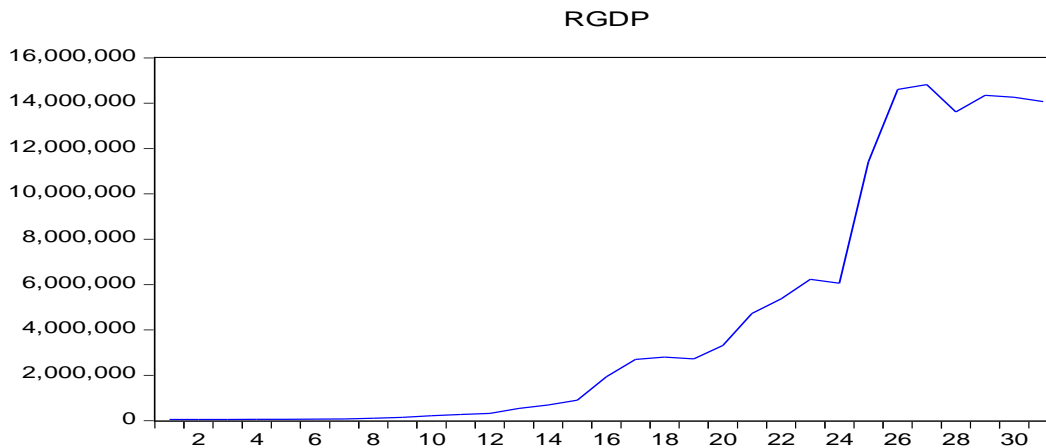
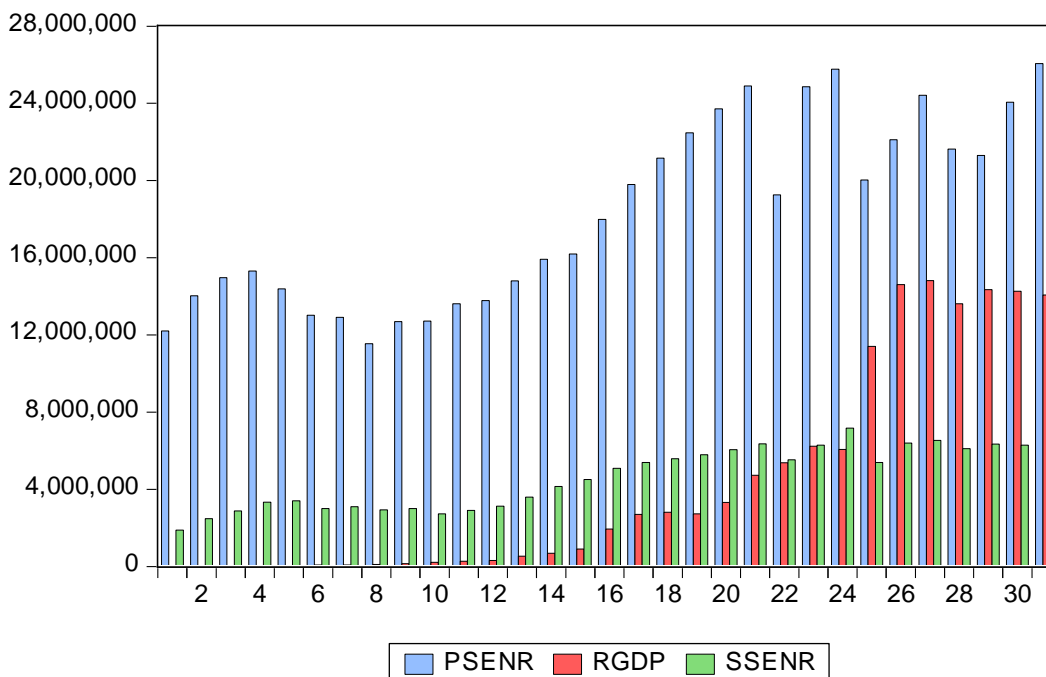


Figure 3: Economic growth

The analysis of the current situation as indicated above show that Gross Domestic Product rates in Nigeria was 14,074,594 as of 2010 while over the past 30 years this indicator reached a maximum value of 14,820,552 in 2006 and a minimum value of 49632.3 in 1980.



