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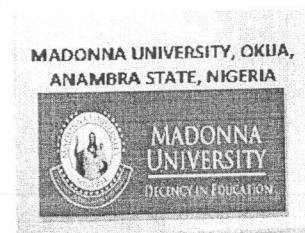
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# APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS (IGR) TO NIGERIA'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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## Abstract

*Inter-Governmental Relations (IGR) is a principle which depicts a political arrangement where by, different levels of government and different categories of public officials inter-relate in different ways, for example in the area of education. In Nigeria, education falls under concurrent legislative list which allows both the State and Federal Government to legislate on it. But apart from this arrangement, Local Government Councils also have responsibility to discharge in the area of education. The foregoing shows that since the three levels of government in Nigeria are involved in issues relating to educational policies, they are bound to inter-relate. This study therefore focuses on the application of the principle of IGR to Nigeria's educational system. The main objective of the study is to examine how the three levels of government in Nigeria, interrelates in the area of education. Its specific objectives include: (i) examine the extent to which the educational system in Nigeria complies with the principle of IGR; and (ii) to examine the challenges of the application of the principle of IGR to Nigeria's educational system. Some of the findings of the study include; (i) the application of the principle of IGR to Nigeria's educational system had fared differently in Nigeria under various regimes, depending largely on the form of government in place; (ii) the application of the principle of IGR is a strategy of fostering national integration; and (iii) most of the challenges especially frictions between different levels of government of the application of the principle of IGR to Nigeria's educational system are traceable to the Constitution /educational system of the country on one hand, and political actors on the other hand. Based on these findings, the study recommends that; (i) there should be strong constitutional provisions to help enforce and maintain the inter-relationships of the different levels of government in the area of education; and where they exist, they should be made more functional; (ii) governments should continue to adopt education as a mechanism for fostering national integration; and (iii) Nigerian political actors should endeavour to promote 'public interest' as opposed to 'private interest'.*

**Keywords:** Education, Inter-Governmental Relations (IGR), Educational System, Government, Educational Policies.

## Introduction

After the amalgamation exercise of 1914 in Nigeria, for several years, the country was administered as a unitary State a form of government in which ultimate power resides with the central government. However, in 1939, some elements of 'devolution'- power sharing between different levels of government was introduced by Sir Bernard Bourdillon, who was then the country's governor. This was in the form of 'decentralization' of administrative units to ease some administrative problems (mainly personnel) facing his regime. His administration divided the country into three administrative units, viz; North East and West (Nicolson, 1977). The administrative units were eventually converted to political units under the 1946 Richards Constitution. The development marks a watershed in the political history of the country. Reason being that it was at that point in time, one could talk of the relevance of the principle of Inter-governmental Relations (IGR) to Nigerian Political System. From that time till now, all the constitutions that had evolved

in the country at different times had devoted certain aspects of their provisions to issues related to IGR. Such provisions covered political, economic, and educational aspects of the administration of the State (Nigeria).

Military interregnum in the country introduced another dimension to IGR. Nigeria though a Federal State, Military tradition of superordinate /subordinate relationships, coupled with centralisation of policy issues, served as an impediment to the effective operations of the principle of IGR during military regimes. Similarly, experiences have revealed that diversities in political parties' programmes often serve as a challenge of promoting cohesive educational programmes. This is because, when two different political parties rule at different levels of government (for example, central and state) they are most likely to have different educational programmes.

To drive home the thrust of the paper, this study gives consideration to a number of educational policies that have been introduced in the country by successive regimes, in line with the principle of IGR. Towards this end, the study focuses on the relationships that exist among the three tiers of government in relation to the educational system

The study is divided into introduction, conceptual clarifications, application of the principle of IGR to the educational system in Nigeria; and conclusion.

