



## THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE ON THE NIGER AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ANAMBRA STATE: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF POLICY IMPACTS 2010-2023

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### Abstract

*The contribution of the Policies of the Diocese on the Niger as a Christian body in fostering a qualitative and sustainable education has been so impactful. Her involvement in education helped in several ways in developing the mind of the people. Impact of education in the Diocese on the Niger has so far brought too many developments both in structure, human capacity building, raising of trust worthy leaders. The main purpose of this research is to examine and appraise the roles, contributions and impacts of the Church educational policies of the Diocese on the Niger Anglican Communion. The crux of the research is to study the positive and negative impacts of Educational Policies of the Diocese to see what the present Church has done so far in educational sector with a view to spurring the Church into a better action. Theories of Perennialism and Progressivism were applied in this study. The findings show that Educational Policies of the Diocese on the Niger has rejuvenated several governments returned schools to some enviable heights, gave scholarships to indigent students from lower class and establishment of more institutions of higher learning to improve societal literacy level. However, though the Diocese at the center has great vision for its education sector, there are still gaps where the Policies of Education within the Diocese needs to fill up. The research thereby recommends that the Education Commission of the Diocese should put more efforts in monitoring and evaluation of all Diocesan schools to ensure that the mode of operation of Diocesan Education Policy is adhered to. There should be adequate programme to improve the welfare of the teachers and staff of all Diocesan Schools. Furthermore, there should be strict adherence to episcopal directives on the financial capacity for any church that wishes to establish a school to avoid floating of a system that operate below diocesan standard which may portray the Diocese on a bad spot.*

**Key Words:** *Impact, Education, Policy, Diocese on the Niger*

### Introduction

The church sees education as an instrument par excellence for achieving human and national development. According to Ihemtuge and Obiekwe (2024), “education is the key to unlock the door of modernization and remains the greatest instrument for development” (p.26). This means that education is a pathfinder for civilization. Anglican Diocese on the Niger in Education has in so many ways helped in educating people with necessary knowledge about the rights of every individual. It has also produced patriotic citizens who will adhere to the norms and values needed for a healthy society.

Though there are visible impacts of the Educational Policies of the Diocese on the Niger, it does not come without some negativities. This paper studies the Impacts of the Educational Policies of the Anglican Diocese on the Niger. How it has helped to improve the masses academically, to see what the present Church has done so far, on education. The study also has the intention of constructively appraising the rate at which churches establish educational institution within the Diocese and the society at large. The reason is to x-ray the roles Diocesan Education Commission are playing in carrying out a preliminary survey of an environment before giving mandate to the local church to establish a school as enshrined in the Educational Policy.



The research encourages a massive involvement of both the government, church and individuals in educational development of the society. The study will go a long way in establishing a better way for individual participation in educational development, bring to light the importance of government's oversight over education in the state at large, the research through its emphasis on moralities and vocational studies will draw the attention of the society to the benefits of attending church mission school, The study will be an eye opener on the side of the government numerous results that follows education when partners with the church, The research among other things will be reference point for the church in establishing and sustaining educational institute, the research will encourage employment of qualified teachers in the schools owned by the diocese.

This paper focuses on the of the Impacts of the Educational Policies of the Anglican Diocese on the Niger which covers six local government Area of Anambra State from 2010 – 2023. They are: Onitsha South, Onitsha North, Idemili South, Idemili North, Oyi and part of Dunukofia Local Government Areas. The climax of this period is the establishment of the University on Niger.

### **Definition of Terms**

- (a) **Impacts:** Hornby (2010), defines impact as “a powerful effect that something or somebody has on something or somebody” (p.751). This implies both the positive and negative effect of Christian involvement on educational development within the Diocese on the Niger
- (b) **Education:** Adesemowo and Sotonade (2022) defines education “as the act or process of educating or applying discipline on the mind or a process of character training” (p.1). Education according to Afe (1995) is “a tool used for the integration of individual into the society so that he can achieve self-realization, develop national consciousness, promote unity and strive for social, economic, political, scientific, cultural and technological progress”.
- (c) **Policy:** Smiths (2003) defines policy from the stand points vertical policy of organization that has the responsibility of its own implementations. He opines that Vertical policy is what we think of as the normal or traditional way in which policy decision are made.
- (d) **Diocese on the Niger:** This is referred to as a Christian denomination under Anglican Church located around the bank of River Niger. It covers six Local Government of Anambra State.

