

## Quality Education And The Attainment of The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) In Nigeria: A Case For Quality Teachers

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### Abstract

This paper adopts a theoretical approach in determining the way forward for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the Nigerian nation in 2015 as agreed by all 147 Heads of State during the September 2000 United Nations Millennium summit. Hence the paper adopts a pragmatic and holistic perspective in the achievement of MDGs following a deliberate and structural change in corporate governance of the country's educational system. To this end, the paper holds that quality education provided by government through the use of quality teachers will constitute a channel or panacea to the attainment of the MDS by the Nigerian nation. A conceptual framework of what is quality and who is a teacher was clearly presented. The paper further highlighted some of the challenges faced in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, as well as, the factors affecting quality teaching and teachers in Nigerian school system at all levels. It was thus suggested that both government and private sector, including NGOs, must continue in the crusade and creating awareness on the attainment of the MDGs, bilateral aid and support should be made available to developing nations for rapid achievement of MDGs, global political support and strong partnership for sustainable development and attainment of MDGs in 2015 should be sustained, as well as ensuring that only teachers (or lecturers) that are adequately qualified academically and practically are recruited to teach courses in schools at all levels.

**Keywords:** Millennium Development Goals; Quality Teachers; Quality Education; UPE; Gender Quality.

### Introduction

To begin this paper, we wish to bring to the foresight the words of the immediate past president of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. He optimistically made the following re-assuring comments, "I see hope for Nigeria when people are truthful, hard working and fair. It is true that everything is not perfect, people still cheat, steal and bribe but Nigeria will be better if many people shun these vices". I see hope in the strength of the Nigeria economy to combat poverty, disease and unemployment. I see hope in the compulsory and free education, what can we do without education? Nothing, I see hope when Nigerians say No to coups and defend democracy. Where there is unity, equity and justice, where people are not lazy and corrupt but where hard work, honesty, goodness are rewarded and praised." If these idealistic words of our president are followed, then the MDGs are attainable by 2015. (Obasanjo, 2002).

The millennium development goals (MDGs) are global inevitable eight goals to be accomplished by 2015 by all Nations in response to the world's main development challenges. These MDGs are fallout from the actions contained in the millennium declaration adopted by 180 Nations and endorsed by 147 heads of State Government during the September 2000 UN Millennium summit. So far, significant advances have been recorded in so many countries together with important setbacks especially with developing countries and more particularly with under-developed countries. Though every region has its attendant challenges but there is the opportunity to put concerted efforts in order to achieve the MDGs. These concerted and deliberate efforts centre on global political support, strong partnerships and coordinated efforts.

The primary objective of this paper therefore is to make a case and argue that quality education and provision of quality teachers (lecturers) is a vital key to the attainment of the MDGs. Without provision of adequate educational facilities and programmes, the MDGs may not be achieved even beyond 2015. The seeming successes achieved by the Asians are as a result of deliberate policy framework, planning, and huge resource investment in their educational systems. Nigeria must do the same to achieve such remarkable progress. This must be done by deliberate restructuring of the general educational framework and a sense of responsibility by federal, state, and local government. To achieve this objective this paper will give a meaning to concept of quality, quality education, and who a teacher is. It will also review the challenges and prospects of achieving the MDGs, and make necessary recommendations.

## **MDGS In Nigeria: Current Progress**

### **Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger**

Recent economic growth, particularly in agriculture, has markedly reduced the proportion of underweight children, from 35.7% in 1990 to 23.1% in 2008. However growth has not generated enough jobs and its effect on poverty is not yet clear. The available data and the current policy environment suggest that the target will be difficult to meet. Growth needs to be more equitable and broad-based. Developing agriculture and creating jobs will require the public sector to create an enabling environment for business, including building critical infrastructure, making regulatory services transparent and providing sustainable access to enterprise finance.