### Conceptual Clarifications

Until recently, scholars of politics were divided over which system of government, for example unitary or federal, did IGR exist? According to Ayoade (1980) the debate produced two schools of thought, namely;

1. That IGR is peculiar to Federal system of government
2. That IGR also exists in unitary system although the level of relations is more in federal system

The above position notwithstanding, recent developments among the rank and file of political scientists seems to have put to rest the debate on which form of government does IGR exist? What informs this position is that the general consensus prevailing among them is that IGR connotes relationships that take place between two or more levels of government, (Wraith, 1978). Wraith's idea of IGR is contained in his article titled, 'County and Township'. Although he did not give the concept its present name, he basically discussed IGR when he explained the relationships between county and Local Government Councils in Great Britain. Most of the early proponents of IGR, Anderson (1960) and Chandler and Plano (1988) explain the principle in relation to American Politics. For instance, Anderson (1960:3) explains IGR as "an important body of activities or interaction occurring between government units of all types and levels and within the (U.S) Federal System". In a similar vein, Chandler and Plano explain IGR in relation to American politics. The scholar explains the principle thus; "Ongoing administrative, political, and legal relationships existing among all levels of government within the U.S federal system". However, after taking cognisance of the criticisms that have been leveled against the classic writers of IGR especially its linkage to American federal system, Chandler and Plano later modified their position by stating that:

Inter-Governmental relations (IGR) go beyond the necessary framework of traditional federalism to include all the combinations of relationships occurring among units of government. It also includes the nongovernmental agencies and institutions that have impact in the policy making and programme implementation (Chandler and Plano, 1988:199).

Harman (2001) explains the imperativeness of IGR. He argues that the current major concern of political scientists is "how efficiently modern political systems actually operate, and how central and regional government bodies, attempt to work together to solve shared problems".

Wright's (1974:1-16) (cited in Rhodes 2001:316) major contribution to the discourse of IGR is seen in the area of distinct characteristics of IGR which Rhodes considers as an elaboration of general definition of the principle offered by Anderson (1960). The five distinct characteristics of IGR he identifies are:

- (i) IGR recognises the multiplicity of relationships between all types of government (ii) IGR emphasises the interactions between individuals, especially public officials (iii)

These relationships are continuous, day-to-day and informal.

- (iv) IGR insists on the important role played by all public officials, be they politicians or administrators.

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- (v) It emphasises the political nature of relationships and focuses on substantive policies, especially financial issues such as who raises what amount and who spends it for whose benefit with what results;

The above features of IGR expose that IGR transcends official relationships between levels of government. Rather, it encompasses what also transpires between or among public officials at different levels of government including the informal aspects of such relationships. The foregoing explains why Wright (1974:4) posits that:

The term IGR alerts one to the multiple, behavioural, continuous and dynamic exchange occurring between various officials in the political system. It may be compared to a different, novel and visual filter or concept that can be laid on the American political landscape.

Wright (1974) however, added that for unitary systems, it is perhaps more common to talk of centrallocal relations.

The various positions reviewed in this study give the picture that IGR takes place between (or among) different levels of government, their agencies, officials within a defined geographical continuity. It therefore excludes the relationships between or among sovereign States described by McLean and McMillan (2009:266) as 'intergovernmentalism' explained by him as "both a theory of integration and a method of decision-making in international organizations, that allows states to cooperate in specific fields while retaining their sovereignty". Also to be noted is the fact that IGR involves human interactions. The role of individuals (government functionaries in particular in this case, education officers) is very crucial to the understanding of the operation of the principle of IGR. Perhaps, this explains why Glendening and Reeves (1978) explain IGR as the interaction of government officials and employees of two or more units of government.

