



Research Article

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Perceived Electricity Supply Prices for Political Socialization in Education: University Functionality in Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined electricity supply prices for political socialization in education and its implications for functionality in university education in Cross River State, Nigeria. The study was a descriptive survey research. The population included 942 head of departments in the two public universities located in Cross River State, Nigeria. Stratified sampling technique was used to select 250 respondents from the universities studied. The instrument designated 'Electricity Prices For Political Socialization Questionnaire (EPFSPQ)' was designed to collect data for the study. The instrument was validated and had a reliability co-efficient of 0.853. The data collected were analyzed using frequency counts and percentage score. The study revealed that electricity supply prices, through management techniques of cost effectiveness, cost efficiency, access to and control of education moderately empowered the university system for political socialization. Electricity prices showed inadequate contributions with weak impact on benefit-related factors for political socialization. Government did not provide support in electricity price reduction though encouraged investment in electricity supply through Power Holding Company Ltd (PHCN). It was concluded that the perception of electricity supply prices could guarantee political socialization towards functionality in university education. Some of the recommendations made were: universities should give attention to electricity supply prices for political socialization. Government should see electricity supply prices and political socialization as a sine-qua-non for functionality in university education.

Keywords: Functionality, university, electricity, political, socialization

1. Introduction

The Nigeria political economy model for education funding involves the political, economic and social structure to interact interdependently with values and belief of the people. The economic factors which provide the axis for interaction, also determine the contents within which institutions carryout their activities (Ekanem, 2016). This made the university education subsector of education to be subject to the influence of the society especially to the economic structure of electricity prices which determine the activities and funding of the components substructure of universities. This tend to strengthen university education not only as a systematic socialization of younger members of the

society into learning but also, as a tool for political class in order to enhance legitimacy and control of government and the administration. Based on this background, the researcher sets out to investigate whether electricity prices can empower political socialization in education and its implications for functionality in university education in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Education is an agent of change in that it presents a solid vehicle for the transformation and empowerment of individual and the society. It seeks to provide the labour force with skills required for sound social living, be it formal or informal. Education at macro level becomes a source for strong and sustainable economic growth due to its productive and skilled labour. At the micro level, it is strongly correlated to higher income generating opportunities and more informed existence. Emerging globalization offers immense opportunities and challenges in competitive environment to benefit individuals and nations with acquired knowledge-based and skills (UNDP, 2015). Therefore, particular attention should be given to political issues in university education such as political selection, fiscal support and equality of opportunity.

2. Literature Review

The economic and socio-cultural growths have been under pursuit through the application of products from investment on university education by every successive government in Nigeria. According to Ekanem (2019), the huge problem inherent in education at this level tends to include the low quality of education due to the social and political conditions in universities. This made government to move policies to policies in education especially during the later part of the 20th century. The political system which tend to influence the education system over long time, may also control socio-economic destiny of the nation. The political culture, ideas and structures achieved through education, affect the educational policy which is derived from overall national goals (Thompson, 2014). Hence, the policy pushed up and down in Nigeria to provide quality educational opportunities to fulfill constitutional demand and avoid denying the rights of desirable citizen's education. Government involvement in electricity prices in universities may help to achieve quality education for socio-economic and political development.

University education does not only provide the means of transmission of beliefs, values and culture of the society but also, the method of socio-political system and controlled socialization in various fields of endeavours. Political socialization in this study means the process of induction into political culture in terms of set of attitudes and roles. In Okunamiri (2015), political socialization include knowledge of values towards inputs of demands, claim into the system and its authoritative output. The expectation has been that opportunity should be offered to university learners in intellectual basis for positions and organizational ideas. This can nurture the elites, enhance nation building and effective political, economic and social communication. University education seems to be the most important means of selecting the ruling class and an appendage of positive fundamental agent. The question is; are the learners really receiving the functional education as expected? Effective electricity prices in university education towards political socialization may be the basis for functionality in university education.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) is focused with the aim of determining the extent to which electricity prices (inputs) in university education have been recognized as a tool for effecting changes in political role of nation building. Electricity supply prices in this study is the amount of money required as payment for electric power consumed. It is an economic force of emancipation to settle obligation (Ibento, 2015). This may include the amount spent on plant generating electricity internally and the national grid through Power Holding Company Nigeria Ltd (PHCN). Therefore, electricity pricing is viewed as the process whereby the university or PHCN set the electricity prices. University management requires a dynamic pricing in order to determine the method and contributions to value of electricity supply. Price of inputs was not well managed not only as a vital element in an institution, but also as a potent factor that contributes to the percentage of Gross National Product (GNP) on the magnitude of the nation's investment in education (Psachoropoulos,

1985). In Ekanem (2016), Keynesian macroeconomics considers both consumption and investment expenditure as different components of national income incurred by different economic units. Nevertheless, electricity prices in university education emphasize that schooling is a process involving inputs from larger environment, and that the process takes place in a social system. Universities should effectively manage electricity supply prices for desirable benefit-related factors in the education system.