### **Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education**

In a major step forward, nearly nine out of ten children, 88.8%, are now enrolled in school. Nevertheless, regional differences are stark. State primary completion rates range from 2% to 99%. In particular, progress needs to be accelerated in the northern part of the country if the target is to be met. Low completion rates reflect poor learning environments and point to the urgent need to raise teaching standards. The rapid improvement in youth literacy, from 64.1% to 80% between 2000 and 2008, appears to have reached a Plateau. The Universal Basic Education Scheme is a promising initiative that needs to be reformed and strengthened. The Federal Teachers' Scheme and in-service training by the National Teachers' Institute have begun to address the urgent need to improve the quality of teaching.

### **Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women**

A gradual improvement in the proportion of girls enrolled in primary school, though noteworthy, is not yet enough to meet the target. There are still fewer girls than boys in school. There are signs of backsliding in the number of girls in tertiary education. Measures to encourage girls to attend school, particularly by addressing cultural barriers in the north of the country, and to provide the economic incentives for boys to attend school in the south-east, are urgently required. Although few women currently hold political office, the new policy framework is encouraging. However, gradual gains in parliamentary representation for women have been greatly expanded in the last election.

### **Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality**

Progress in reducing child mortality has been rapid. With sustained effort and improvement in related and lagging sectors, such as water and sanitation, there is a strong possibility of achieving Goal 4 by 2015. Under-five mortality has fallen by over a fifth in five years, from 201 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2003, to 157 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2008. In the same period, the infant mortality rate fell even faster, from 100 to 75 deaths per 1,000 live births. Recent interventions-including Integrated Management of Childhood illness- that reflect the underlying causes of child deaths, have contributed to these successes. However, these need to be rapidly expanded and accelerated if Nigeria is to achieve Goal 4. Access to primary health care needs to be improved by more investment in infrastructure, human resources, equipment and consumables, and better management.

### **Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health**

Recent progress towards this Goal is promising and, if the latest improvements can be sustained at the same rate, Nigeria will reach the target by 2015. Maternal mortality fell by 32%, from 800 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2003 (at the time one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world) to 545 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2008. However, the proportion of births attended by a skilled health worker has remained low and threatens to hold back further progress. Government commitment is not in doubt. An Innovative Midwives Service Scheme is expected to contribute substantially to ongoing shortfalls but its impact has yet to be reflected in the data. If the scheme is expanded in proportion to the national gap in the number of midwives, this will further accelerate progress.

### **Goal 6: Combat HIV-AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases**

Nigeria has had striking success in almost eradicating polio, reducing the number of cases by 90% between 2009 and 2010. Another marked success was the fall in the prevalence of HIV among young pregnant women aged 15-24 from 5.8% in 2001 to 4.2% in 2008. Thus, nationally, Nigeria has already achieved this target. However, some states still have high prevalence rates that require urgent policy attention. Successes have been buoyed by better awareness and use of contraceptives. There has been a sharp decrease in malaria prevalence rates. Nationwide distribution of 72million long-lasting insecticide-treated bed nets, although only in its initial stages, protected twice as many children (0.9% in 2009, compared to 2008 95.5%). Similar progress has been made with tuberculosis. With sustained attention, tuberculosis is expected to be a limited public health burden by 2015. To consolidate and extend progress on Goal 6, challenges that need to be addressed include improving

knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS, improving access to antiretroviral therapies, and effective implementation of the national strategic frameworks for HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis control.

#### **Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability**

Nigeria's natural resources, some of its most valuable national assets, are still seriously threatened. For example, between 2000 and 2010 the area of forest shrank by a third, from 14.4% to 9.9% of the land area. Similarly, access to safe water and sanitation is a serious challenge for Nigeria. Little progress was made up to 2005 but improvements since then have brought the proportion of the population accessing safe water to 58.9% and the proportion accessing improved sanitation to 51.6%. The major challenge lies in translating substantial public investments in water into effective access. This requires more involvement by committees to identify local needs, and better planning to deliver holistic and sustainable solutions. In sanitation, efforts are falling short of the target. Rural-urban migration will add to the pressure on sanitation infrastructure throughout the country. It is doubtful that town planning authorities have made adequate preparations for sustainable housing and sanitation.