#### **Educational System Explained**

Simply put, educational system refers to a model of education adopted by the government of a named State at a particular point in time. Some scholars have equated educational system with 'educational policy making'. Their examples include Easton (1983) (contained in Howell and Brown, 1953:7). According to Easton, educational policy making is all about efforts on the part of scholars and students of politics in particular to "learn much about policy making in educational institutions by examining their processes and structures through the application of a conceptual framework, systems analysis, designed to understand policy making in society at large". (Eason, 1983 contained in; Howell and Brown, 1988; 7). In their own view, Howell; and Brown (1988:13) start their position on 'educational policy making' by positing that it is an area of study in politics which has attracted little attention from Political Scientists or students of Public Administration. The scholars there after settled for the adoption of Easton's (1955) systemanalysis approach to explain the functionality of educational policy making in any political system. Inputs comes into the political system and decisions are made by it based on the available facts and resources. Such decisions are communicated to the public in the form of outputs. However, society members may well be bound by decisions taken in sub-systems of the national social system; such as local government authorities.

Nigeria's educational system is embodied in a document called; 'The National Policy on Education' which came into force in 1976 during the administration of General Olusegun Obasanjo. What gave birth to the unified educational system was the report of the committee on National Policy on Education, headed by a then seasoned bureaucrat in the country, Simoen Adebo, constituted by the regime of General Yakubu Gowon in 1973. The committee had its report adopted for action in 1974 when government published 'White Paper' on it but the military coup of July 29, 1975, truncated its implementation. This was however, done by the administration of General Olusegun Obasanjo in 1976.

What led to the adoption of National Policy on Education (NPE) was that there were inconsistent arrangements in the nation's educational system where by each Region or State in the country had its own educational system. The 'new' educational policy however, changed the philosophy of the country's educational system. This affected all levels of education (pre-primary education, primary education, secondary education, higher education, adult and non-formal education; and special education). The introductory part of the NPE stipulates among other things that; "The Federal Government of Nigeria has

adopted education as an instrument par excellence for affecting national development” (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1981:5). As reflected in Section 1 (1) of the NPE, the scheme was government’s way of achieving part of its national objectives using education as a tool because “no policy on education can be formulated without first identifying the overall philosophy and objectives of the nation” (National Policy on Education, 1981:7). Towards this end, the policy reiterates the five main national objectives of Nigeria as stated in the Second National Development Plan (1970-1974). They are;

1. A free and democratic society
2. a just and egalitarian society
3. a united, strong and self-reliant nation;
4. a great and dynamic economy and
5. a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens.

Section 1 (5) of the NPE goes further to state the national aims and objectives to which the philosophy (of education) is linked. These are:

- i. the inculcation of national consciousness and national unity;
- ii. the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society;
- iii. the training of the mind in the understanding of the world around; and
- iv. the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society

The foregoing shows that the development of Nigeria is largely dependent on its educational system. There should be unity of purpose in the area of education before the nation can forge ahead. Educational imbalance caused by different educational policies introduced in various parts of the country should be eliminated and substituted with centrifugal educational policies. It was in view of this fact that the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended) complements the various objectives of the Constitution and provides that

- (1) Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational policies at all levels
- (2) Government shall promote science and technology
- (3) Government shall strive to eradicate illiteracy; and to this end Government shall as and when practicable provide-
  - (a) free compulsory and universal primary education;
  - (b) free secondary education;
  - (c) free university education; and
  - (d) free adult literacy programme

The above provisions appear to have transferred the responsibility of education to the central government at least when implemented to the letter. However, at the level of their implementation other levels of government in the country (State and Local Governments) will be involved. This is where IGR comes in. again, the same Constitution which appears to have placed education under the care of the Federal Government still lists it under the ‘concurrent legislative list’ (areas where both the federal and state governments can legislate on). Section 27 Part II of the Second Schedule of the Constitution empowers the National Assembly (the name of Nigeria’s central legislature) to legislate on university, technological and post-primary education, at the federal level. On the other hand, Section 29 provides that a State House of Assembly shall have power to make laws for the State with respect to the establishment of an institution for purposes of university, technological or professional education.

