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Impact of Leadership Adoption of Quota system of Admission Policy into Nigerian Higher institutions

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Abstract

This study examined the leadership adoption of quota system of admission policy into Nigerian higher institutions. The study is a survey research design using two objectives and a null hypothesis as a guide for the study. Simple random sampling was used to select a sample size of three hundred and fifty (350) entrance board members of the faculties and senior staff members of admission units of the south east Nigerian higher institutions. Two major instruments were used to collect data, on factors militating against leadership adoption of quota system of admission policy with a reliability index .81 and nature of quota system of admission with reliability index of .79. T-test hypothesis was used to test the study at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The study revealed that University admission based on quota system policy decreases the quality of education and encourages ethnicity and nepotism in admission of students, it also gives room for admission of incompetent and unqualified persons into different institutions of higher learning and thereby leading to lowered educational standards, among others.

Keywords: leadership, Education, tertiary education and quota system of admission policy.

Introduction

Education and Leadership skills acquisition has been globally applauded as viable instruments for national development. They stand in the interface of the transmission of knowledge, skills, positive values and attitude. They are accepted as the main stay of the

education system. Leadership quality in any educational institution is therefore crucial and has been globally accepted to be significantly related to with the quality of education in general and in student's learning outcomes specifically as the right to education is a human right.

Leadership is a hinge responsible for development in any organization. According to Iginla (2015), leadership can be clearly defined as a lifestyle with the inert ability to positively influence others, having their vehement desire (passion) to instill a very high sense of self-control and behavior modification, towards achieving the maximum and purposefully outcome in terms of human potentials. In corroboration, Nwankwor, Okeke, Onumonu and Nwafor defines principals' leadership as inspiring teachers and students to do their best in order to achieve desired results. This definition is in line with Cuban in Bush (2007) concept of Leadership, he opines that leadership is the art of influencing others' actions in achieving desirable ends. Leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others. Leadership...takes...much ingenuity, energy and skills. While Northouse (2007) considers leadership as a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. Peretomode and peretomode in Ekpiken and Ifele (2015) defines leadership as the art or process by which a member of a group or organization persuades, inspires or influences the members to work willingly, cooperatively and enthusiastically towards the accomplishment of set goals. Besides, in the word of Ukaegbu C. (2010) Leadership is a reflection of characters, which include but not limited to knowledge, vision, courage, openness, accountability, determination, transparency, motivation and patriotism put in place by office holders to lead their people and or followers so as to achieve reasonable and positive societal development. In this research leadership is defined as an inert ability to positively and constructively persuade, inspire and or influence others, having their desire to instill a very high sense of behavior modification, to work willingly towards achieving the maximum and purposefully outcome in terms of human potentials and national development.

Education should be able to produce refined leaders who are equipped with appropriate values, creativity, innovative ability and sound knowledge of desired character. The view that education is central to the development of desirable character was buttressed by Fafunwa. Fafunwa (1974) in collaboration avers that education denotes the aggregate of all the processes by which a child or young adult develops the abilities, attitudes, and forms which are of positive values to the society in which he lives. The concept of education owes its origin from the following latin words: Educare (rex extenza) & Educere (rex cogito)). Educare means "to rise or bring up, to train or to develop/nourish". It indicates that the child should be brought up or nourished keeping certain aims and ideals. Educere {rex cogito} is to think, "to lead out or to draw out" or to take away. In this regard, education through its process draws out of the best what is inside the learner (Mbaji, Kabiru, & Ogbe, (2019). According to Egwu (2021) education is the steps to take in restoring the dignity of man, the unique motor – UNN. Education is the process of inculcating in its citizens the