#### **Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development**

Debt relief negotiated by Nigeria in 2005 provided new opportunities for investment in the social sector. Debt servicing fell from 15.2% of exports in 2005 to 0.5% in 2008. To build on these positive developments there is a need to take action to forestall a relapse into unsustainable levels of debt that could prevent the country from achieving the MDGs. The outlook for the broader partnership for development is not as bright. Trade agreements continue to be inequitable and constrain exports and economic growth. Development assistance has grown although, when debt relief is excluded, it is still very low on a per capita basis. Improving the quality of human and capital resources available is critical to attracting the foreign direct investment that is needed to contribute to development. As a result of the deregulation of the telecommunications sector in 2001, the proportion of the population with access to mobile telephones increased from 2% to 42% between 2000 and 2008. However, this has yet to bridge the digital divide and only 15.8% of the population currently has access to the internet.

#### **Limitations to the Realization of MDGs In Nigeria.**

The present day statistics on the achievement of MDGs in Nigeria is worrisome; all these are traceable to the following:

1. **Political Instability:** Nigerian politics/democracy is still not very certain following the trend of events. The current devastating effects of Boko Haram in the North and the in-fighting's of political parties, Nigeria is just attaining fourteen (14) years of democracy since independence.
2. **Corruption and Bad Leadership:** The leaders piloting the economy are corrupt to an unbearable level. Nigeria has leaders who do not concern themselves with meaningful development but concern themselves on how to loot the treasury to the detriment of the nation. Embezzlement has become the order of the day. The economic and financial crimes commissions(EFCC) and the independent corrupt practice commission(ICPC) are themselves saddled with corrupt officials, judges, and a judicial system that does not easily dispense justice on the corrupt rich and powerful.
3. **Economic Depression:** What we here on the print and electronic media, is how the economy is experiencing a great depression, the prices of things rising by the day and making the common man helpless. This in turns make many engage in nefarious and degrading acts of indiscipline, stealing and prostitution. Hence there is an increase in poverty and sexually transmitted diseases.
4. **Ethnicity/Religion:** Ethnic dichotomy is another problem we need to put behind us. People are still glued to tribal interest above national interest. This has also led to poor information dissemination concerning the use of contraceptives because of religious beliefs.
5. **Poor Policy Implementation:** Nigeria is excellent at policy formulation and absolutely poor in implementation. How many reforms policies have we seen, but fizzles into thin air due to complacency of our leaders. Policies do not stand the test of time.
6. **Loss of Moral Values:** People no longer uphold the tenets of moral values. We live in a country where evil is not punished and good never rewarded. This is evident because the elites who should actually lead by example become the very culprits of lying and the perpetration of immoral values.
7. **Poverty/Unemployment:** Poverty and the rising level of unemployment are two major challenges plaguing the country in achieving the millennium development goals (MDGs) says government report, 2008. Imagine the countless thousands of young graduates from higher institutions without a corresponding provision of job opportunities/ graduates roam the streets in search of jobs so as to make a living.

### Quality Conceptualized

The word “quality” has been derived from the Latin word *quails*, meaning, “what kind of”. With a wide variety of meanings and connotations attached to it, quality is a difficult and elusive term to define, having thus been referred to as a “slippery concept” (Pfeffer and Coote, 1991). It is slippery because it has a wide variety of meanings. The word implies different things to different people. It has, thus, been defined with different perspectives and orientations, according to the PERSON, the measures applied and the context within which it is considered. Amid the wide gamut of such definitions, there seems to be no consensus definition-but they all deal either with the product/services or the service producing these product/services. From the perspective of the consumer or users, the product or service-based definition is more useful. From the perspective of the organization providing goods/services, which is a perspective relevant to TQM, the process-perspective is more useful.