All the efforts of Nigerian Federal Government in the area of educational system boil down to the issue of developing a State where everybody and government agencies will have a role to play in achieving rapid political, social and economic development. This calls for inter-personal relations of government functionaries on one hand, and intergovernmental relations of the different levels of government on the other hand. Also, germane to the success of any educational system are the inter-relationships that take place between various educational agencies at different levels of government.

#### **Application of the Principle of Intergovernmental Relations to Nigeria’s educational system**

The operational tenet of IGR is ‘decentralisation’ which often takes the forms of ‘devolution’ and ‘decongestion’. Chaturvedi (2006:79) explains decentralisation as “the process of dividing and distributing

authority and responsibility for programs to administrative sub units". According to Roberts and Edwards (1991:38) devolution is the "delegation of specific power to some subordinate units of government" or as Ola (1984) puts it, implementing national socio-economic programmes at the lower levels of government for example, Local Government. Decongestion refers to decentralisation policy involving government ministries or public corporations. From the foregoing it can be seen that both devolution and decongestion explain how a higher level of government creates and gives power to a lower (elected) level of government to exercise (Tansey, 1995). Apart from lessening the burden of the higher government, the arrangement makes government to be closer to people at the grassroot level. It also increases the level of awareness of people about the activities of government and guarantees unity of purpose. Another advantage of devolution and decongestion is that they facilitate decision-making.

At this juncture, it is imperative to state that none of the administrative devices- devolution and decongestion operates in absolute terms in any political system. The mixture of the devices can exist in a political dispensation. This has been the experience of Nigeria since 1954 when it opted for federal system of government. But more importantly, the utility of the two mechanisms is seen in the fact that they help to explain the nature of the interrelationships among the various levels of government under different political arrangements.

The tool of analysis to be adopted in this section of the study will be to discuss the principle of IGR as it affects Nigeria's educational system in line with its operational tenet- decentralization.

Tansey (1995) argues that in a system of 'decentralisation', subordinate local administrative agencies are created by a central government and may be given some discretion to interpret central policy and consult local opinion. Arguing in the same vein, Chandler and Plano (1988:179) explain decentralisation as:

The process of dividing and distributing authority and responsibility for programs to administrative subunits. Decentralisation typically involves reassigning decision making responsibilities on a geographical basis to field service operational units. It may also involve reassignment of tasks based on subject matter specialisation.

The above positions (Tansey; Chandler and Plano) are in relation to 'National -State-Local relations' on one hand, and 'State-Local, relations' on the other hand'. Relating IGR to Nigeria's educational system, gives a picture of interrelationship among the various levels of government, their agencies and officials. However, it should be reiterated that experiences have revealed that the nature of political arrangement in the country (for example, whether, unitary or federal system) had, had significant effect on the nation's educational system. Added to this is also the type of government in place in the country (for example, whether colonial, military or civilian).

Nigeria was officially colonised on January 1, 1900 by the British authorities. Between that time and 1954, the country was administered by the colonialists as a 'Unitary State' (a form of government in which powers are concentrated in one level of government usually, the central government). During the period in question, educational policies used to be the exclusive preserve of the colonial government. It determined the school curricula and where schools were to be cited. This limited people's access to education and participation in electoral activities beginning from 1922. Most of the few educated elites received higher education in London and other European countries. All these explain why a Nationalist Movement, National Congress of British West Africa (NCBWA) founded by Casely Hayford in 1917 demanded for the establishment of a West African University and increased participation of educated elites in matters affecting them (Sklar, 1983). The agitation paid-off with the establishment of Yaba Higher College of Technology in 1933 by the colonial government. Being the only tertiary institution in the country then, the level of interaction that took place was between the colonial government and the school management team who were predominantly whites.