skills, values, appropriate knowledge, attributes and attitudes of peaceful living and co-existence within the society (Okeke, Agu, Nwankwor, Aye, & Akaneme, 2021). Ezeillo in Egwu (2021) elaborates the entailments of education thus: Education in its wider sense is more than school. In the African traditional system character development was the major aim of education... Instruction ends in the classroom, but education ends only with life. Osaat (2010) in addition maintains that education denotes the process whereby knowledge is transmitted and developed in human beings in such a way that the acquired knowledge translates to intellectual, socio-economic and political development when it is put in practice. Besides, Parankimolil (2012) opines education as a systematic preparatory process through which individuals are assisted to acquire necessary knowledge, experiences, skills and sound attitudes. Education is a major catalyst for individual and national development because it is a process of transmitting the right type of knowledge, skills, and values that produce positive transformation in the lives of people (Enaige Igbinothere, 2016). The national policy on education sees education as necessary tool for human resources and national development. It opines that a nation's policy on education is government's way of realizing that part of the national goals which can be achieved using education as a tool. No policy on education, however, can be formulated without first identifying the overall philosophy and goals of the nation.

In this research education is a systematic process of developing creativity, critical thinking and collaborative skills as well as nourishing and acquiring knowledge for the benefits of individual (youths) for successful living and development.

The goals is encompassing as reflected in tertiary education (Nigerian higher institutions) thus:

1. Contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training;
2. Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society;
3. Develop the intellectual capability of individual to understand and appreciate their local and external environments;
4. Acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society (FRN, 2014).

The federal government among others welcome the quota system of admission policy for effectively and efficiently prioritization of the achievement of national objectives. The quota system of admission policy is considered by Idigwe and Swem (2016) as a system of admitting certain number of candidates from each state into the university in one academic year. In a similar view, quota system of admission policy is seen as a process of admission into schools, where a fixed number (quota) is assigned to each state or local government area every academic session (Omeje, Egwa, & Adikwa, 2016). It was introduced by the colonial government in 1959 to quell the agitations for equal representation in the access to public offices (Onwuka, 1997). He further noted that the quota system principle was not

employed for admission into the university. In collaborating with him, Segun, Ronald and Ilemobola (2014) held that the international University Council (IUC) insisted on merit as pivotal for academic excellence and admissions into the University College, Ibadan. The consideration of merit over the quota system according to Anyanwu (2010) was maintained by the post-colonial government of Alhaji Tafawa Balewa. Also, in the 1970s, the northern elders clamored for the inclusion of quota system into the educational sub-sector and the federal government adhered and forced the system into policy Anyanwu (2010). However, the quota system admission policy was not welcomed with open arms by most Nigerians. It was rather regarded as an obnoxious policy (Ogoke, 2021). He further said that most Nigerians considered the quota system of admission policy as an act of injustice against some university applicants. In this write up, quota system of admission policy is a corrupt system in the educational field, driven with political nepotism, and a religious sentiment to the society. It has prevented the economic development of human resources and the entire nation at large. The system discourages efforts and merits and encourages social discriminations and denies meritorious candidates of their right or rightful opportunities in fact it is the root of indiscipline of all sorts. It is an indirect way of sowing violent revolution in the future (Onwubiko, 2014). This therefore means that quota system of admission in the Nigerian university system appears to be unconstitutional and opposing to federal government's bid to achieving its national goals of building a free, fair and democratic society, just and egalitarian society full of bright opportunities or all citizens as stipulated in her national policy on education (FGN, 2014).

According to the searcher, the essence of quota system is to control disparities in educational attainments in Nigeria. States were categorized into educationally disadvantaged and educationally advantaged areas to show existing gaps in educational attainment of different sections of Nigeria (Onwuka, 1997). Enemu (2004) on the other hand argues that the policy of quota system of admission promotes injustice...he submits that, application of the quota system to students' admissions, denies meritorious candidates of their right or rightful opportunity for admissions into the university. It means that quota system of admission in the Nigerian university system appears to be unconstitutional and opposing to federal government's quest of building a fair and great Nigerian society. For more than thirty years now, the operations of the quota system of admission have resulted in denying many qualified applicants from the southeast of university admission due to their origin. As a fallout of the above, the needed opportunity for many individuals to improve and better themselves through university education are denied. Thus, the southeast is witnessing an increased exodus of young people who travel abroad for university education. Some of these young people do not return after studies abroad therefore denying the region and Nigeria at large the needed skilled manpower for development. Ogoke (2021).

