



Impact of Inflation on Infrastructure Facilities Development of Basic Schools in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the impact of inflation on infrastructural facilities development of Basic schools in Nigeria. A documentary research method was employed, where secondary data were used in this paper and the secondary data were collected from online publications and print materials. The study established that inflation has affected the development of infrastructure facilities in Basic schools in Nigeria. The paper also concluded that contract review, increment in cost of building materials, increment in labour, suspension of projects and delay in the commencement of new projects are the impact of inflation on infrastructure facilities development in the Basic schools in Nigeria. The government should provide a conducive business environment for manufacturers of building materials by giving them access to loan facilities, constant power supply and a secure environment. The government should diversify the economy by encouraging more local production of material resources for local uses and exportation. The government should reduce import duties on construction materials and equipment to reduce the cost of construction.

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INTRODUCTION

The education provided to children between the ages of 0 and 15 is known as basic education. It includes ten years of formal education as well as early childhood care and development education (0–4). However, early childhood care and development education is divided into two age groups: those under four years old, who are in daycare centers or crèches and are entirely under the control of social development agencies and the private sector, and those who are five and six years old, who are enrolled in formal school. The objectives of basic education are to:

- a) give children a wide range of fundamental knowledge and skills for entrepreneurship, wealth creation, and educational advancement;
- b) raise patriotic youth capable of carrying out their civic duties and contributing to social development;
- c) instill moral principles and produce morally pure people who can live independently thinking, and who value the dignity of labor;
- d) encourage a sense of national consciousness and peaceful coexistence, regardless of variations in wealth, religion, race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status; and e. offer chances for children to acquire manipulative skills that will allow them to contribute to society as fully as possible.

The availability of both human and material resources is a prerequisite for the accomplishment of Basic School Objectives. Among the material resources are school plants, teaching resources, and infrastructure amenities. Infrastructure facilities, in the opinion of Osagie (2003), symbolize the attractive image of the school that is presented by the placement of structures in relation to one another. Additionally, it illustrates the actual value of the entire school setting in carrying out the school's operations (teaching and learning). In precise words, he claimed that the school plant consists of buildings, playgrounds, structures, buildings for security, trees, lawns, hedges, and utilities. A well-maintained physical facility, on the other hand, can deter early dropouts and make learning more enjoyable. Physical infrastructure can improve people's performance, which is why the aforementioned development occurred (Ayeni, 2017). It is able to additionally draw in higher caliber educators. Physical facilities, according to Anike and Tari (2011), are those items that assist students learn efficiently and allow teachers to perform their jobs to the highest standards. For instance, the student can get information more easily thanks to the chalkboard.

School facilities are also described by Emetarom (2004) as tangible items that support and facilitate instruction in order to improve outcomes. According to her, these kinds of facilities serve as the pivot around which enjoyable teaching and learning are constructed. Infrastructure is so important that some have claimed an institution lacks integrity if it does not provide students with library infrastructure (Ayeni, 2018). More significantly, infrastructure is defined by

Ehiametalor (2001) as the operational input of all instructional programs and as the components required for both teaching and learning. These consist of structures, labs, equipment, furnishings, and electrical fittings. These need to work well with other community resources like libraries, health centers, and decent roads. They also need to be big enough to accommodate future growth.

Enrollments rise. As can be seen from the foregoing, infrastructural facilities are those resources, made of materials, that help any institution carry out service delivery. Infrastructure facilities, in particular, are those found in postsecondary institutions that support the implementation of community services, teaching, and research. Educational facilities are described as non-human and non-financial resources that include moveable and immovable things that improve teaching and learning by Odey, (2018) and Abdulkareem (2000).

According to Ogunode and Agwor (2021), the following are some of the reasons that infrastructure is important in educational institutions: it helps with the efficient administration of administrative functions in schools; it makes service delivery quick and dependable; it helps teachers deliver lessons quickly; it creates a conducive working environment for both teachers and students; it allows students to learn well and at ease; and it gives teachers the ability to prepare their lessons and deliver them online (ICT). One cannot undervalue the role that school infrastructure plays in achieving academic objectives. For this reason, it has been observed that the improvement of infrastructure improves human security (Ayeni, Andeshi, & Uzoigwe, 2022). School facilities support the way that the teaching and learning process is carried out in throughout the educational institutions. The school fence shields children, instructors, and administrators from criminals while the school offices give teachers a comfortable place to work. The classrooms aid in the learning process. But there are also some unanticipated advantages to infrastructure (Ayeni, Sani, Andeshi, Ibrahim, & Adamu, 2021). The entire human resource base is shielded from the elements by the school plant from the sun, rain, heat, cold, and snow (Ogunode & Agwor, 2021).