PSEN, SSEN, and RGDP

A general overview of the above indicators reveals high rate of primary school enrolment over secondary enrolment and gross domestic products. Secondary enrolment was second at the initial year but below GDP in the 25th year and above. This implies that, the country is experiencing a fluctuating growth on all the three indicators.

Based on the foregoing, this study will further elucidate on the policy measure needed to put in place by the government to make growth in the primary and secondary schools inclusive.

Econometric Method, Data Description and Model Set Up

The model for this study is specified in accordance to previous literature from what leading authorities in the field of economic growth have done. Following the Solow neoclassical production function of the form:

$$Y_t = A_t f(K_t, L_t) \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Where Y is aggregate real output, K is the capital stock, L is labour, A is the efficiency factor and 't' is the time factor.

Thus, expressed in growth form, equation (1) becomes:

$$GY = GA + \beta K + GK + BL GL \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Within the growth accounting framework and given the fact that capital stock data is generally not available (unless computed using inventory method), equation (2) is usually estimated in the form:

$$GY = GA + \beta K (I/Y) + BL GL \dots\dots\dots (3)$$

Where 'I/Y' is the investment aggregate output (income) ratio.

However, with the advent of Endogenous growth theory and models (e.g., Romer, 1986; and Barro, 1991), it was suggested that other endogenous factors such as government policies as well as political stability, school enrolment, market distortions, human capital development, technological progress, and so on can affect and help to determine economic growth.

Based on this, several studies have attempted to integrate exogenous forces with endogenous factors in explaining economic growth across countries. In these studies, the augmented Solow neoclassical production function was used.

Specifically, equation one above can be modified as:

$$Y_t = A (t) K^{a_1} L^{a_2} SE^{a_3} \dots\dots\dots (4)$$

Where SE = school enrolment and $a_1 + a_2 + a_3 = 1$ (assuming constant returns to scale); other variables are as defined earlier. Taking the natural logarithm of both sides of the equation produces a linear equation in levels of the form.

$$\ln Y = a + a_1 \ln K + a_2 \ln L + a_3 \ln SE \dots\dots\dots (5)$$

Going by the model formulated, 'a' is the growth rate of growth accounting for residual. Precisely, increase in school enrolment as a function of higher human capital development is believed (according to the pro endogenous growth) to have proportional effects on productivity. Similarly, the theory assumes that investment in education will bring about positive externalities and spill-over effects.

Data

Time series data on primary school enrolment, secondary school enrolment, unemployment rate and real GDP were collected from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and World Development Index on Nigeria. The data covers the period from 1980 to 2016 computed for 36 years of analysis.

Model Specification

This study applies the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) technique to examine the impact of primary and secondary enrolments on economic (inclusive) growth in Nigeria. The econometric model will be formulated using regression analysis to obtain the relationship between the dependent and explanatory variables.

$$\text{LNGDP} = \beta_0 + \text{Log } \beta_1 \text{PENR} + \text{Log } \beta_2 \text{SENR} + \text{Log } \beta_3 \text{LFPR} + \mu \dots\dots\dots (6)$$

RGDP = Real Gross Domestic product

PENR = Primary school enrolment

SENR = Secondary school enrolment

LFPR = Labour Force Participation Rate - as Control variable

β_0 = Intercept

μ = Error Term

Results and Discussion

Table 1

Regression Results

Dependent Variable: LOG(RGDP)

Method: Least Squares

Sample: 36

Included observations: 36

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	-74.52037	12.08674	-6.165466	0.0000
LOG(PSENR)	1.069490	1.663993	0.642725	0.5256
LOG(SSENR)	4.613799	1.181186	3.906071	0.0005
LOG(LFPR)	2.678941	1.564667	1.277373	0.0023
R-squared	0.879083	Mean dependent var		13.84839
Adjusted R-squared	0.870447	S.D. dependent var		2.131581
S.E. of regression	0.767231	Akaike info criterion		2.399709
Sum squared residual	16.48203	Schwarz criterion		2.538482
Log likelihood	-34.19549	Hannan-Quinn critter		2.444945
F-statistic	101.7823	Durbin-Watson stat		1.792535
Prob (F-statistic)	0.000000			

Before the model was estimated, the characteristics of the time series data was examined using Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) test for stationarity. All the variables were found to be stationary at levels, i.e., they were of order $I(0)$. According to the analysis (as contained in table 1), it was apparent that there was conformity between the coefficient of the explanatory variables and the 'a-priori' expectations. This proves a positive impact of both primary and secondary school enrolments on economic growth in Nigeria for periods under consideration. Also, the R-Square value of 0.8429712 reveals that about 84 percent variation in the dependent variable is accounted for by the explanatory variables at the same time the remaining 16 percent is explained by other variables that are not within the specified model. The F-statistics of 101.7823, indicates that the forecasting strength of the model is high and that also shows that the model is adequate and sufficient in explaining the relationship between dependent and explanatory variables.