Nonetheless, the quota system has continued to serve as a method of school admissions into Nigerian federal higher institutions with the federal government of Nigeria insisting that the policy promotes equitable and just distribution of educational cum socioeconomic

development Ogoke (2021). It is against this background that the researchers' interest were aroused to investigate the extent leadership adoption of quota system of admission policy into federal higher institutions in Nigeria has affected Nigerian education.

Statement of the Problem

Federal higher institutions in Nigeria are primarily aimed at the training of high level manpower through the various courses and programmes offered, thereby, fostering national unity, and the acceleration of national development. Unfortunately, these lofty objectives have been truncated by the scourge of corrupt practices in the education system especially at the higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. Quota system and catchment areas are actually policies of federal character in admission into schools, appointment to offices and resource allocation coined by the federal government of Nigeria. The concept of quota system of admission policy and catchment areas were introduced by the sharp disparity between the north and the south in terms of school enrolment and the provision of educational facilities.

This pathetic state of affairs in question form can be thus put: does university admission based on quota system policy decrease the quality of education and encourages ethnicity and nepotism in admission of students? does the quota system of admission policy create room for admission of incompetent and unqualified persons into different institutions of higher learning as the admission is based on disadvantaged and advantaged states? Also, does quota system of admission policy consider high scores of those from advantaged states?. These have been of great concern and source of worry to the parents, government, policy makers, school management, lecturers and students themselves, and other stakeholder in the education system. Could this be attributed to the leadership adaptation of quota system of admission policy in Nigerian higher institutions as no study known to the researchers has been carried out in this direction? This omission creates a gap to be filled by this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate impact of leadership adaptation of quota system of admission policy in Nigerian higher institutions. Specifically, the objectives are to:

1) Ascertain the perceived factors militating against adoption of quota system of admission policy by the leadership of Nigerian higher institutions.

Find out the nature of quota system of admission policy into Nigerian universities.

Research Questions:

What are the perceived factors militating against leadership adaptation of quota system of admission policy into Nigerian higher institutions.

What is the perceived nature of quota system of admission policy into Nigerian higher institutions.

Hypothesis:

The null hypothesis which was tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study:

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of entrance board members of the faculties and senior staff members of admission units on perceived factors militating against leadership adaptation of quota system of admission policy into Nigerian higher institutions.

Review of the empirical studies:

Most researchers' findings condemned quota system of admission policy into higher institutions of learning, since it encouraged fraud and injustice. Olatunde (2008) carried out a study on quota system of admission: Implications on equal rights among university applicants in federal universities in south-west Nigeria. The findings of their study showed that university quota system of admission policy has negative implications on equal right among university applicants because: it infringes on the rights of some applicants on the basis of sex, origin among others; affords other applicants more opportunity through concessions, reduces admission chances of some qualified university applicants from certain areas of the country among others. In another study, Ani (2010) carried out a study on the influence of quota system of admission on the rights of university applicants from educationally disadvantaged and advantaged areas of Nigeria. The findings of this study showed that quota system of admission has negative influence on the rights of university applicants educationally advantaged areas; quota system of admission has positive influence on the rights of university applicants from educationally disadvantaged areas among others. Again, Okoro and Ede (2010) carried out a study on quota system of admission and the challenge of equal access to federal universities in south-east Nigeria. The findings of the study indicated that: admitting some university applicants with lower scores are among the challenges the quota system of admission poses to equal access to federal universities in Nigeria. Moreso, Idika (2010) carried out a study on quota system and federal character admission criteria: The problem of Inequity for candidates from educationally advantaged states in south-east Nigeria. Findings from the study revealed among other things that the quota system and federal character admission criteria in the Nigerian universities are fraught with various problems of right infringements, unfair admission considerations, inequitably distribution of admission opportunities, less regard for merit, infringements of applicants' rights among other things. A study was conducted by Ibe (2009) on implication of John difference principle on the quota system of admission in federal universities in North-central Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed that Rawls' difference principle is a justification for the quota system in federal universities; quota system of admission created more deprivation and or marginalization in university admissions among others. Omeje, Egwa, and Adikwa (2016) carried out a study on impact of quota system and catchment area policy on the university admissions in north-central Nigeria. Findings from the study showed that quota system and catchment area policies impact on students' admissions. This is because admissions are inequitable and

