

Economic Recession and Management of Public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated Economic recession and management of public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. Three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated for the study. The design adopted for this study was descriptive survey design. The population of the study is 10,176 academic and non-academic staff of Colleges of Education in North Central zone of Nigeria. The sample for this study is 1,017 respondents. Simple random sampling technique was adopted to draw the sample size of the respondents. A structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled “Economic Recession and Colleges of Education Management Questionnaire,” (ERMCEQ) was used for data collection. Mean Score and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions while Chi-Square was used to test the hypotheses. This study found that economic recession has influence on funding, continuous personnel development and the provision and maintenance of school plant in public Colleges of Education. The study recommended that the government and management of Colleges of Education should source for funds and allocate same to Colleges of Education for effective management of the institutions.

Keywords: Economy, Recession, Management, Colleges, Education, Nigeria

Introduction

The global economy in this decade faced harsh financial crisis not recorded in its financial history since the great depression of the last century. This financial disequilibrium created economic upheavals that were termed global economic depression, financial crisis, economic crisis or economic recession. According to Jato (2016), economic recession is defined as systemic disturbances to the financial system that impede the system's ability to acquire and utilize financial capital and disrupt the economy's capacity to function therefore leading to severe financial and economic distress.

The economic crisis has been felt in many areas. According to Usmanu (2017), the economic recession negatively affected the prices of crude oil products globally, lowered the prices of home mortgages, lowered the prices of stocks in the global market, caused poor repayment of bank loans and resulted into surging and double digit inflation among many other negative economic indices. The current economic recession is believed to have emanated from the United States of America. According to Lashika (2018), annual double-digit increases in the United States of America housing prices proved unsustainable and the rapidly growing price-rent and price-income ratios clearly had to fall.

In Nigeria, Okpo (2018) notes that the former Central Bank of Nigeria Governor, Professor Chukwuma Soludo was credited as saying that Nigeria was not going to be affected by the global economic recession. After much dithering, the Federal Government decided to take some steps towards insulating the nation's economy against the effects of the global economic recession. Suffice it to say that the economic policy planners locked the stable door after the horses had bolted. Odu (2018) opines that economic recession has the potential of impacting negatively on the management of public colleges of education, which largely depend on government's allocation for all their financial engagements.

Management of educational institutions entails the coordination and harmonization of the various daily and routine activities by the personnel in whose hands such institutions have been placed in order to accomplish stated national and educational aims and objectives. According to Okpan (2018), core aspects of educational management include adequate funding, proper staff recruitment or appointment, planning, budgeting, organization, directing, supervision, sustained provisions for staff welfare, provision of needed educational facilities, proper staff retention, continuous personnel development and making arrangements for optimal staff performance of organizational responsibilities.

The managerial functions mentioned above cannot be effectively coordinated if adequate funds are not available in the educational system. Okajieli (2010), in a study on

the influence of economic recession on the management of universities, found out that economic recession impacted negatively on the management of universities in areas like annual budgetary allocation, execution of projects and other vital managerial functions necessary for effective management of the universities. Similarly, Ogbonnaya (2012), in a study on the economic recession and management of universities in Nigeria, reported the impact of economic recession to include deplorable state of physical facilities; internal and external brain drain among the intellectual class; and overstretching of teaching, research and managerial capacities in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Okpo (2018) in a study to investigate the impact of economic recession on the tertiary institutions in Nigeria found out that, most noticeable at the undergraduate level where class sizes may already have run up against the space constraints set by the size of the campus' largest lecture theatres, there is increasingly crowded lecture halls in non-degree awarding institutions.

Goiki (2016) maintains that effective management of any institution revolves around adequate funding as ample funds are the live wire for the success of any business or social venture. The absence of or delayed satisfactory funding is speculated to delay the implementation of policies and programmes and derail the path of the pursuance and accomplishment of intended objectives of the tertiary institutions of learning. Ahmed (2011) laments that students also find it difficult to study at night because of crippling electricity cuts caused by the government's failure to provide electricity. The importance of adequate financing of education cannot be over-stressed.