The decentralisation policy introduced by the administration of (Governor) Sir Bernard Bourdillon in 1939 did not alter the IGR arrangement with regard to the country's educational system. The conversion of the three administrative units (East, North and West) created by Sir Bernard Bourdillon to political units by the Richards Constitution of 1946 did not touch on the IGR as regards the country's educational system. The establishment of University College Ibadan (now University of Ibadan) by the colonial government maintained the status quo because the Lieutenant-Governor of the West Region could not give directives to

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the management of the institution. Instead, their loyalty was to the central (colonial) government. Therefore the type of IGR that took place then were those that involved the school and central government on one hand and the Department of education/ education officers / the school management team on the other hand. As a result of the non-involvement of the indigenes in the running of the affairs of the University, for a long time, the curricula of the various courses of the institution were those that can neither expose the indigenous students to the evils of colonialism nor make them contribute significantly to national development in the future. In fact courses like Classics (Latin Greek in particular) were given prominence over science courses. This was the experience of the Nigerians till 1954 when the country changed to federalism which according to Hague and Harrop (1982) often reflects a substantial territorial dispersion of government authority with the autonomy of sub-national government constitutionally entrenched.

With the adoption of federal system of government, the political arrangement which had effect on the country’s educational system changed. The levels of government increased from two to three while education fell under ‘concurrent legislative list’. The implication of this development was that Regional Governments had a new lease of life to develop their own educational system although without negating the broader objective of the educational policy of the colonial government. This was in tune with the principle of federalism which confers some degree of autonomy to political units or subunits. This development marked a watershed in Nigeria’s educational system as various Regions fashioned out its own educational systems with minimal involvement of the central government.

The Western Region, which had Chief Obafemi Awolowo as its Premier was the first to fashion out its own educational system. The Region’s educational policy which came into force in 1955 made education free up to ‘Modern School’ (equivalent of current Junior Secondary School in the country). Unlike what operated in other parts of the country it made its primary education a six-year programme whereas it was a seven-year programme in both Eastern and Northern Regions. The two Regions continued the arrangement till the collapse of the First Republic and beyond because the States that were created from them continued the seven-year programme till 1971 when the Military Government adopted six-year programme for primary education throughout the country. It is however, imperative to note that Modern Schools only existed in the Old Western Region and the States that were carved out from them in 1967 continued the three –year postprimary education programme till late 1970s.

Worthy of note is the fact that apart from the adoption of federalism which gave the old Western Region the opportunity of developing her own educational system, party politics also played a significant role. The Old Western Region was controlled by Action Group (AG) the East by National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (later known as National Council of Nigerian Citizens- NCNC) while the North had Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) at the helms of affairs. Each of these three political parties had their educational programmes spelt out in their Constitutions. In the case of the Old Western Region, the IGR that took place minimally involved the central government because it was the Region that funded its educational programmes through proceeds from cocoa, timber and rubber.

The old Western Region was also the first subnational level of Government to establish a University. This came with the establishment of University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife) in 1960. The East followed suit with the establishment of University of Nigeria Nsukka in 1961 while the North established its own University, Ahmadu Bello University in 1962. These three universities later turned out to be a disintegrative mechanism because they promoted sectional interest by way of admitting, mainly, candidates from their geographical contiguities into their institutions. In fact, the IGR also produced relationships between their proprietors (Regional later States Governments and their management teams/ public officials working there. Apart from the fact that the central government did not play any major role in their establishment, it did not also participate in the development of their curricula. All these made the Federal Military Government to convert the three Regional Universities to Federal Universities in 1976 as a way of making Nigerian Universities to key into the developmental efforts of the then Military Government and in line with the spirit of Nigeria’s National Policy on Education which came into force in 1976. But as will be seen later in this study, this idea had been defeated since Second Republic (1979-1983).

#### **Military experience**

As earlier postulated in this study, Military regimes are dictatorial in nature. They operate in the form of unitary system of government even if a country is a federal state. Although Nigeria’s educational system witnessed giant strands when the country was under military rule between 1966 and 1979; and later between 1983 and 1999, it can be argued that the feats were recorded through coercion or draconian laws in

this case, decrees. Military governments at the state level had no option than to carry out the educational policies handed down by the central government. The criticisms notwithstanding the system of government achieved cohesion in the area of education. Some case studies will be cited in this study.