### **Development of Educational Policies of the Diocese on the Niger**

Diocese on the Niger has shown to be the pioneer of education in the eastern Nigeria. The advent of Western education in what was to become Nigeria which Diocese on the Niger became a part is usually intimately intertwined with the Christian missionary enterprise. According to Fafunwa, (1974), “the old literary and rhetorical education of the Roman era was almost completely destroyed because it was considered pagan in spirit” (p.70). People became not only disenchanted but dispirited in either receiving or reviving it. This culminated into some kind of indifference to education generally by the church. According to Fafunwa (1974):

the church however, soon realized that it could not do its work effectively unless its adherents were able to read and write. Realizing also the advantage of an „education“ that was tailored to its needs, it began to establish schools which were religiously biased, rather than the secular schools of the Roman era. In this scenario, educational authority was ultimately transferred from the state to the church. Having subsequently enacted a monopoly on education that lasted for more than a thousand years, the church proceeded to impart a tremendous impact on the intellectual life of Europe and America, which later on extended to British colonial territories in Africa and Asia. (p.71).

Anyabolu, (2000) states that “Igbo people in general embraced Western education provided by the missions because many parents began to appreciate its economic value” (p.65). More fundamentally however, was the fact that the Igbo readily welcomed the Christian faith preached by the missionaries. Because literacy was the means of learning and teaching the Christian religion. The Igbo could not but embrace it. Besides, the means of transmitting the new religion – English Language equally fascinated the Igbo. Anene (1966) avers that “our religious instruction is tolerated and accepted because it is compulsory and is a means of acquiring English, the language of trade, the law court, and government administration” (p.326).



Though the early missionaries began to arrive the Igbo environment in the 1840s, they had covered the Eastern Region with a network of churches and schools even before the British government established colonial rule along the coast in the 1890s; and in the interior, through the eve of the First World War The colonial government left most education to the missionaries and concentrated majorly on concerns regarding the organization of an effective administration and promotion of commerce. Fafunwa in Okoro (2018) states that:

The education the mission provided consisted in the most rudimentary level, of Christian religious studies, geography and arithmetic. Other subjects included grammar, reading, spelling and meaning of words. These were taught with one-overriding aim in mind: to enable the new Christian converts to acquire the mastery of the art of reading and writing, with a view to facilitating the study of sacred writings, and for the performance of religious duties. (p.69).

Fully aware of the great necessity for holistic educational development within the Anglican Diocese on the Niger, which development is hinged on inculcating the children the right moral and spiritual values rooted in sound Christian ethics, the diocese an elaborated policy that can help in developing learning process.

Diocese on the Niger Education believes that every individual is endowed with capabilities and potentials that can be harnessed and enhanced by an effective early start with developmentally appropriate pedagogical skills. Education Policy Revised (2018) states that “effective skills which focus chiefly on the process and ultimately the outcome; shall be emphasized across subject areas for high moral discipline and academic attainment; the bottom line of which is to nurture and develop resourceful and responsible citizen. The Policy has it as a mission to integrate Anglican Evangelical Vision and education with the view to producing individuals who possess high Christian moral standards, knowledge, skills and critical thinking for self-development as well as self-reliance, effective inter personal interactions and meaningful contribution to national development.

To create a maximum impact, the Diocese on the Niger Educational Policy has four major aims which to provide a uniform frame work of operation for all schools own by the Diocese, prepare learners to consciously know, and understand the necessity to serve God and man, to prepare learners for future life by adequately equipping them with knowledge and skills through effective teaching and learning skills for meaningful and productive existence alongside others, to state certain specified rules and procedures which determine the degree of authority and behavior of each participating members, to the above targets, the Education Policy developed a stipulated method of actualization states that the system will provide a high standard moral based education programs at all levels of children’s development. It will encourage learners to focus chiefly on the process for facilitating knowledge and skill acquisition; and ensuring effective application of same in life for better societal living. Among other things, the method will equip learners with creative and critical thinking skill; harness and develop individual talents in sports, arts and language. Lastly the method will inculcate the spirit of cooperative living, leadership development and civic responsibilities.

### **Impacts of Educational Policies of the Diocese On the Niger**

The involvement of the church has brought some level of impacts which can be reckoned as positive in the education sector. The following point outlines them but they are not limited to the list.

#### **1. Calvary Care Mission Foundation Education Scheme**

The Calvary care Mission foundation is a Non-Governmental Organization established by the Bishop on the Niger for the purpose of human capacity development. This scheme is bound by the theory of perelianism which states the importance of developing student’s intellect through absolute and universal knowledge. Ofojebe and Igboabuchi (2010) support this view in highlighting that “education should aim at developing the rational and intellectual of the learner” (p.144).