The probability value of 0.0000 at the 5 percent level of significance in relation to the F-statistics value also shows that the model has a good fit. Again, the model is free from autocorrelation as indicated by the Durbin-Watson statistics value of 1.79. The primary

enrolment component of the model though positive, is statistically insignificant (thus, we accept the Null hypothesis in this case) going by the probability value of 0.5256. This can be because despite the increase in the level of primary school enrolment, the primary school students of nowadays are too young to participate in any meaningful economic activities upon the completion of that level of education as many of them are between the ages of eight and eleven. The secondary school enrolment is both positive and statistically significant (we accept the Alternate hypothesis in this case) with the probability value of 0.0005. The reason for this is not farfetched. Most of the students who complete that level of education are around the ages of sixteen and eighteen who are already engaging in one form of economic activity or the other after leaving schools. On gaining admission into tertiary institutions, some of them even seize the opportunities presented by the campus environment to engage in different forms of trading by selling one form of article or the other to their friends and classmate mostly on a part time basis. Besides, many of them are already mature enough to engage in constructive debates and discussions at different levels and through different media such as television, radio and social media thereby contributing to the growth and development of the economy. Similarly, the control variable, Labour participation rate (probability value = 0.0023) is statistically positive and has a significant impact on economic growth in Nigeria. This is in line with the findings of Duval et al (2010) that skilled labour force enhance economic growth.

Conclusion and Recommendation

We assessed the impact of primary and secondary enrolments on inclusive economic growth in Nigeria. The study established that the rate of primary school enrolment is high and above the rate of secondary school enrolment and GDP level in Nigeria. By implication, the country is experiencing a fluctuating growth on all the three indicators for the period examined.

The findings of the regression analysis of the variables examined shows that primary school enrolment is statistically positive but has insignificant impact on economic growth (GDP) in Nigeria. On the other hand, secondary school enrolment, is found to be both statistically positive and have significant impact on economic growth (GDP) in Nigeria.

Going by the findings of this research, this study concludes that to achieve a desirable inclusive economic growth in Nigeria, primary and secondary school enrolment are indispensable. Particularly, more attention must be given to secondary school education. To achieve inclusive growth, both boys' and girls' enrolment must be enhanced equally for productive participation in national development. The government and key stakeholders must invest heavily and prioritise basic education to ensure that all children of school age have access to free and quality education. The federal and state government needs to increase their budget allocation to the education sector, especially the primary and secondary education level. In addition, it is clearly ascertained from the results obtained (going by the constant (-74.52037)) that without adequate development in the educational sector, sustainability of the economic growth may not be feasible. Again, this has confirmed the imperative of implementing the recommendation of UNESCO on the adequate funding of education particularly on the first two levels of education as this remains the only way of engendering inclusive growth whereby everybody is adequately equipped to participate in various productive activities.

Noting that our findings indicate a strong relationship between economic growth and labour force participation rate in Nigeria, the country needs to increase its active population to produce goods and services. If school enrolment is improved, more people will be available for work, prompting those above 16 years to be included in labour force.

We note that a mixture of the identified policy options is presumed to have immense contributions in the quest to reviving the educational sector that stimulate inclusive growth in Nigeria. It is equally imperative for the government to fund the education sector adequately, effectively, and consistently at all levels in the country. Infrastructural facilities should also be adequately provided in the various educational institutions to enhance the process of teaching and learning in the education sector. We note that the government may not be able to adequately fund the education sector in isolation; therefore, there should be effective collaboration between the government and private sector within the structure of public-private partnership (PPP).

As a matter of importance, the education curriculum at all levels should be reviewed to make them more technically oriented for school goers to develop productive skills that will foster inclusive economic growth. Furthermore, there should be a concerted effort on the part of every stakeholder towards getting every child of school age to school to enable them acquire the education necessary for their effective participation in economic activities to make economic growth in Nigeria inclusive.

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