Because of the annual increase in student enrollment, all Nigerian educational institutions are constantly developing their facilities. Since there isn't a single educational institution in Nigeria without active efforts to develop school facilities, one could characterize Nigerian educational institutions as construction sites. One type of educational institution in Nigeria that is distinguished by the development of its infrastructure is the basic school, which is a result of its annual enrollment growth. All basic schools in Nigeria have ongoing facilities projects, with the exception of those that have recently undergone renovations and expansions by the government or private citizens.

Development of infrastructure is known to create an atmosphere that is suitable (Ayeni, Abdullahi & Andeshi, 2021). Inflation is just one of the many issues that impede the development of infrastructure and facilities in Nigerian

basic schools. It has been said that inflation is an economic ill that works to impede economic growth. An economy experiencing a persistent overall increase in the cost of goods and services is said to be experiencing inflation. According to an index like the consumer price index (CPI) or the implicit price deflator for the gross national product (GNP), it can be described as an ongoing increase in prices. "Too much money chasing too few goods" is a common description of inflation. The value of money decreases when there is inflation. The amount of money that a certain quantity of When there is inflation in the economy, the value of the naira would gradually decrease. For example, if the price of cement doubles in the following period and N10.00 can buy 10 bags of cement in the present period, then N10.00 can only buy 5 bags of cement. Ogunode and Ukozor (2023) define inflation as the steady increase in prices of goods and services over a period of time. According to Femi (2022), inflation occurs when a lot of money can only be used to buy a small number of products and services. According to Tucker (2007), consumer prices and the GDP's gross domestic product are measured by inflation. Prices for locally produced products and services are measured by the deflator. As noted above, inflation is viewed in this work as an economic time when a large amount of money is in circulation but not enough to purchase a wide range of products and services. When money no longer has the same purchasing power as it once did, or is worth less than it once was, inflation has taken place. It occurs when a significant amount of money is focused on a small number of products and services during a certain period of time.

It has been observed that inflation affects secondary school pupils' performance both directly and indirectly (Ukozor, Ayeni, & Andeshi, 2024). Moving forward, inflation is an economic issue that may restrict progress, according to Ishaya and Ogunode (2021); Omuru (2022); and Oludare (2024). Inflation deters investment and might contribute to a high national unemployment rate. A worldwide issue, inflation affects both developed and developing nations, including Nigeria. According to Olufemi (2024) and Ogunode and Ukozor (2023), Nigerian inflation consistently has an impact on all public and private institutions, particularly those that provide basic education. Based on this, the purpose of this article was to investigate how inflation has affected the development of infrastructure and facilities in Basic schools in Nigeria.

The disengagement of teachers and other administrative staff during inflation by school management to reduce the cost of operation and to be in the market has implications for quality education. When the teacher-student ratio is low and few teachers are teaching larger numbers of students, it affects the quality of education.

During inflation, managers of schools due to a shortage of funds available to schools decided to reduce procurement of all needed educational resources and only purchase a few as a result inflation increases the operational cost of the schools. This decision of not buying the required and adequate

teaching and learning resources affects the quality of education because education can be likened to a system in that all resources must be provided with the right qualities and deployed. The failure to do this will affect the quality of education.

The cost of living of teachers is affected by inflation because teachers who have access to little money at hand are constrained in terms of their movement to school and attendance in the classroom. When teachers miss class and cannot teach the entire period as planned in the scheme and syllable as a result of inflation; the missed classes and lessons will imply students resulting in poor quality of education because students do not learn what they are supposed to learn at the right time.

During inflation many poor parents cannot afford to transport their wards to schools regularly and some wards do not eat well in their rooms due to the high prices of foodstuff in the market. The poor feeding of the children at home leads to malnutrition and poor class attendance. This action affects student learning and has led to poor quality of learning.