Price measurement of inputs is usually carried out based on present value in order to determine the actual cost. High and low prices of electricity supply depend on value and state of the electricity. This means that, adjustment could be effected based on depletion, appreciation and utility value. Figure 1 presented a graphical illustration of the adjustment in terms of fall in price of electric power supply due to utility value as it concerns university management.

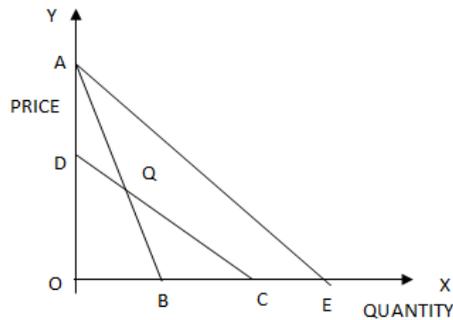


Figure 1: Fall in price of electricity supply due to utility value

Source: Adapted from Izuagba, N. J. 2016. Economics of Education: Expository issues p.163.

The utility value of electric supply x brings a fall in price as shown above. The original price of electricity supply is AB whereas the university preference is Q on the triangle OAB . This means that price falls as a result of utility value over time whereby the consumer feels he is better off at Q . The price line is reduced from AB to DC and Q becomes available to the university as a buyer. The higher demand for the electricity supply will extend OB to OE , then the price line will be drawn from AB to AE .

Electric power supply generally plays a critical role in the university system and it is regarded as a sine-qua-non for development. According to Ekenem (2018), a university as an open system mingled with its environment. It has resources (human and material) and constraints (policies, goals and expectations) which the electricity supply price variations as inputs nurture the education system to enable individuals to gain greater understanding and control. In this study, universities are seen as agents of nationalism with government ensuring equitable legitimate representation of all interest groups in the system. This is because investment in human capital by government is with the hope to increase the productive capacity of human beings and the possibility of receiving higher earnings in the future (Agabi, 2012). The scope of this study is delimited to issues on political socialization in terms of fiscal support, knowledge creation, equality of opportunity, political selection and classification towards functionality in university education.

3. Statement of the Problem

It has become a problem to the learners to receive functional education as expected in Cross River State, Nigeria. The electricity price structure input could not nurture universities for highly qualified graduates with required skills, attitude, knowledge and values. A common observation in university education system was the failure to acquire high level manpower training for sustainable national

development as stated in the National Policy on Education 2013. The question is, can electricity supply price be a mechanism for political socialization in education towards functionality in university education? This is in a sense that no matter how laudable a university programme may be, if the electricity price structure does not favour it, the education programme may not develop as expected. The electricity supply prices seem to be characterized with different challenges of poor management techniques application such as, cost-effectiveness, cost-efficiency, access to and control of university education.

University management lacked information for fiscal sustainability as well as effective financial allocation that could meet the need for synergy of quality and equality of opportunity in the system. The benefit-related factors of political socialization such as political selection and classification, fiscal support and knowledge creation tend to be of no significant motivating impact to boost the system for productive outcome. Also, the poor attitude of government toward electricity supply price fixing tend to discourage knowledge transformation. Hence, poor human and social capital for desirable political socialization in university education. This development is unacceptable in this 21st century of globalization.

Despite several efforts of government in improving quality management through political socialization, the problem still persisted since the depth of input-output function of university electricity prices was critical. The problem of this study therefore, was to determine whether or not the electricity supply prices could boost political socialization in education for functionality in university education if properly managed and implemented.