The first noticeable giant stride during the Military administration of General Yakubu Gowon was the adoption of the same system of primary education in 1971. As earlier stated in this work, before that time, states that constituted Old Western Region (Western and Lagos) operated a six year primary education programme. On the other hand, the remaining ten (10) states of the federation (Nigeria then had twelve states) practiced a seven year primary education programme. With the adoption of six year primary education programme for the entire country, it made it practically possible for the central Military Government to introduce educational policies that affect the entire Federation. This guaranteed IGR to flourish in the area of education between federal and State governments.

The most remarkable achievement of the Military Government in the area of education came with the adoption of National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1976. For the first time in the educational history of the country, the central government handed down a model of education which served as a template for the entire country. The first way the scheme was demonstrated was the take-over of the hitherto three universities established by three Regional Governments in the country. They were; the Universities of Ife (now known as Obafemi Awolowo University) Nsukka and Ahmadu Bello. This type of policy action would have generated crisis between different levels of government in a civilian dispensation. Six additional Universities were established by the Federal Ministry Government in States where there were none. All these steps were taken to foster national cohesion through education. The Federal Military Government then had the responsibility to appoint Vice-Chancellors for the Universities and designed their curricula. The admission processes into these federal Universities was also harmonised with the establishment of a central admission body called Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) in 1979. The body now admits candidates not only into federal tertiary institutions (Universities, Polytechnics, monotechnics and Colleges of Education) but State and private tertiary institutions. This has therefore increased the degree of IGR between Federal, State, Local and private agencies. What informs this position is that JAMB officers who are Federal Government employees will automatically inter-relate with state personnel in any admission exercise affecting a state Tertiary institution. Currently, the regulatory body for the University education in Nigeria is the National Universities Commission. The Commission has the responsibility to regulate the syllabuses of various courses in the nation's Universities. There is also National Commission for Colleges of Education while Polytechnics and monotechnics in the country has National Board on Polytechnics and Technical Education as its own regulatory body.

Apart from the foregoing, there are other examples of educational policies introduced by the military regimes of; General I.B. Babangida in the country that placed the central government in the advantage position over other levels of government in IGR. They include School Year (Variation) Decree No. 20 of 1986; National Primary Education Commission Degree No. 31 of 1988 and National Universities Commission Amendment Decree No. 49 of 1988. Others include National Commission for Colleges of Education. Decree No. 3 of 1989; Academic Staff Union of Universities (Revocation of Proscription, etc); and School Year (Variation) Decree No. 27 of 1991. The cited Decrees affected Federal, State, Local Government and privately owned institutions in the country. They were however, promulgated by the Military government without recourse to the inputs of the other levels of government that assisted in their implementation. This criticism notwithstanding the military atmosphere guaranteed their effective IGR.

Another major remarkable educational policy of the Federal Military Government came with the launching of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme on September 2, 1976 by the then country's Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo. In his address at the launching ceremony which took place in Lagos, General Obasanjo described UPE as "the dawn of new era in the history of education in Africa, making education a right rather than a privilege for all Nigerians" (Ojiako, 1979:176). According to Ojiako in order to achieve the stated objectives of the UPE, the Federal Military Government embarked on the training of 163,000, 'new' teachers: took over 156 teacher training colleges, embarked on the construction of 74 new ones, procured reading materials for distribution to pupils across the nation and constructed new class rooms. All these policy measures were undertaken to enable the central government have a good grasp of the control of the country's educational system. At that point in time, the IGR in the area of education was par excellence.

## **Second and Fourth Republics**

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Second and Fourth Republics are being taken together because they both represent post-military era. The Third Republic was an aborted one which featured and got truncated in the process during General I.B. Babangida regime. However, some of the educational policies that were made then had earlier been mentioned in this study in the form of decrees.