Quality can be viewed as exceptional, as perfection (or consistency), as fitness for purpose, as value for money and as transformative:

- (1) Quality in education can be viewed, first, as “exceptional”, with three notions in terms of “being distinctive, as exceeding very high standards and as passing a set of required standards”, with each of these being subject to debate.
- (2) A second approach to quality of education, views it in terms of, “consistency”, especially of the processes involved through specifications, to be achieved through a ‘zero defects approach and a quality culture’. But the very basis poses limitations and may be questioned with regard to whether there is a consistent conformity or standards in education (Harvey and Knight, 1996), especially given the fact that such standards of conformance are achieved by the students.
- (3) A third approach to quality views quality, in relation to the “purpose of the product/services” (Crawford, 1991), which again, raises three issues – “fitting the customer specifications, mission-based fitness for purpose and customer satisfaction”, each being subject to debate.
- (4) The fourth approach to quality views it as, “value for money through efficiency and effectiveness” (Schrock and Lefevre, 1988), clearly linked to accountability and with emphasis on performance indicators, but, here again, this very emphasis on performance indicators is debatable.
- (5) The final approach, which views quality as, “transformative”, in terms of a qualitative change or form, to include cognitive transcendence, wherein education is believed to be an ongoing process of transformation that includes empowerment and enhancement of the customer.

Harvey and Knight (1996) conclude that, while it is not suggested that these five definitions of quality are in any sense mutually exclusive, transformation is a meta-quality concept and the other aspects of quality are possible operationalizations of the transformative process rather than ends in themselves.

Green (1994), refers to quality as “an elusive” concept difficult to articulate. While it is subjectively associated with something that is good and worthwhile, it involves differing concepts and approaches, which will be discussed as follows: The traditional concept, deals with quality, as providing a product/service that is “distinctive” and special, conferring status on the owner/user/. However, as Green (1994) points out, this is not of much value when it comes to quality in higher education as a whole, Quality is “conformance to specification or standards”. Green (1994) points out that, while this approach gives all institutions an opportunity to aspire to quality, with different standards being set for different types of institutions, it sets no basis/criteria to be used to set the standards. It is called a “static model”, as it implies no reconsideration of specifications once they have been defined. Further, with a heavy emphasis on measurable and quantifiable standards, this approach may not be amenable for institutions of higher education. The term “standard”, may also cause confusion in terms of higher education.

Given the varied approaches, Green (1994), points out that it is not possible to deal with quality as a unitary concept, and the best that can be achieved is to define clearly the criteria that each stakeholder uses when judging quality and to take into account the competing views when assessment of quality is undertaken.

Mortimore and Stone (1990), drew attention to the “normative and comparative” element inherent in quality, emphasizing quality in education as “an attribute or defining essence; a degree of relative worth; a description of something good or excellent; and a non-qualified trait”.

Legerweij and Voogr (1990), lay emphasis on the dynamism of quality and conclude that while the concept of quality in education cannot be easily defined in a clear and exact manner, any definition of quality should be expected to change over time, because “it necessarily reflects a society’s interpretation of educational needs and the intensity of its moral and financial commitment to fulfilling them”.

Barnett (1992), lays emphasis on the need for a clear understanding of what might be included under the umbrella concept of higher education, so as to have a conceptual clarity, especially in light of a number of differing and contrasting conceptions of higher education that give varying approaches to the definition of quality. Given this premise, he offers “objectivist, relativist and developmental”, concepts of quality. While the objectivist conception of quality, emphasizes that it is possible to identify and quantify certain aspects of higher education that can be universal to all lays emphasis on public policy and theoretical backing.

“Quality of education”, has also been defined in a contextual manner, taking into account the external environment in which schools are operating; the internal environment in which the teaching-learning process takes place and the home environment of the learners (Govinda and Varghese 1992).

West-Burnham (1992), refers to the issue of “quality in education”, as a perennial one, that he feels is incapable of a solution as far as a definition is concerned, with the definition being that of the customer and not that of the supplier through meeting started needs, requirements and standards.

According to Harris (1994), there are three generic approaches to quality: first, customer focus approach, where the idea of service to students is fostered through staff focus approach, the second is concerned with value and it enhances the contribution of all the members of staff to the effectiveness of the school; and the third, that takes a service agreement focus and seeks to ensure conformity to specification at certain key measurable points of the educational process.