In spite of the fact that there has been a sustained spate of intervention programmes, like the Tertiary Education Trust Fund, in the funding of public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria, it seems all is not well with these institutions. Stakeholders in education, like the students and parents amongst others, frequently grouse about the quality of education and infrastructure obtainable in public Colleges of Education. A survey of most of the public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria reveals educational infrastructure in a state of disrepair which might have been caused by economic recession. Many structures have become death traps while some have practically become unusable. This might have stemmed from the reduced funding from the government occasioned by economic recession. Personal observations by the researchers show that public Colleges of Education in this area are filled with many underdeveloped personnel that could offer only the wrong quality and quantity of education to the recipients. This is because recently, there has been reduced skill-effective training and re-training opportunities for both academic and non-academic personnel of the public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. It seems the public Colleges of Education have become vulnerable to the devastating influence of economic recession thereby making them unable to pursue their visions and missions.

It has also been observed that much school equipment across the public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria are in a state of disrepair which might have arisen

from economic recession. The acquisition of new school equipment has gradually eluded most Colleges of Education in the region. The researchers speculate that economic recession has influence on the management of public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria in areas like funding, continuous personnel development, and provision and maintenance of school plant, hence the present study.

Research Questions

The research was guided by the following research questions:

1. In what ways does economic recession influence funding of public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?
2. How does economic recession influence continuous personnel development in public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?
3. In what ways does economic recession influence the provision and maintenance of school plant in public Colleges of education in North Central Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

Ho1: Economic recession does not significantly influence funding of public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Ho2: Economic recession has no significant influence on continuous staff development in public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Ho3: There is no significant influence of economic recession on the provision and maintenance of school plant in public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Methodology

The design adopted for this study was descriptive survey design. A descriptive survey research design deals with data collection from a large population by drawing a representative sample of such population for the purpose of describing, interpreting, evaluating and analyzing the existing conditions of variables and prevailing situations through the formulation and testing of relevant hypotheses for drawing inferences (Shields, 2013). The area of the study was North Central Nigeria. This zone comprises Benue, Kogi, Nasarawa, Niger, Kwara, Plateau states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja. Geographically, the North Central Nigeria is situated in the middle belt region of Nigeria, spanning from the west around the confluence of Rivers Niger and Benue. The region itself is rich in alluvial soil and other natural features that boost the Nigerian exciting scenery. The region is mostly agrarian in nature. The zone has nine (9) federal Colleges of Education and seven (7) state Colleges of Education. The population of the study is made up of 10,176 academic and non-academic staff of colleges of education in North Central Nigeria. The population of academic and non-academic staff is distributed as follows: Federal Colleges of Education =5,723; State Colleges of Education=4,453. The sample for this study is 1,017 respondents (10%) of the population of 10,176 staff from the Colleges of Education in the North Central Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was adopted to administer the instrument on the

desired number of respondents from the public Colleges of Education. After deciding the desired number of respondents per school, the research assistants and the researchers visited each public College of Education and embarked on simple random sampling where the instrument was administered on the sample size determined for each institution. A structured questionnaire developed by the researchers titled “Economic Recession and Colleges of Education Management Questionnaire”, (ERCEMQ) was used for data collection. The questionnaire consists of three (3) clusters named Section I to III. Each cluster has five (5) items totaling fifteen (15) items. Section I contains items concerned with the influence of economic recession on funding of Colleges of Education in the North Central Nigeria; Section II elicits information on the influence of economic recession on continuous personnel development in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria; and Section III contains items concerned with determining the influence of economic recession on provision and maintenance of school plant in Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. A four point modified rating scale was used to establish the disparity in the respondents' opinions. Thus, Strongly Agree (SA)=4; Agree (A)=3; Disagree (D)=2; Strongly Disagree (SD)=1 were used by respondents to respond to each item in each cluster. A total of 1, 017 copies of the instruments were administered on the respondents by the researchers.

The descriptive statistics of Mean Score and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions. A cut-off point of 2.50 was used for decision making. A Mean Score of 2.50 and above was accepted as having influence while a Mean Score of less than 2.50 was not accepted as having influence. The Boundary for Decision Making with respect to positive items was 1.00-1.49=SD; 1.50-2.49=D; 2.50-3.49=A; 3.50-4.00=SA while the reverse was the case for negative items. Chi-Square statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: In what ways does economic recession influence funding of public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?

Data collected and analyzed with respect to the above research question is presented on table 1.