Inflation can hamper education development because it makes all educational resources unreachable to school managers, students and parents. Inflation leads to an increase in school fees that affect student enrolment, retention and school completion. Inflation affects facility development and maintenance in schools and can lead to poor quality of education if those resources are not provided as a result of inflation.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is hinged on system theory. The theory offers an alternative approach to the planning and management of education like Basic education. The systems management theory proposes that education can be likened to the human body that has a goal to attain and consists of multiple components that work harmoniously so that the larger system can function optimally. According to the theory, the success of an educational system depends on several key elements: synergy, interdependence, and interrelations between various subsystems. The realization of the education goals depends on the effective relationship between the sub-unit or component in the system. Every component is important and its role is very vital to the attainment of the institution's goals. Therefore, the failure of the governance system to perform its responsibility is affecting the educational system (Ogunode, Ayeni, & Olorundare, 2024)

In the application to this paper, Nigeria can be likened to a system made up of sub-components like education, health, energy, politics, infrastructure, religious institutions, culture, economy (Inflation, unemployment, deflation) et cetera. All the sub-component needs one another to

work effectively and to realize the goals of Nigeria. The malfunction of one component affects the functioning of other components. Thus, it has been noted that when a structure is not performing its function optimally; depravities often appear (Joseph, Cinjel, & Ayeni, 2017). The above further is explained by scholars when they argued that when a structure like a government fails to perform its expected role, there are bound to be negative consequences (Ayeni, & Nwaorgu, 2018). If the economy that is made up of Inflation, unemployment, and deflation is allowed to be disrupted by inflation, it will affect the operation of the entire system because it is a system that depends on several key elements: synergy, interdependence, and interrelations between various subsystems.

Impact of Inflation on Infrastructure Facilities Development in Basic Schools in Nigeria

There are many impacts of inflation on infrastructure facilities development in the Nigerian Basic schools. Some of these impacts include; contract review, increment in cost of building materials, increment in labour, abandonment of projects and delay in the commencement of new projects.

Contract review

Inflation in Nigeria has led to a review of some major contracts awarded for the building of facilities in some basic schools across the country. Contractors handling various infrastructure facilities projects in some Basic schools in Nigeria have called for a review of the contract due to the high rate of inflation that has pushed up the prices of human and materials resources needed to complete the projects assigned and planned. Peter (2022) maintained that due to the high cost of building materials in Nigeria, many contractors managing projects in various educational institutions across the country are calling for a review of contract agreements because initial agreements on the contracts are no longer visible and implementable. Studies by Obi (2023) confirmed that contract review is a major feature of an inflationary economy because there will always be variation.

Increment in cost of building materials

The price of building materials has increased drastically in the market due to inflation and this has affected facilities development in most Basic schools where projects like building of more classrooms, computer centres and offices are going on. Contractors handling various projects in Basic schools across the country are complaining about the high prices of building resources. This has slowed down many projects because contracts need to seek review of the contracts to get more funds to deploy for the completion of the facilities in the Basic schools. Muhammed and Abu (2022) noted that inflation is a major problem of infrastructural facilities development because it affects the procurement of resources for the projects. Peter (2022) lamented that many school projects have

been suspended due to inflation and this has affected the quality of education because teaching and learning must take place in an environment that is conducive for both teachers and students. Femi (2022) observed that when facilities that are supposed to be in use are not there because of problem link inflation it affects the implementation of school programmes. Oludare (2024) and Ogunode and Ukozor (2023) concluded that inflation in Nigeria has led to an increment in the general prices of building materials which hurts the facilities' completion. Livinspace (2023) quoted a Guardian article that stated that Nigeria's inflation rate as of December 2023 climbed to 28.9% due to the effects of petrol subsidy removal and the aforementioned exchange rate crisis, both exerting substantial impacts on consumer prices. The direct effect of this (particularly the exchange rate) is being felt mostly on imported materials like windows, doors, tiles, plumbing and sanitary fixtures et cetera, which represent over 20% of the construction materials in the market. The prices of the local materials, which account for almost 40% of materials in the market, have also been affected by the increase in the cost of production and transportation due to the subsidy removal. Put together, this accounts for 60% of the materials that go into a given construction project, increasing the overall cost of construction. Prices of essential building materials such as cement, blocks, doors, reinforcement rods, sand, timber, paints, roofing sheets, glass and tiles have risen by over 75% in the last 12 months to as high as 100- 200 per cent over the last two years.