In 2014/2015 academic session, in the scheme with full tuition paid. 2015/2016, ten student benefited with full tuition paid while three persons received half tuition making thirteen students. In 2016/2017 session nine students were given full tuition scholarship while ten were given half tuition. In 2017/2018, eight students received full tuition scholarship while nine students received half tuition. In 2018/2019, nine students received full tuition while ten students received half tuition. In 2019/2020, nine students received full tuition while ten received half tuition. In 2020/2021, nine students were given full tuition scholarship while twelve received half tuition. In 2021/2022, nine persons received full tuition while eleven received half tuition. In 2022/2023, eleven students received full tuition while eleven students received half tuition. In 2023/2024, eleven students received full tuition scholarship while eleven student received half tuition. These students will continue to receive their school fees until they graduate.

## **2. Employment Opportunities**

Diocese on the education policy has witnessed a massive employment within its jurisdiction. Using Lady Hannah Model School Awada as an example, it has a total workforce of Ninety staff; both academic and non-academic staff. In that case, if all the schools in their large number can boast of such workforce, the resultant effect will drastic reduction of unemployment rate that has pervaded our society.

To tackle the problem of unemployment within the diocese, the education commission of the diocese has made sure that no school in the diocese lacks a qualified teacher or merging of student and pupil in a classroom where one teacher handles two classes. In such a way, the teaming youths who have educational training can apply for teaching opportunity.

Another factor that has so far increased the number of employment opportunity within the Diocese is proliferation of schools. Churches are encouraged to establish schools which is believed will help to inculcate strong morality among children. The higher the establishment of schools the higher the need of teachers. With the establishment of University on the Niger Umunya, job opportunities, have greatly increased.

## **3. More Evangelical Inroads**

Through the activities of the church in some of the schools, Christ is proclaimed to young children who may otherwise not visit the church since their parents are passive about church attendance. Okeke (2006) states:

All schools and colleges manage by the society for non-Christians are intended to be primarily and dominantly evangelistic. Daily attendance in class for religious instructions as a rule must be compulsory on the part of all scholars and giving of this instruction must ever be one of the most urgent responsibilities of the missionary in charge. (p.8).

Ani (2025) states the roles of some students in the Diocese in evangelization which has led in establishment of more churches within the Diocese and beyond.(p.89). Nwadike (2025) affirms that due to positive impact of mission schools within the diocese, Muslim families are attracted to send in their children to study in the diocesan schools. This invariably led to conversion of adherence of other religious faithful.

## **4. Better Management, Closer Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation has helped the diocesan schools in proper management of its educational institution. To achieve a positive impact in diocesan education system through evaluation, potential teachers are oblige to sit for an exam which must include mathematics and one other subject from the applicant's area of specialization. In some Diocesan schools, CCTV cameras are installed to help in monitoring both the teachers and the student. This research maintains that proper monitoring and evaluation is the first step to success in any educational institution.

## **4. Establishment of Skill Acquisition**



The establishment of skill acquisition center has improved productivity, lead to increased entrepreneurs and reduced unemployment. In order meet up with the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century demands, Diocese on the Niger established a center for skill acquisition center known as Beatrice Onyemelukwu Information and Management Technology (BOIMT)

Ani (2025) states that Beatrice Onyemelukwu Information and Management Technology (BOIMT) was establish for the sole purpose of engaging the members of the society to be skillful and self-reliant. The institution was established on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 with 5,604 graduated. Currently the school has 132 students.

## **6. Proliferation of Schools**

Proliferation of schools has increased the level of competitiveness which is a valuable tool which has helped students develop skills and also provides students with opportunities to evaluate their performances critically, helping them identify their strengths and areas of improvement. Apart from its benefits to student, proliferation of schools in the Diocese which gives room for competitiveness.

## **7. Infrastructural Development**

Chigbo-okeke (2024) highlights the role of the diocese on infrastructural development states that: “the diocese is embarking on massive infrastructural development in most Diocesan schools”. A case is made to Isu Primary School Oba, Akpaka Ogwe Primary School Ogidi where the Diocese through the instrumentality of the Parish Priest Organized the Old Boys Association took up the infrastructural development of the schools. She also cited Oba Girls where the Diocesan Women Ministry have taken up most of the infrastructure in the school. Anieto (2025) points out the roles of the diocese on infrastructural development through the participation of the Old Boys Association. Emefo (2025) corroborate that the involvement of the Old boys’ association on infrastructural development of diocesan schools cannot be over emphasised.

Furthermore, this paper discovers that there are philanthropical contribution on infrastructural development of the diocesan education system.

## **Negative Impacts**

### **1. Abandonment of Cultural Heritage**

Ojukwu (2024) states that some Diocesan mission schools have abandoned some Igbo cultural heritage. Most of the religious teachings and indoctrination in mission schools have brought to death the cultural heritage of the Igbo race in that some of the Cultures like Ozo title taking and Otu Odu are seen as sinful and phased out of school activities, even when they are being revived students and pupils no longer have interest in them again.