4. Purpose of the Study

Based on the political influence on university education, this study set out to investigate the perceived electricity supply prices for political socialization so as to improve the future functionality in university education in Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the sought to:

1. Find out effectiveness of electricity supply prices variations on university political socialization;
2. Assess the adequacy of electricity supply prices enabling factors on university political socialization;
3. Ascertain the impact of electricity supply prices benefit-related factors on university political socialization and;
4. Find out government encouragement in fixing electricity supply prices benefit-related factors on university political socialization.

5. Research Questions

In addressing this problem, the following research questions were raised:

1. How effective has electricity supply price variations empowered university political socialization?
2. How adequate does electricity supply price enabling factors contribute to the political socialization in university education?
3. What is the impact of electricity supply prices on system benefit-related factors for university political socialization?
4. How does government encourage fixing of electricity supply prices in order to improve political socialization in university education?

6. Significance of the Study

The significance of this research will be seen as an inspiration for universities to be committed to quality attainment in policy-management among other potential benefits. The government will pay

attention to the extent of its involvement in electricity supply prices in universities. Educational managers, students and parents will equally find the study useful as universities are prime targets of efforts to the production of high manpower in the economy. The study is particularly important to scholars since it examines continual input-output functions and the cyclical nature of events in order to ensure future quality stability (dynamic equilibrium) and functionality in the university education.

7. Methodology

This research adopted a description survey design. The research design was appropriate in that the members of the research population were collected in order to determine the current status of the population with regards to one or more variables. The study areas was Cross River State of Nigeria. It is one of the states in the south-south geo-political zone of the nation. Calabar is the political and economic capital of the state with two universities (federal and state universities) each located therein. Effective management of electricity supply prices may stimulate political socialization in education for functionality in university education in Cross River State, Nigeria. The population of study consisted of 942 head of departments in the two universities studied. A stratified random sampling techniques was used to draw 250 subjects as a sample size.

The respondents responded to the researcher designed questionnaire called 'Electricity Prices For Political Socialization Questionnaire (EPFPSQ)' used to collect data for the study. The instrument contained four sections on the assessment of electricity prices as a mechanism for empowerment, contributions, and impact on political socializations in university education. A section was used to find out the encouragement of government to improve political socialization in university education. The instrument was validated and had reliability coefficient of 0.853. Therefore, the instrument was reliable for the successful realization of the research objectives.

The researcher personally administered copies of the instrument to the sampled universities administrators with the help of two trained research assistance. This ensured 98 per cent returned rate. Frequency counts and percentage score were statistical techniques used to analyze the research questions.

8. Data Analysis and Results

Data emanating from the study were subjected to analysis based on research questions using frequency counts and percentage scores. The results were presented in Table 1 to 4.

8.1 Research question 1: How effective has electricity supply price variations empowered university political socialization?

The data for analyzing this research question were presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Electricity supply price variation as a tool for system building in political socialization. (N=250)

S/N	Electricity price management system techniques	Very		
		Effective	Effective	Ineffective
1.	Cost-effectiveness	20(8%)	135(54%)	95(38%)
2.	Cost-efficiency	43(17%)	145(58%)	62(25%)
3.	Access to education	38(15%)	128(51%)	84(34%)
4.	Control of education	68(27%)	108(43%)	74(30%)

The finding presented in Table 1 showed that majority of respondents rated the four management system techniques as somewhat effective: Cost efficiency (58%), cost-effectiveness (54%), access to education (51%) and control of education (43%) in improving political socialization in their universities. Very few of the respondents rated the techniques as very effective: cost-effectiveness (8%), cost efficiency (17%), access to education (15%), and control of education (27%). Also, techniques rated as ineffective by 38%, 25%, 34% and 30% of the respondents were for cost – effectiveness, cost efficiency, access to education and control of education responsibility. The result raised the curiosity of the researcher in ensuring the functionality in university education in Cross River State, Nigeria.

8.2 *Research question 2: How adequate does electricity supply prices enabling factors contribute to the political socialization in university education?*

Findings with respect to research question 2 were presented in table 2 below;

Table 2: Adequacy of electricity price enabling factors used by the university management in contributing to political socialization in education. (N250)

S/N	Electricity price enabling factors	Very adequate	Somehow adequate	Inadequate
5.	Availability of information in electricity prices	40(16%)	55(22%)	155(72%)
6.	Availability of electricity meters	38(15%)	68(27%)	144(68%)
7.	Availability of funds for electricity cost	28(11%)	80(32%)	142(57%)
8.	Needs of electricity consumers	48(19%)	133(52%)	69(28%)

A critical examination of the finding presented in Table 2 showed that majority of the enabling factors in this study were rated inadequate (>50%), except the needs of electricity consumers was rated somewhat adequate. The fact that the respondents rated them inadequate as taken care of by the universities in the state created attention by the researcher.