The dynamic and interactive aspects of quality in education are highlighted by Dahlgaard, Kristenseni and Kenji (1995), who defined total quality education as an educational culture characterized by increased customer satisfaction through continuous improvement in which all employees and students actively participate. While attempting to amalgamate ideas from TQM (Tenner and Detoro, 1992), with a systems approach, Cheng (1996), defines education quality as the character of the set of elements in the input, process, and output of the education system that provides services that completely satisfy both internal and external strategic constituencies by meeting their explicit and implicit expectations.

This definition involves the characteristics of input, process, output and multiple constituencies of an education institution. It regards education quality as a multi-dimensional concept that cannot be assessed by only one indicator.

Winch (1996), identifies four approaches to quality which are Total based; Product based; User based, and Value based. Mukhopadhyay (2001), remarks that, depending on the goals, the term “quality in education”, has been defined as excellence in education; value addition in education fitness of educational outcome and experience for use; conformance of education output to planned goals, specifications and requirements; defect avoidance in education process; and meeting or exceeding customer’s expectations of education.

Thus, we can conclude that quality in education is a multiple concept which does not have a single generally acceptable or universal definition. Sahney et al (2002), conclude and define total quality in education as multi-faceted. It believes in the foundation of an educational institution on a systems approach, implying a management system, a technical system and a social system, all based on principles of quality, to be implemented throughout. It aims at satisfying the needs of the various stakeholders, through the design of a system based on certain principles and practices. It includes within its ambit the quality of inputs in the form of students, faculty, support staff and infrastructure; the quality of processes in the form of the learning and teaching activity; and the quality of outputs in the form of the enlightened students that move out of the system. In fact, it is all permeating, covering the different aspects of academic life.

### **Education And Attainment Of MDGS**

Any Nation that does not place premium in its educational system, does so at its own detriment. It is quite unfortunate to note that many of our leaders both past and present do not regard education as a vital sector that needs revampment. This is obvious looking at the educational budgets from when Nigeria got her independence. Statistics clearly depict a down ward movement in the budget. This ought not to be. Education constitute bedrock to any meaningful developmental stride in a polity. In fact, our leaders are cheap educated illiterates. By this it infers that the school did not go through them but they went through school. It is good to bring to the front burner in this time of our history the importance of education on the minds of the people. Education is not just the exposition to formal training but what actually distinguishes men from other animals. Education is the sum total of all human experiences through the acquisition of knowledge. Education enlightens man’s intellect and strengthens the will power of people.

Therefore, if any system desires to make a positive and lasting legacy, it must give a dogged regard to education, which forms a tool in the attainment of MDGs. Education is the process by which a society through schools, colleges, universities, colleges and other institutions deliberately transmits its cultural heritage.

It is therefore worthy to conclude that education is what happens to an individual from birth to death. An educated man leads others to be good citizens, performing justly, skillfully and magnanimously. Also helps to produce sound character and fosters national unity and integration.

### **Concept of Teacher Quality**

Teachers plan a significant role in the economic development of a society by providing necessary skills and competencies to learners through enabling them to partake in notional development (Amoor and Udor 2008; Amoor 2008).

Dasko (2002) defined a teacher as a person that imparts knowledge to people, teach them how to read and write, and explains how problem are solved. A teacher guides the children and advices them about different matters in relation to their studies and life. Furthermore, Dasko (2002) noted that a teacher is sometimes a parent to students who provides for them what they need in class and shows care when the need arises and he possesses the following traits; patience, kindness, loving, caring, honesty down to earth, friendly, calm, alert and smart.

Quinton (2002) opined that a teacher is more than someone who passes on knowledge but also provides the interaction, relationship, understanding and encouragement to enable a person or child to reach the full potential. She explained further that a teacher provides opportunities that allow the learners to learn by themselves because learners do not learn by being told but by finding out for themselves.