The Second Republic lasted from October 1, 1979 to December 31, 1983. Being a civilian dispensation, major policy issues in the country were settled strictly in line with constitutional provisions. In line with this submission, Part II of the Second Schedule of the 1989 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, on 'concurrent legislative list', lists education as a policy issue on what both the Federal and State legislative houses can legislate on. Towards this end, each of the two levels of government enjoyed the freedom of developing its own programme on education. At that time five political parties (National Party of Nigeria- NPN; Unity Party of Nigeria- UPN; Nigerian Peoples Party-NPP; Great Nigerian Peoples Party-GNPP; and People's Redemption Party (PRP) that were registered by the country's Election

Management Body, Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) contested elections at both federal and state levels and fared differently. For instance, the results of gubernatorial elections showed that NPN won seven States; UPN, five States; NPP, three States; GNPP, two States and PRP, two States.

As soon as the governors' of the UPN controlled States (Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Bendel and Ondo) were inaugurated, they announced the introduction of free education programme. This was in fulfillment of the manifesto of their party which made free education one of its four cardinal programmes with a promise that the schedule will take effect from October 1, 1979 (Ojiako, 1981:254). The scheme fared well in the five UPN –controlled States. Furthermore, three of the UPN-controlled States- Bendel, Lagos and Ogun established State Universities. Worthy of note is the fact that the NPN controlled central government did not have a blue-print on the country's educational system. However, the party (NPN) did not promise Nigerians free education. What is stated about education in its manifesto is that it will strive to "eradicate illiteracy throughout Nigeria and to promote learning science and culture" (Ojiako, 1981:125). This study is however of the view that eradication of illiteracy in a society calls for a mass-oriented educational programme. Towards the election period of 1983, NPN had to change its stand on educational system when it dawned on it that UPN was using it to achieve a political aim. Consequently, the party came up with the slogan of 'free but qualitative education'. The NPP that also promised free education did not introduce the Scheme in the three states (Imo, Anambra and Plateau) it controlled.

The foregoing shows that IGR in relation to education was liberalised in the Second Republic and the only area where it was effective were issues that related to primary education and to some extent University education.

In the Fourth Republic, Nigeria's educational system was also predicated upon constitutional provisions. As earlier mentioned in this work, education is also listed under concurrent legislative list in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Fourth Republic is now in its fifth phase, beginning from May 29, 2015. Political parties have fared variedly in the area of education. Unlike the Second Republic which witnessed some State governments taking giant strides in the area of education, the same is not true of political parties in the Fourth Republic. Apart from State governments which have introduced State-owned tertiary institutions, none has introduced a mass-oriented education policy which equates the one introduced in the UPN –controlled States in the Second Republic. This notwithstanding the Federal Government agencies and their personal inter-relate with State governments and public officials in the areas of establishment and accreditation of the courses run in State-owned tertiary institutions.

The Federal Government had introduced a number of educational policies that placed it at an advantage position over other levels of government; individuals and private agencies. One of such policy actions was the review of the UPE Scheme which had been on course in the country since 1976. The Scheme was re-branded, Universal Basic Education (UBE) Scheme. The programme was launched in Sokoto (the capital of Sokoto State) on September 29, 1999 by the (civilian) administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo And all the States of the federation regardless of their political affiliations were represented at the occasion not minding the fact that it was a PDP- Federal Government Controlled Programme. One of the areas addressed by the Scheme was a reduction on the control which Local Government Councils have on education. However, despite this policy, currently, Secretaries of Education Authorities at the Local Government level are still being appointed by Local Government Chairmen. But if the September 29, 1999 policy of the Federal Government which transferred the control and management of primary education to

state governments is to be followed to the letter, appointments of Secretaries of Education Authorities should be the responsibility of State Governments. However, this role is not properly defined and because of this reason it is prone to frictions especially where different political parties control different levels of governments. For instance, in November 1999, the Oyo State Government announced the removal of eighteen (18) out of twenty-four (24) Secretaries of Education Authorities in the State. Apparently it did this because of the September 1999 arrangement that transferred the management and control of primary education at the Local level to the State Government. However, the affected Secretaries challenged the action of the State Government in a High Court in Ibadan and the case was decided in their favour.