Because of this assertion, some individuals absconds mission schools citing lack of teaching of core Igbo cultural heritage.

### **2 Profit Base Oriented**

Nwadike (2025) is of the view that “this is a hidden fact”. Despite the facts that it is a tradition in the Diocese that every Parish must have a school which will help in evangelizing the children, the fact remains that there are some small churches that lacks the financial wherewithal to establish a school but will still go ahead with opening of a school irrespective of the number of both private, returned and public schools already within a location. In some cases, the motive is not always for intellectual development which is seen in less or little reinvestment of money generated into the development of the school.

Because of the monetary gain of establishing school every church is striving to establish a school notwithstanding the financial capacity of such church. Ojukwu also supports this view by stating that in spite of huge amount of money generated, church owned schools doesn’t take serious



consideration the welfare of their staff. This led to mass exodus of teachers to government's institution whenever the opportunity calls and also makes the staffs of some diocesan schools to operate below standard and expectation.

### **3 Lack of Qualified Trained Teachers**

According to the national policy on education (2004) it demands that the minimum acceptable qualification for teaching should be national certificate of education (NCE). Up from the previous minimum of teachers' certificate of (Grade 2), university graduates in disciplines other than education intending to make Career out of teaching are required to obtained a post-graduate diploma in education (PGDE).

Many teachers lacked experience, teach science in abstraction, lacked adequate knowledge of subject matter. And the competence to deliver. Abdullah (2007) was of the view that teacher training institution in Nigeria produce teacher that are unqualified regarding knowledge of subject matter and pedagogical skills. Due to too many projects expected to carry out by the income generated from schools which dwindle the finance of the school, employment and welfare of qualified teachers becomes an impossible task. This research discovers that while it may be true that some Diocesan schools because of meager finance employ the services untrained teachers, there are more schools that insist on NCE as basic qualification for employment as a teacher.

### **4 Bickering Among Management, Staffs and students**

This is seen when an educational institution employs people of diverse religious background or denominational lines. Chigbo-Okeke in Ani (2025) states that in some returned schools the root of bickering can be traced to the Parish Priest who wants to control the Headmistress while the Headmistress on the other hand insists that headship of the Priest is limited to the church while she is in charge of the school affairs, this breeds bickering between the supervising Priest and the Headmistress. Some churches do establish a church owned school irrespective of public-mission school in the same compound. However, the causes of bickering in some cases could be traced to desire of some teachers to continue with truancy, laxity, extortion of student and examination mal practices which the supervising priest has rebuffed.

On the other hand, Ojukwu in Ani (2025) states that in some situations, the unhealthy bickering is among students. This is caused by some religious teachings and doctrines of some denominations which may not be in consonance with a sister denomination. The students out of zeal and love for their denomination begin to quarrel among themselves.

### **5 Less Reinvestment of Education Proceed**

This is a situation where money generated from a school is not reinvested solely for rebuilding of school's system. It can be used in upgrading the basic infrastructure in education sector of the diocese. However, in the Diocese on Niger Education System, schools and Parishes differs on the ways and types of reinvestment of educational proceed. Ani states that for the purpose of reinvestment of educational proceeds, some Diocesan Schools reduced their tuition below what is paid in most Private schools within Onitsha. Some Diocesan Schools as way of reinvesting educational proceeds have increased the salaries and welfare packages of their workforce above what is obtainable in the private institutions.

### **Conclusion**

Anglican Diocese on the Niger in Education has in so many ways helped in educating people with necessary knowledge about the rights of every individual. It has also produced patriotic citizens who will adhere to the norms and values needed for a healthy society. The contribution of the Diocese on the in fostering a qualitative and sustainable education have been felt greatly within the Diocese.

This study discovered that in spite of its achievement in education sector, Diocese on the Niger Educational section still has gaps that needs to be filled. Though there are many positive



impacts of Educational Policies of the Anglican Diocese on the Niger within its Ecclesiastical jurisdiction, there are also negative impacts which is been experience.

Reflective analysis of impacts of Educational Policies of the Anglican Diocese on the Niger Anambra State has proved that education is very vital and a good instrumentation in building a healthy society. It's even more effective when it is handled by the ecclesiastical body. This is so because the church has from the time immemorial stood as an agent of societal transformation. This role cannot be taken away from the church. The message of the church which centers on values and good moral conducts which is the bedrock of the Anglican Diocese on the Niger is been translated and incorporated into its educational Policies. This has seen a positive impact within the Diocese with some negative impacts which the research has tried to solve.

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