Webster (2003) defined a teacher as one that teaches, especially the one whose occupation is to instruct. Amoor (2010) observed that a teacher is a person who teaches, guides, instructs trains or helps another in the process of learning. He explains that a teacher is a key to the learning processes of students in the classroom. He thus conclude that the success of any educational reforms depends largely upon having good quality teacher.

Idialu (2007) described quality as standards of something as compared to other things. That is the degree of goodness or excellence. In his contribution Leigh (2007) said that teacher's quality means the ability of teacher to raise students' performance on tests as well as skills, and also work well with other teachers and school administrators for the purpose of raising the performance of the students.

Based on these definitions, Amoor (2010) summarizes that teacher quality entails effective and excellent teaching that improves students learning and satisfaction. It also ensures that learners posses adequate knowledge, skills and competences that are appropriate for their areas of responsibility that would meet the needs of labour workforce. Continuing, he emphasizes that a quality teacher, means teacher mastering the subject he teaches and how to teach it to the students; understand how students learn and what to do when they are having difficulty; be able to use effective teaching methods for those who are learning easily as well as those who have special needs. Teacher quality is an important determinant of student outcomes.

### **Factors Affecting Teachers' Quality in Education Programme**

The followings are the factors that affect teacher quality in business education programme in Nigerian universities:-

#### **1. Shortage of Teachers**

It is a well known fact that most of the higher institutions that offer business education programme suffer from shortage of teachers (Qiang and Shiyan, 2007). The few teachers available cannot effectively impart the desired knowledge, skills and competences on the students. For example, teachers in business education that are biased in accounting and marketing education teach courses like Executive Office and advanced shorthand transcription in office education. According to Amoor (2009), this is responsible for the university secretarial graduates not having adequate knowledge, skills and competence to meet the standards of labour market. Also, the excessive workload of teaching and supervision of students' projects that rest on the few teachers available reduce their effectiveness in teaching. Qiang and Shiyan (2007) observed that teachers in vocational education are always too busy because they have to teach many students, evaluate and supervise more than ten students. This inevitably affects the quality of teaching in vocational education.

## 2. **Teachers Qualification and Experience**

The educational qualification of teachers and their experience affect teacher quality. Unqualified teachers will not be able to perform effectively. This is the case in most of our universities where part-time teachers are hired instead of full time teachers. Closely related to this is the inexperience of teachers. An inexperienced teacher does not know how to and what to teach. These factors constitute poor teacher quality. In business education, teachers are expected to be well equipped with high level of theory but also a strong operational ability. Therefore, in a situation where a teacher lacks one, it may result to poor teacher quality.

## 3. **Lack of Supervision of Teachers**

There is no structure on ground to adequately monitor or supervise business teachers in Nigerian universities in order to ensure quality teaching. It is observed that once a business teacher is employed, he is assigned courses to teach, and nobody cares to monitor or supervise what he teaches. If such a teacher is inexperienced, and not supervised, the students are at a risk of learning things that may not lead to the desired knowledge, skills and competence (Sahu, Shrivastava, and Shrivestava, 2008).

In another dimension, teachers take up visiting appointments to two or more universities, thereby ignoring their primary assignment where they take up tenure appointment. This can seriously affect teacher quality.

## 4. **Poor Image of Business Education Programme**

There is still poor image of vocational and technical education in the eyes of the general public. Idialu (2007) stated that the new policy document on education in section 6, subsection 47 recognizes the general public attitude that regard vocational and technical education as somewhat inferior to other types of education. Idialu (2007) stated that there is still strong tendency towards white collar jobs as a result of low status associated with vocational education. He stressed further that most parents want their children to be medical doctors, accountants, lawyers etc. This attitude of people toward vocational education significantly contribute to the problem of teacher quality.