The September, 1999 UBE Scheme also altered the stages of the country's educational system. It was changed from; 6-3-3-4 system to 9-3-3-4 system (now nine years in primary school, three years in secondary school and four years in the University). This policy affects not only Federal owned schools but also State; Local and privately owned primary and post-primary schools. The IGR under the Scheme is being cemented with a proviso that State governments should have 'State Universal Basic Education Board' (SUBEB). Although State governors are empowered to constitute the Board, its allegiance is to the 'Universal Basic Education Commission' always constituted by the Federal Government. Therefore, regardless of their political affiliations, the State and the Federal Governments are bound to inter-relate in the area of education. In fact, UBEC has the responsibility of ensuring the effective implementation of the UBE scheme nationwide.

Furthermore, the establishment of twelve (12) Federal Universities by the administration of President Goodluck Elebe Jonathan between 2011 and 2012, made both the Federal Government and Governments of the beneficiary States to inter-relate. The role of the beneficiary State governments not minding their political differences was mainly in the area of providing the enabling environment for the Universities to take-off. Towards this end, officials from National Universities Commission (NUC) and those of the beneficiary states inter-relate on several occasions before the take-off of the institutions and continue to inter-relate after their take-off. Also, State Governments played significant role in the determination of where to site each University. For instance, controversy marred the decision of the Federal Government on the town that will host the Federal University sited in Ekiti State. Both Ikole-Ekiti and OyeEkiti wanted the university to be located in their separate towns. The controversy degenerated to crisis in which lives were lost. At long run, while the seat of the University (with majority of facilities) was located in Oye-Ekiti, Ikole-Ekiti was compensated with the Faculty of Agriculture. It should however, be noted that the amicable resolution of the dispute came about as a result of IGR between the Federal Government and Ekiti State Government on one hand; and the people of the communities in dispute (Oye-Ekiti and IkoleEkiti) on the other hand.

**Conclusion** This study had attempted a comparative study of how a political principle, IGR, can be applied to the workings of Nigeria's educational system. The study begins with introduction, conceptual clarification and the application of the principle of IGR to Nigeria's educational system. This took the form of epoch reportage in which case IGR was applied to Nigeria's educational policy during Colonial /First Republic; Military interregnum; Second and Fourth Republics.

The following observations were made:

- (i) During colonial days, Nigeria operated unitary system of government till 1954. This did not allow IGR to thrive as regards educational system. Apart from the giant strand made by the old Western Region in 1955 through the introduction of free education programme, Colonial Government did not strictly speaking, inter-relate with Regional Governments in the area of education. In the First Republic regional Universities were established by Regional Governments to promote their educational parochial interests.
- (ii) Federal Governments has been resorting to educational policies as a way of fostering national unity. This explains why the country currently has forty (40) Federal Universities with each of the thirty-six States of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, having at least one.
- (iii) The application of the principle of IGR to Nigeria's educational system had fared differently under various regimes depending on the form of government in practice at any point in time.

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- (iv) Most of the challenges (especially frictions between states and federal Government) can be attributed to the problem of federalism caused by weak constitutional provisions and the myopic interest of policy actors.

Based on the above findings, the study recommends that:

1. There should be strong constitutional provisions to help enforce and maintain the interrelationships of the different levels of government in the area of education.; and where they exist, they should be made functional;
2. Federal Government should continue to adopt education as a mechanism for fostering national integration; and
3. Nigerian political actors should endeavour to promote 'public interest' as opposed to 'private interest' to 'private interest' by fostering healthy IGR at all times.

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