inaccessible; admission processes are messed up, leading to the production of low-quality graduates, unethical practices during admission among others. Similarly, Odigwe, and Swem (2016) carried out a study on impact of quota system of admission on quality of education in universities in Cross River State. The results of the study revealed that university admission based on quota system significantly decreases the quality of education because, it gives concessions to applicants from educationally disadvantage states, catchment areas for university admission; while university education based on merit significantly increases the quality of university education. Furthermore, Adeyemi (2001) conducted a study titled equal access and the catchment area factor in federal universities in south-west Nigeria. The results showed that admission ratio into federal universities among states in Nigeria was not proportional to the size of enrollment at the terminal grade of secondary school level which justify affirmative policies such as catchment to redress the imbalance.

Method:

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. According to Nworgu (2015), survey research design is concerned with obtaining data on a particular feature of a given population in a systematic manner that the findings are expected to be generalized to the entire population. This design was chosen as the data collected to be generalized to the entire population. The area of the study was all federal universities in Nigeria. The population of the study was all the entrance board members of the faculties and senior staff members of the admission units (880) in Nigerian higher institutions (from South-east Nigeria). Twelve (12) Federal higher institutions from South-east Nigeria comprising 350 entrance board members of the faculties were drawn as sample of the study using simple random sampling technique. A-10 item questionnaire titled, "perceived factors militating against adaptation of quota system of admission policy (PFMAQSAP)" was developed by the researchers and used to obtain relevant information for the study. It is divided into three clusters (1-2) and has a total of 15 items, with 4-points Likert scale options (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree; weighing of 1-4 for favourable statements. Cluster 1 contains 10 items addressing research question; while 2 contains 5 items addressing research question 2 respectively. The criteria mean was 2.50. It was validated by three experts, two from the department of educational foundations and one from department of educational sciences (Measurement and Evaluation), Faculty of education, university of Nigeria, Nsukka. Cronbach Alpha coefficient method was used to obtain 0.80. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed to answer the research questions. The data were analyzed by computing the mean and standard deviations (SDs) for each item. The researchers used the real limits to interpret the results based on the following decision rule: Any item with a mean score below <2.50 was not accepted, while any that scored above >2.50 were accepted. The standard deviation was also presented to show how the individual raw scores from the computed mean was dispersed. The t-test statistics were used in testing the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The results are presented in Tables 1-2 showing the summary of the results of the three sections of the study. The tables reported the mean and standard deviation (SD) for each of the items on which the decision

regarding the research questions was based. The table 3 contains the analysis of the t-test statistics of the difference between the mean of the responses of the and entrance board members of the faculties and senior staff members of admission units respectively, to address the hypothesis.

Results:

Research Question:1

What are the factors militating against adaptation of quota system of admission policy by the leadership of Nigerian higher institutions.

Table 1: Shows Mean Responses of Entrance Board members of the faculties and Senior Staff members of the admission units on the factors militating against adaptation of quota system of admission policy by the leadership of Nigerian higher institutions.