## **Understanding Teacher Education**

The issues of teacher preparation supply status enhancement motivation and retention as well as continuous training and retraining as at the heart of education reform at all levels; pre-school/ECCDE, basic-lower and upper, senior secondary, special education and tertiary. The overarching goal of human capacity development for the efficient and effective delivery of UBE, EFA, and related MDGs is that “by 2015 Nigeria will have the human resources base to manage and implement the UBE scheme” (NAP, 2006). Thus, through certain strategic actions that include continued expansion of teacher training opportunities; continuous programme of enhanced status and professionalism for teachers through training and retraining, reviews of current remuneration packages, and enhanced career opportunities; programmes designed to address the capacity needs of schools and educational management; building the capacity of the inspectorate services to improve quality; engaging civil society partners in the roles of quality assurance, monitoring evaluation and impact assessment work at all levels.

The critical need of professionalization of the teaching profession, vested in the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) by virtue of the Teachers Registration Council Act began in 2007 with the mandatory registration of all professionally qualified teachers. This action is equally matched with comprehensive training and in-service training seminars and workshops in the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. More importantly, the TRCN has began implementation of the NPE provision that “all teachers in education institutions including universities shall be professionally trained” (section 8, B, para 72).

The goals of teacher education are specified in Section 8 (b) of the NPE (2004), paragraph 70-79 the NAP (2006) and the 10 Year Strategic Plan, among others. While the goal of the Strategic Plan is to “design a teacher education framework, based on what teachers should know and do relative to Nigeria’s new vision and mission. The national Policy on Education (2004) highlights the thrust of the ongoing reforms which include produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of our educational system; encourage further the spirit of inquiry and creativity in teachers; help teachers to fit into the social life of the community and the society at large and enhance their commitment to national goals; enhance their commitment to the teaching profession which make them adapt to changing needs of society. (NPE, 2004).

It is significant that both the National Action Plan and the 10 Year Strategic Plan adopt a holistic approach to addressing reform of teacher education through training and retraining, instructional material development and availability, the Community Accountability and Transparency Initiative (CATI), periodic renewal of teacher licenses, capacity building of a reformed of Inspectorate service, support to the Teachers Registration Council’s mandate and enhancement of teachers status and incentives. Furthermore, the 10 Year Strategic Plan emphasizes

the need to address key issues of access, equity and quality across eleven related areas, each of which has been the focus of a dedicated Task Team. These include education, economy and competitiveness; curriculum, instruction and teacher quality; reform of the Federal Ministry of Education and Parastatals; Information and Communication Technology (ICT); Physical Infrastructure; Standards, accountability and academic assessment; Examination ethics and campus safety; Communication strategy; Equity; Governance and politics; and Education finance.

### **Educational Skills: Bedrock to Achieving Millennium Development Goals.**

Educational skills and competencies are playing a formidable and valuable role in the frontiers of MDGs no. Nation can truly develop without the active cooperation, inputs, and contributions of its educational institutions and systems.

There is a positive correlation between the provision of quality education and the attainment of MDGs. Entrepreneurial ventures which is a product of quality education are essential in solving economic problems, unemployment issues, unbalanced area development, concentration of economic power and diversion of profits from traditional advances to investment. Despite the fact that entrepreneurship faces unending challenges, yet the following will serve as a guide in the attainment of the MDGs through entrepreneurship programmes that has clearly provided through quality education.

1. **Capacity Building:** Entrepreneurship ventures are regarded as the “University” where people are trained to be self sufficient.
2. **Employment Growth:** Entrepreneurship usually creates more employment per unit of investment because of the labour intensive nature. It therefore helps in curbing unemployment problem of many countries.
3. **Promoting Growth:** This process enables the activating of foundational economic activities, which depend on locally sourced materials. This equally is a key role in the growth.
4. **Serving Large Scale Industries:** Entrepreneurship supplies goods and raw materials to large scale industries. This process also serves as an agency for the distribution of such final products to either consumers or other neighbouring nations.
5. **Technological Acquisition:** Through adaptation, the entrepreneurial ventures have provided opportunities for the development of local skills and technology acquisition. This provides a basis for the attainment of solving environmental problems as advocated by the MDGs.
6. **Poverty Reduction:** This is an important role in any serious nation that is poised to achieve economic development. Entrepreneurship helps to reduce poverty because such industries or ventures allow for employment of both skilled and unskilled labour force. It enhances the earning capacity of citizens thereby reducing poverty and inequality gaps.
7. **Industrial Development:** Entrepreneurship generally provides an alternative for countries that desire the fast option for industrial development process. They basically have short-term gestation period and high potentials for rapid turnover.