Table 1: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of the Influence of Economic recession on the Funding of Public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria

S/N	Item Description	N	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1	Owing to economic recession there has been reduced funding of the public College of Education where I work.	1,017	601	347	21	98	3.34	.86	Agree
2	Economic recession has reduced the procurement of instructional materials for use in the public College of Education where I work.	1,017	631	343	16	27	3.52	.72	Agree
3	Economic recession has facilitated regular servicing and maintenance of laboratory and office equipment in the public College of Education where I serve.	1,017	17	12	391	597	1.45	.63	Disagree
4	Economic recession has reduced the procurement of official vehicles in the public College of Education that I work.	1,017	642	285	36	54	3.69	.82	Agree
5	Economic recession has increased the furnishing of staff offices in the public Colleges of Education where I work.	1,017	12	04	602	397	3.19	.83	Agree
Cluster							3.01	0.78	Agree

As shown on Table 1, items 1, 2, 4 and 5 have mean scores above 2.50. This indicates that the respondents agreed with those items. It is only item 3 that has mean score below 2.50 indicating that respondents disagreed with the item. The cluster mean score is 3.01. The implication of this result is that economic recession has influence on funding of public Colleges of Education.

Ho1: Economic recession does not significantly influence funding of public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Table 2: Chi-Square Analysis on the Influence of Economic Recession on Funding of Public Colleges of Education in the North Central Nigeria

Opinions	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Level of Sig.	df	χ^2 -cal	P-value	Decision
SD	04	254.25	-115.3	.05	3	113.42	.00	Ho rejected
D	08	254.25	-153.7					
A	492	254.25	92.7					
SA	537	254.25	17.3					

(P-value=0.00; P=0.00<0.05; Ho rejected).

Table 4 shows Chi-square (χ^2) value of 113.42 at 3df, P<0.05 and Ho rejected. This result reveals that the null hypothesis which states that economic recession has no significant influence on funding of public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria was rejected. This implies that there is significant influence of economic recession on funding of public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Research Question 2: How does economic recession influence continuous personnel development in public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation on the Influence of Economic Recession on Continuous Personnel Development in Public Colleges of Education

S/N	Item Description	N	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
6	Economic recession has intensified the organization of workshops and seminars in the public College of Education where I work.	1,017	69	42	106	800	1.94	.92	Disagree
7	The public College of Education where I am working has been able to send staff on in-service training courses.	1,017	62	44	119	792	3.86	.91	Agree
8	As a consequence of the economic recession, staff in the public College of Education where I am working are barred from proceeding on study leave.	1,017	631	311	04	71	3.62	.73	Agree
9	As a result of the economic recession, the public College of Education where I work is able to organize refresher courses of staff.	1,017	42	12	179	784	2.42	.99	Disagree.
10	Economic recession has made the public College of Education where I am working incapable of training staff to be ICT-complaint	1,017	463	428	28	98	3.38	1.02	Agree.
							3.04	0.82	Agree

As shown on Table 3, items 7, 8 and 10 had mean scores above 2.50 while items 6 and 9 had mean scores below 2.50. The cluster mean score was 3.08. The implication of this result is that economic recession has influence on continuous personnel development in public Colleges of Education in the areas covered by questions in the cluster.

Ho2: Economic recession has no significant influence on continuous staff development in public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Table 4: Chi-Square Analysis on the Influence of Economic Recession on Continuous Personnel Development in Public Colleges of Education in the North Central Nigeria

Opinions	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Level of Sig.	df	χ^2 -cal	P-value	Decision
SD	20	254.25	- 215.7	.05	3	210.62	.00	Ho rejected
D	318	254.25	- 112.3					
A	492	254.25	42.7					
SA	537	254.25	67.3					

(P-value=0.00; P=0.00<0.05; Ho rejected).

Table 4 shows Chi-square (χ^2) value of 210.62 at 3df, P<0.05 and Ho rejected. This result reveals that the null hypothesis which states that economic recession has no significant influence on continuous personnel development in public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria was rejected. This implies that there is significant influence of economic recession on continuous personnel development in public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Research Question 3: In what ways does economic recession influence the provision and maintenance of school plant in public Colleges of education in North Central Nigeria?

Data with respect to the above research question is presented on Table 5.