S/N	Items	Entrance Board			Senior Staff		
		(X)	SD	Dec	(X)	SD	Dec
1	Quota system of admission is corrupt policy.	3.32	0.94	A	3.01	0.57	A
2	it is enthronelement of injustice in education sector	3.33	0.38	A	2.99	0.66	A
3	Leads to the production of low-quality graduates.	3.40	0.37	A	3.04	0.44	A
4	It denies merit candidates admission into Nigerian higher institutions	3.51	0.99	A	3.22	0.66	A
5	University admission based on quota system policy decreases the quality of education.	3.16	0.77	A	3.34	0.72	A
6	Encourages ethnicity and nepotism in admission of students.	3.31	0.63	A	3.01	0.52	A
7	It gives room for admission of incompetent and unqualified persons into different institutions of higher learning, leading to lowering the educational standards.	3.32	0.93	A	3.24	0.33	A
8	low academic growth and development of the students.	3.20	0.41	A	3.22	0.55	A

9	discourages efforts and merits and encourages social discriminations and denies meritorious candidates.	3.21	0.49	A	3.14	0.65	A
10	The quota system does not consider high scores of those from the advantaged states	3.70	0.77	SA	3.04	0.82	A
	Cluster Mean	3.35	0.67	A	3.13	0.59	A

Table 1, shows that mean ratings and standard deviation of Administrative and Senior staff on factors militating against adaptation of quota system of admission policy by leadership of the Nigerian higher institutions. The cluster mean of 3.25 and 3.22 respectively revealed that the respondents strongly agreed that all the factors militating against adaptation of quota system of admission policy by leadership were needed to refute quota system of admission policy into Nigerian higher institutions. The table revealed that the items had their standard deviation ranging from 0.90 to 0.37 which indicated that the respondents were close to the mean and one another in their responses. The cluster standard deviation of 0.38 and 0.88 shows that the degree of variance from the mean is not much.

Research Question 2:

What are the perceived impacts of quota system of admission policy in Nigerian higher institutions

Table 2: Shows Mean Responses of Entrance Board of the faculties and Senior Staff members of admission units on the perceived nature of quota system of admission policy into Nigerian higher institutions.

SN	Items	Entrance Board			Senior Staff		
		(X)	SD	Dec	(X)	SD	Dec
1	Admission into institution of learning are by means of the quota system policy	3.43	0.54	A	3.25	0.81	A
2	The quota system is done in the belief that the north is educational backward	3.22	0.41	A	2.98	0.91	A
3	The quota system is done with the belief that the north should catch up with the south in education	2.79	0.88	A	3.32	0.56	A
4	The quota system of admission favours students from the disadvantaged states	3.39	0.74	A	3.14	0.84	A

5	The quota system promotes those from the disadvantage states.	3.10	0.87	A	3.04	0.78	A
	Cluster Mean	3.19	0.69	A	3.15	0.78	A

Table 2, shows that mean ratings and standard deviation of Administrative and Senior staff on perceived nature of quota system of admission policy into Nigerian higher institutions. The cluster mean of 3.21 and 3.22 respectively revealed that the respondents strongly agreed that all the perceived nature of quota system of admission policy were needed to refute quota system of admission policy into Nigerian higher institutions. The table revealed that the items had their standard deviation ranged from 0.90 to 0.37 which indicated that the respondents were close to the mean and one another in their responses. The cluster standard deviation of 0.38 and 0.88 shows that the degree of variance from the mean is not much.

Null Hypothesis:

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Entrance board members of the faculties and Senior Staff members of the admission units on the factors militating against adaptation of quota system of admission policy by the leadership of Nigerian higher institutions.

Table 3: The t-test Statistics of the Mean Scores of Entrance Board members of the faculties and Senior Staff members of the admission units on the factors militating against adaptation of quota system of admission policy by the leadership of Nigerian higher institutions.