8.3 *Research question 3: What is the impact of electricity supply prices on system benefit-related factors for university political socialization?*

The finding of research question 3 was presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Respondents rating of the impact of electricity prices on system benefit-related political socialization. (N250)

S/N	System benefit-related factors	Strong	Moderate	Weak impact
9.	Fiscal support	33(13%)	53(21%)	164(66%)
10.	Political selection and classification	68(27%)	65(26%)	117(47%)
11.	Equality of opportunity	120(48%)	75(30%)	55(22%)
12.	Knowledge creation	100(40%)	105(42%)	45(18%)

The result depicted in Table 3 electricity prices impacted on the system benefit-related factors of equality opportunity (48%) as the highest, knowledge creation (40%) and, political selection and classification (27%); while fiscal support (13%) has the last impact. The findings showed that on the whole, there was a weak impact on electricity prices benefit-related factors for political socialization in university education in Cross River State, Nigeria.

8.4 *Research question 4: How does government encourage fixing of electricity supply prices in order to improve political socialization in university education?*

The results of research question 4 were presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Government effort in fixing electricity prices for improving political socialization in university education. (N250)

S/N	Variation sources	Agree	Disagree	Undecided
13.	Education of university administrators.	68(56%)	150(60%)	32(13%)
14.	Government intervention as a public goods.	140(56%)	60(24%)	50(20%)
15.	Investment in electric power supply.	168(67%)	70(28%)	12(5%)
16.	Funding support for electricity cost.	73(29%)	155(62%)	22(9%)

The result in Table 4 shows that the respondents agree that government intervened on electricity prices as public good (56%) and investment in electric power supply (67%) through electricity prices. However, they disagree that government made significant effort to educate university administrators on electricity prices (60%) and did not support funding for electricity expenditure in universities (62%) in Cross River State, Nigeria.

9. Discussion

The result of the analysis in Table I showed that electricity supply prices could not effectively empower political socialization in university education. The outcome of the result was probably owing to the fact that some of the head of departments in the universities did not have good knowledge of the system's management techniques applied. Also, there was no public awareness on how electric power price variation could enhance achievements of desired educational objectives with minimum application of resources inputs. The desired outcome of the university education was not achieved in an efficient manner given a specified amount of electricity supply input price. This finding was in consonance with Akinyemi (2013) on the analysis of inputs prices of public primary education in Lagos state of Nigeria. In the study, both private and social unit cost escalated every year and could not effectively empower the school systems. The outcome of this study could also be in line with Samuel (2013) which emphasized the principle of fiscal justice. The study explained the reason for the rising cost of education at university education level since it carried large prime benefits of education. The heavy burden of education cost and financing of public university education on government and parents provided an explanation for poor access and control of education towards the non-empowerment of political socialization in university education.

In Table 2 the price enabling factors did not adequately contribute to political socialization.

Information in electricity prices was inadequate to the management due to ignorance on availability of the information or unwillingness of the relevant university officials to access the data. Electricity meters were not adequately made available by the relevant electric power authority. These resulted in unreasonable high electricity charges vis-a-vis estimated bills to the universities. The implication of this was that the PHCN made fortune at the expense of the universities through super-normal profits arising from estimated bills on customers (Simpson, 2005). Funds available to the universities were somewhat adequately appropriated for electricity cost. This was rather unfortunate as the university management could not live up to their expectation. The principle of fiscal sustainability was not effectively observed as universities were not able to manage their finances in order to meet their spending commitment (Ekanem, 2013). The universities accommodated deficits and debits for future and deprived future generation of paying for electric power supply that the current generation benefits from but not paid. This made the university system not viable with a dysfunctional political socialization.

Moreso, the needs of electricity consumers were adjusted as being somewhat adequate. This could be so because the price to be settled by the university management depends on the need of consumers of the electricity. This confirms the report in Oke (2010), that electricity consumers were crucial in boosting organizational culture and offering data; and these depends on electricity specification of needs. Economics of education was not treated as a state of emergency in order to apply distributive rules in allocating electricity funds to consumers for the synergy of quality and equality of opportunity in the university system (Babalola, 2010).