Table 5: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation on the Influence of Economic Recession on Provision and Maintenance of School Plant in Public Colleges of Education

S/N	Item Description	N	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
11	The public College of Education where I work has been unable to construct new staff offices due to economic recession.	1,017	444	429	11	133	3.62	.93	Agree
12	In the public College of Education where I am serving, dilapidating structures are regularly repaired even in economic recession.	1,017	39	81	192	705	1.49	1.82	Disagree
13	Economic recession has increased the construction of new classrooms in the public College of Education where I am working.	1,017	12	54	234	717	1.11	.94	Disagree.
14	Library facilities are not adequately procured in the public College of Education I work due to economic recession.	1,017	739	228	12	58	3.75	.61	Agree
15	There is shortage of basic amenities like electricity and pipe-borne water among others caused by economic recession in the public College of Education where I am working.	1,017	498	376	12	131	2.09	1.02	Disagree.
Cluster							2.41	0.75	Agree

The results on Table 5 show that respondents agreed with items 11 and 15 and disagreed with the other items (which are negatively framed). The cluster Mean Score is 2.41. The implication of this finding is that economic recession has influence on provision and maintenance of school plant in Colleges of Education on areas covered by the cluster. This conclusion is so because all the negatively framed items were rejected, indicating negative influence of economic recession.

Ho3: There is no significant influence of economic recession on the provision and maintenance of school plant in public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Table 6: Chi-Square Analysis on the Influence of Economic Recession on Provision and Maintenance of School Plant in Public Colleges of Education in the North Central Nigeria

Opinions	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Level of Sig.	df	χ^2 -cal	P-value	Decision
SD	20	254.25	-238.7	.05	3	23.72	.00	Ho rejected
D	318	254.25	-353.3					
A	492	254.25	92.7					
SA	537	254.25	128.3					

(P-value=0.00; P=0.00<0.05; Ho rejected).

Table 6 shows Chi-square (χ^2) value of 23.72 at 3df, $P < 0.05$ and H_0 rejected. This result reveals that the null hypothesis which states that economic recession has no significant influence on provision and maintenance of school plant in public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria was rejected. This implies that there is significant influence of economic recession on provision and maintenance of school plant in public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Discussion of the findings

The first finding of this study was that economic recession has significant influence on funding of public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. This implies that economic recession has negatively influenced funding of public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. This result agrees with some of Ogbonnaya's (2012) earlier findings alluding to deterioration of physical facilities; internal and external brain drain among the intellectual class; and overstretching of teaching, research and managerial capacities in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

The second finding was that economic recession significantly influenced continuous staff development in public Colleges of Education in the North Central Nigeria. The implication of this finding is that economic recession negatively influenced the management of public Colleges of Education in the area of continuous staff development. The findings agree with a study by Gardwyl (2012) who found out that the economy to a large extent, determines staff engagement and retention in non-degree institutions. This implies that the weaker the economy, the weaker the ability of management of higher institutions to hire more staff and the vice versa.

The last finding of this research revealed that economic recession has significant influence on the provision and maintenance of school plant in public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria. This is as all the negatively framed items were rejected by the respondents. The implication of this finding is that economic recession gave rise to a deplorable state of school plant in public Colleges of Education with severe consequences on the management of such public Colleges of Education. The findings of this study agree with Okpo (2018) who found out that most noticeable at the undergraduate level, where class sizes may already have run up against the space constraints set by the size of the campus' largest lecture theatres, there is increasingly crowded lecture halls in non-degree awarding institutions like Polytechnics and Colleges of Education.

Conclusion

This study found that economic recession has influence on the management of Colleges of Education in areas like funding, continuous personnel development and the provision and maintenance of school plant. The study therefore concludes that the variables of management (such as funding, continuous personnel development, provision and

maintenance of school plant) which are found to be influenced by the indices of economic recession investigated in this study have significant influence on the management of public Colleges of Education in North Central Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers recommend that:

1. The government should ensure equal allocation of funds for smooth running of the public Colleges of Education in areas like execution of projects and provision of instructional materials among others. This can be done through sourcing for donor agencies as well as prudent utilization and disbursement and monitoring of national finances made available to the public universities.

2. The management of public Colleges of Education should devise alternative ways of raising funds for continuous personnel development in the face of economic recession. This can be done through re-investment of internally generated revenue in areas of agricultural business as well as engagement in other economy-boosting ventures like college presses, production of cosmetics and textile materials from related departments as well as engaging in agricultural activities.

3. The Colleges of Education Management and the government should ensure that issues pertaining to the provision and maintenance of school plant are treated with dispatch and utmost importance. Funds can be raised through donor agents, long-term and low-interest borrowing and raising the internally generated revenue to provide and maintain school plant in Colleges of Education.

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