Status of Staff	N	Mean	St. D.	Df	t-Cal	t-Tab	Decision
Entrance Board members	288	3.21	0.86	60	2.56	+1.960	Rejected
Senior Staff of admission	62	3.25	0.82				

Table 3 revealed that there was significant difference in all the items. This was expected considering that the mean for entrance board members of the faculties was 3.21 and senior staff members of admission units were 3.25. The mean result implies that the senior staff of admission units perceived the items as factors militating against adaptation of quota system admission policy by leadership of the Nigerian higher institutions than the entrance board members of the faculties. It also showed that the t-calculated for the cluster was 2.56 and the t-tab (critical) value is 1.96. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion and Findings:

The research question one sought to investigate the factors militating against adaptation of quota system of admission policy by leadership of Nigerian higher institutions. The results revealed that the entrance board members of faculties and senior staff members of admission units perceived that the quota system of admission policy denies merit candidates admission into Nigerian higher institutions, they equally observed that the quota system of admission policy is enthrone of injustice in education sector and leads to the production of low-quality graduates, admission is corrupt policy. University admission based on quota system policy decreases the quality of education, encourages ethnicity and nepotism in admission of students, it gives room for admission of incompetent and unqualified persons into different institutions of higher learning, leading to lowering the educational standards, discourages efforts and merits and encourages social discriminations and denies meritorious candidates. The quota system does not consider high scores of those from advantaged states. This is in line with Enemuo (2000) who stated that the quota system of admission is the practice of favouring some facilities/department/candidates at the expense of others, in university admissions, promotion in offices, appointments, employment, on the basis of state of origin, tribe, nepotism or choice of course of study. Such practices, he maintains, marred the objective implantation of the 1978 Education policy. Enemuo continues: the application of quota system denies admission, employment, appointment and promotion of the merited candidates. Based on this view, Kosemani in Ogbonnaya (2009) regards such exercise (quota system of admission policy) as the enthrone of injustice in the education sector.

The research question two sought to ascertain the nature of quota system of admission policy into Nigerian higher institutions. The results revealed that the entrance board members of the faculties and senior staff members of admission units perceived that the quota system of admission is done in the belief that the north is educational backward and also that the north should catch up with the south in education. They equally perceived that quota system of admission favours students from the disadvantaged state. The system promotes those from the disadvantage states and is means of admitting students from disadvantage states into institution of learning.

This findings of study is in line with her benefits identified by Ogbonnaya (2009). The scholar stated by quota in this context is meant a number of people or candidates that should come from each state. It is immaterial whether or not such candidates qualify for such places, honors or post. He said, this is the major reason why admissions into federal government owned institutions of learning have come to be by way of federal character or quota. Onwuka (1991) corroborated with this findings that the policies of quota system and catchment areas were adopted insidiously as the cornerstone of admission and even employment into federal institutions by the federal military government. It is now the order of the day in Nigeria. Contrary to these findings, (Ogbonnaya (2009) advised that the policies of quota system, catchment area and educationally disadvantaged are in agreement with the argument that the north is educationally backward and should be assisted in every

way to catch up with the educationally advantaged states in the south. This is, he said, still the major problem facing Nigerian educational system.

Conclusion:

A lot of factors militating against and nature of quota system of admission policy have been reviewed and there is no globally backing up where such quota system of admission policy had been implemented. Researchers concluded through the findings that the only way out is going back to Egypt for the normal system of admission policy (education) and going down globally for best admission practices if the national development would be considered.

Recommendations:

1. Traditional moral or values status should be incorporated into the curriculum of higher institutions in Nigeria.
2. Citizens of Nigeria should have equal access to education to forestall the effects of over reliance on certificates which breeds corruption among staff and students.
3. Quota system of admission policy should be scrapped out of university education system if education is essential for progress and true peace based on national consciousness, solidarity, cohesion and dignity of man.
4. Election of leadership of institutions and otherwise should be through diligence and due process and or one who is devoted to serve.
5. Leaders should lead with examples.
6. Work ethics should be sustained and enforced in all higher institutions and or in organizations in Nigeria.
7. Nigeria should practically join the rest of the world by making education the central component of the globalization process for development.

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