### **Recommendations**

If these MDGs must be attained by 2015, then, there is need to strictly adhere to some of these recommendations.

1. That government, private sector and NGOs continue in the crusade and awareness creation on the attainment of MDGs by 2015.
2. That non-governmental organization, the organized private sector, donor agencies etc form a global partnership in providing special funds in combating HIV/AIDs, and other related diseases by 2015.
3. That government should evolve strategies that will enhance the management capabilities and technical competence of small entrepreneurs by staging regular seminars and workshops to foster modern skills in production, technology and marketing. This will go a long way improving employment in Nigeria.
4. That there should be global political support, strong partnerships and coordinated efforts for sustainable development in attaining the MDGs by 2015.
5. That bilateral aid and contributions to multilateral development institutions need to be increased rapidly in developing countries in other to meet the MDGs by 2015.
6. The fight against corruption must be strengthened, it is corruption that has led to the impoverishment of the commonman in Africa and Nigeria specifically.



In order to effectively improve teacher quality in education programme in Nigerian universities, it is also recommended that:-

1. Both federal and state governments should entice teachers with special allowances and enhanced salaries as it is obtainable in the some profession. This will entice the subsequent graduates of business education to take up tenure appointment as teachers in education department instead of rushing to industries or private sector for employment. Once this is put in place, it will reduce the workload in teaching and supervising students on the few teachers available, thereby, creating more time for the teachers to conduct research, so as to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
2. Educational administrators should ensure that only qualified and experienced teachers that posse's very high level of theory and strong operational ability are recruited to teach courses in our universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education. Subsequently, they should be encouraged to participate in international and local conferences seminars to update their knowledge, skills and competencies. All forms of political, tribal, ethnic, or sentimental recruitment of teaching staffs should be discouraged.
3. Students should be motivated with very conducive environment that accommodates teaching/learning. Also adequate teaching/learning facilities such as computers, internet and good teacher-student relationship will improve the zeal and the interest of students to learn and excel.

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**Table 1: Constitutional Responsibility For Education In Nigeria**

	<b>Federal</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Local</b>
Basic (Early Childhood Care and Education, Primary & Junior Secondary)	(i) Policy (ii) Allocation of resources through UBEC (iii) Maintenance of Standards (inspection & monitoring FIS)	Implementation through SUBEBs	Management of primary schools
Senior Secondary	(i) Policy (ii) Curriculum (iii) Inspectorate (iv) Examinations through WAEC & NECO (iv) Management of Federal Technical Colleges	(i) Policy (ii) Implementation (iii) Inspectorate (iv) Technical Colleges	
Tertiary Education	(i) Policy (ii) Universities (iii) Polytechnics (iv) Colleges of Education	(i) Universities (ii) Polytechnics (iii) Colleges of Education	
Adult Education	Policy Co-operation Monitoring	Implementation	Implementation
Special Education	Policy	Implementation	Implementation

Source: Federal Ministry of Education 10 Year Strategic Plan (2007).

**Table 2: Summary of Enrolment of Learners by Programme (2007)**

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Learner's Enrolment</b>		<b>No. of Centres</b>		<b>No of Facilitators</b>
Basic Literacy	548,408	465,292	1,013,700	20,828	23,422
Post Literacy	186,045	264,239	450,284	7,101	11,986
Vocational Education	39,504	82,685	122,189	2,371	3,763
Continuing Education	37,651	44,312	81,963	4,393	2,642
<b>Total</b>	<b>811,608</b>	<b>856,528</b>	<b>1,668,136</b>	<b>34,693</b>	<b>41,813</b>

Source: Status of NFE Statistics in Nigeria 2007, (NMEC, 2008).

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