Table 1.1 Prices of construction materials

Items	Previous Rate	New Rate
Cement	N4700 / bag	N6500 – N9500 / bag (depending on location)
9 inch Blocks	N450	N550
6 inch Blocks	N370	N500
Steel Rebar 8mm	N225 000 / tonne	N518 000 / tonne
Steel Rebar 10mm	N422 000 / tonne	N520 000 / tonne
Steel Rebar 12-16mm	N446 000 / tonne	N515 000 / tonne

Source: Guardian

The development has made it difficult for property developers and contractors to deliver affordable housing for over 75 per cent of Nigerians, who lack access to desirable, dignified accommodation. This has implications for infrastructure facilities development in the educational institutions in Nigeria.

Increment in labour

Inflation in Nigeria has led to an increment in the salaries of workers in the building industries across the country especially those working in educational institutions like Basic schools. Yusuf (2018) observed that workers in the building industries are Nigerians who buy goods and services every day. The workers spend a lot on transportation, feeding and family needs. So, they have justifications to demand for increase in wages or salaries as the economy is a chain and system that affects everybody in it. Omuru (2022) and Ogunode, Eze, and Olumodeji (2024) opined that one of the reasons for the increases in the wages of workers in the building industries is inflation. An economy that is inflation-inclined affects the salaries and wages of workers. Livinspace (2023) noted that the naira has nose-dived beyond any record in history. Most of the building materials are imported, which are usually imported with foreign currency. Secondly, the cost of transporting materials has skyrocketed because of the increase in the pump price of petroleum products under the claim of removal of petroleum subsidy. The prices of these products go up almost every week. These and other factors such as the cost of labour have generated high multiplier effects on the cost of construction.

Abandonment of projects

Many projects are abandoned in Nigerian Basic schools as a result of inflation. The above development hinders access to education that is projected to empower people (Ayeni, Sani, Idris, & Uzoigwe, 2019). Inflation causes the prices of building resources to be high, making it impossible for contractors to complete the projects and the government due to bureaucratic processes may delay reviewing such contracts which has resulted in abandoned projects across the Basic schools in Nigeria. Nwanekezie, and Nwanguma, (2019) undertook a study on the causes of abandoned projects and found that inflation, wrong estimates, inadequate planning, poor risk management and inadequate finance are the significant factors causing the abandonment of building projects in Nigeria. Another study by Mac-Barango (2017) examined the causes and effects of abandonment of construction projects in Nigerian schools and indicated inflation, bankruptcy of contractors, inadequate funding, inadequate planning, variation of project scope, faulty design, delay, and quackery are factors responsible for projects' as factors responsible for projects abandonment in Nigeria. Ogunode and Murtala (2022) concluded that inflation has contributed to project abandonment in Nigerian schools.

Delay in the commencement of new projects

Due to inflation in Nigeria, many Basic school administrators have decided to suspend the commencement of new projects that the PTA and SBMCB are financing in their respective schools. The funds generated and available for the identified school project can no longer finance the school projects as a result

of inflation. Musa (2023) remarked that many public and private schools in Nigeria have intentionally delayed the commencement of new projects like the renovation of classrooms, and the building of toilet facilities and computer centres as a result of inflation. The money at hand cannot start and finish the projects as planned by the management. The above development has sentenced more people to poverty. Consequently, scholars have further argued that this poverty causes insecurity (Muhammed, & Ayeni, 2018).

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper critically assessed the impact of inflation on infrastructural facilities development in Basic schools in Nigeria and established that inflation has affected the development of infrastructure facilities in Basic schools in Nigeria. The paper also concluded that contract review, increment in cost of building materials, increment in labour, abandonment of projects and delay in the commencement of new projects are the impact of inflation on infrastructure facilities development in the Basic schools in Nigeria.

Based on the findings of this study, the paper hereby recommends that:

1. The government should develop a master plan for building industries' local sources of materials and encourage more local production of building materials in Nigeria to reduce the prices.
2. The government should provide a conducive business environment for manufacturers of building materials by giving them access to loan facilities, constant power and a secure environment.
3. The government should diversify the economy by encouraging more local production of material resources for local uses and exportation.
4. The government should lower the import duties on construction materials and equipment to reduce the cost of construction.

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