The findings in Table 3 reveals that electricity prices impacted weakly on the benefit-related factors for political socialization in university education. The plausible explanation for this result could be based on the weight of equality of educational opportunity vis-à-vis the attitude and commitment of students to learning with electricity supply. Hence, the highest result of 48% by the respondents on the factors. On the other hand, the gains of electricity power supply prices had no significant motivating impact it supposed to have in the university systems in the state. This was because the findings attested that benefit-related factors such as knowledge creation, fiscal support, and selection/classification would not boost the education system for higher political and productive outcome. In Ekanem and Okon (2015, knowledge production was derived best from enhanced social and education environment. This study confirmed this result since the university system had failed in its cultural role to build national hope and aspiration in Cross River State, Nigeria. The political socialization could not progressively and vigorously keep abreast with the development in the world to boost self images and functioning of universities (Babalola, 2007).

Analysis of research question 4 revealed that government did not encourage university in fixing prices of electricity in order to improve political socialization in university education. However, government encouraged the supply of electricity power on the national grid with investment in electricity generation, transmission and distribution through electricity prices. There was no effort of government to educate the educational administrators and directly fund the electricity supply in the universities. The failure to educate the university administrators could be as a result that government was not in firm control of the need of electricity consumed in the universities. On the other hand, this had a negative implication in that knowledge transformation was lacking to enable the university management effect proper planning and control. This was supported by Obanya (2011) which reported that knowledge from higher education would aid the bench marking areas of investment as a good strategy for national transformation. Therefore, knowledge transformation is needed to promote political socialization as well as functionality in university education.

Moreso, the respondents disagreed with government direct support for electricity cost in universities. The implication of this was that there was lack of public expenditure without the possibility to increase human and social capital. The national values and nationalism in current political structures were not embraced by the university curriculum (Bullivant, 1981). This gave rise to the struggles among contending social forces of those who could change the system for political socialization and preserved the status quo to guarantee functionality in university education.

10. Educational Management Implications for Functionality in University Education

1. The electricity supply prices could not empower the political socialization effectively. The educational managers should engage in policies that support multiple learning including costing of electricity price inputs in the university system. This will improve on Human Development Index (HDI), Knowledge Economy Index (KEI) and drive political socialization in university education in Cross River State, Nigeria.
2. The price enabling factors did not adequately contribute to the political socialization in university education. Universities should consciously provide and disseminate information on electricity supply prices in order to derive the expected synergy between learning and doing. This will help fiscal sustainability devoid of deficits accommodation on electricity supply for productive and social living in the universities.
3. Electricity prices impacted weakly on the benefit-related factors for political socialization in university education. The university managers should promote opportunities to technically and ethically sustain the social structure and values in knowledge production, selection/classification, fiscal support and equality of opportunity that justify university objectives. This makes university education to function as an instrument of integration since the educational output will be critical with reality, and discover how to transform their world.
4. Government should establish legitimacy and sustainability of social environment for electricity prices in universities. This will make government to bring to bear new ideas in surmounting issues concerning political socialization and functionality in university education.

11. Conclusion

The study investigated perceived electricity supply prices for political socialization and its implications for functionality in university education in Cross River State, Nigeria. Results revealed that electricity supply prices moderately empowered university system for political socialization. Electricity prices inadequately contributed to university political socialization and revealed weak impact on some selected system benefit-related factors such as knowledge creation, selection/classification, fiscal support and equality of opportunity in university education. Government at the state and federal levels had not supported electricity price reduction in the universities; though intervened in electricity investment through PHCN. Therefore, this study has been able to establish that there was a wide gap between knowledge transformation and functionality in university education due to dysfunctional political socialization in university system in Cross River State, Nigeria. Effective management of electricity price structure is desirable as input in the university system to gain quality knowledge production under an acceptable cyclical political condition of events for the achievement of objectives. Electric power supply being crucial as an inexorable system catalyst, could boost every level of activities in the university system for socio-economic development.

12. Limitations of the Study

This research made use of 250 subjects as sample size which limits generalizations to the entire population. Therefore, a broader study is required to validate the results of this study. Only one state in Nigeria was covered with limited assessment of electricity prices for empowerment, contribution and impact on university political socialization. This calls for future researches to integrate more variables. Also, the dearth of empirical literature narrowed theoretical base and opened up further gaps in the area.

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