

Impact Nigeria Economic Policies on the Teaching and Learning

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Submitted: 2023-03-26. Revised: 2023-04-26. Accepted: 2023-05-28.

Abstract

This research explored the influence of Nigeria's Federal Government economic policies on teaching and learning in upper basic schools within the Ilorin Metropolis. A purposive sampling method was employed to select a sample of 335 religious studies teachers at the upper basic level. Data collection was facilitated through a researcher-designed questionnaire, and the gathered data were analyzed using simple percentages. The instrument's reliability was confirmed with an index score of 0.87. The findings revealed that the Federal Government's economic policies, particularly the cashless policy and naira redesign, had adverse effects on the teaching and learning process in these schools. Furthermore, the study identified negative impacts on the procurement and utilization of instructional materials essential for effective teaching and learning. It was recommended that the Federal Government prioritize the needs of the education sector when formulating economic policies to ensure minimal disruption to the educational process.

Keywords: Economic policies; Naira Redesign; Teaching and Learning

INTRODUCTION

The government, as an institution, develops various policies that span multiple sectors, including health, politics, the economy, sports, agriculture, and education. These policies directly or indirectly influence the functionality, efficiency, and productivity of these sectors. Following an announcement by the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) on October 26, 2022, it was declared that starting from December 15, 2022, the old N200, N500, and N1000 notes would be phased out and cease to be legal tender by January 31, 2023 (Aliyu & Oluwatayo, 2023). Notably, one of the CBN's primary responsibilities is to design, redesign, and issue new currency every five to eight years. The last naira redesign occurred nearly 20 years ago (Osita et al., 2023; Otitoju et al., 2023). The Federal Government highlighted several reasons for the redesign, including better control of currency circulation (Pillah, 2023), reducing inflation and speculation against the naira, and discouraging cash-based criminal activities by promoting a cash-light economy. However, the implementation caused significant hardship, as the production and distribution of new naira notes were slow and inefficient (Folorunso & Adebayo, 2023; Lawal, 2023). This negatively affected various sectors, such as education, health, transportation, agriculture, and the economy. Furthermore, allegations surfaced of some bank officials hoarding the new notes and selling them at exorbitant rates for foreign exchange (Asaolu et al., 2023).

While the cashless and naira redesign policies were intended as economic measures to benefit Nigerians (Monye, 2023), their implementation had profound repercussions on the education sector (Orie & Orie, 2020; Ifeyinwa et al., 2023). Effective teaching and learning are hindered in environments where teachers face emotional and financial instability, struggle to purchase educational resources, or cannot meet basic needs like food. Abayomi (2023) highlighted that lecturers, students, and even visitors at Kwara State University Malete faced challenges stemming from these policies. Lecturers and students frequently missed classes due to difficulties caused by the cashless policy, potentially compromising educational quality.

These policies impacted all sectors, with education being particularly affected. Despite the potential benefits of the cashless and naira redesign policies, they proved problematic for teachers. Many struggled to access their salaries, afford transportation, or cover basic household and school-related expenses. Teachers also faced exploitation from Point of Sale (POS) operators, who charged exorbitant fees (Folorunso & Adebayo, 2023). Consequently, teaching and learning deteriorated significantly during this period, with many educators unable to sustain their families or meet fundamental needs (Ifechukwu, 2022). Dada (2023) reported that restrictions on cash withdrawals, long queues at banks, and inflated charges by POS operators compounded the difficulties. This led to absenteeism, tardiness, and diminished classroom engagement among teachers, often leaving them too demoralized to teach effectively (Folorunso & Adebayo, 2023).

The primary objective of this study was to evaluate how the Federal Government's economic policies of cashless transactions and naira redesign impacted the teaching and learning process in Ilorin Metropolis. Specifically, the study examined: The impact of these policies on the teaching of religious studies in upper basic schools in Ilorin, Kwara State. The effect of these policies on the acquisition and utilization of instructional materials for teaching religious studies in these schools.

To guide this investigation, the following research questions were posed: What is the impact of the Federal Government's cashless and naira redesign policies on teaching religious studies in upper basic schools in Ilorin, Kwara State? How do these policies affect the acquisition and utilization of instructional materials for teaching religious studies in upper basic schools in Ilorin, Kwara State?.

METHOD

This study adopted a survey research design. Data collection was conducted using a researcher-developed questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on the Impact of Federal Government of Nigeria Economic Policies of Cashless and Naira Redesign on the Teaching of Religious Studies (QIFGNEPCNRTRS)." A purposive sampling technique was utilized to select a sample of 335 upper basic religious studies teachers. The instrument underwent validation by three experts in the field of Test and Measurement, who confirmed its suitability for the study. Reliability was assessed through a test-retest method conducted over a two-week interval, with the results analyzed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC), yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.87. The study addressed two research questions, analyzed using simple percentage methods. The questionnaire was distributed by the researchers and their assistants to all 335 participants, after securing permission from the heads of the selected schools. The instrument consisted of 20 items designed to gauge the respondents' perceptions, with options to indicate Positive Impact (PI), Negative Impact (NEI), or No Impact (NI).

DISCUSSION

Highlights the effects of Nigeria's Federal Government economic policies, specifically the cashless policy and naira redesign, on the teaching of religious studies in upper basic schools within Ilorin, Kwara State. The findings indicate that these policies had no impact on 1 out of 10 assessed items. However, they negatively affected 9 out of 10 items related to the teaching of religious studies in these schools. Areas impacted include salary collection, punctuality, teaching methodologies, preparedness for teaching, transportation to and from school, feeding, motivation to teach religious studies, teachers' attitudes toward teaching, and overall living standards of religious studies teachers. Conversely, the cost of instructional materials was not affected by these policies. These results suggest that the Federal Government's cashless and naira redesign policies had a detrimental effect on the teaching of religious studies among upper basic schoolteachers in Ilorin, Kwara State.

Outlines the effects of Nigeria's Federal Government economic policies, specifically the cashless policy and naira redesign, on the procurement and use of instructional materials for teaching religious studies in upper basic schools within Ilorin, Kwara State. The findings reveal that these policies had no impact on 3 out of 10 assessed items but negatively affected 7 out of 10 items related to the acquisition and utilization of instructional materials. Items such as

textbooks, MP3 players, mobile smartphones, VCD/DVD players, chalk or markers, notebooks, and VCD/DVD cassettes were adversely impacted by these policies. In contrast, laptops, projectors, and multimedia projectors were not affected. These results suggest that the Federal Government's cashless and naira redesign policies significantly hindered the acquisition and utilization of instructional materials for teaching religious studies among upper basic schoolteachers in Ilorin, Kwara State.

The Federal Government of Nigeria's cashless and naira redesign policies had a negative impact on the teaching of religious studies among upper basic schoolteachers in Ilorin, Kwara State. This aligns with the findings of Abayomi (2023) and Folorunso and Adebayo (2023), who reported that these policies disrupted the teaching and learning process, leading to significant setbacks in academic activities. Both teachers and students faced numerous challenges due to these policies. However, this study's findings differ from those of Otitoju et al. (2023), who argued that the cashless and naira redesign initiatives were primarily economic policies aimed at generating positive outcomes for Nigerians.

Additionally, the policies adversely affected the acquisition and use of instructional materials for teaching religious studies in Ilorin. This observation supports the conclusions of Dada (2023) and Otitoju et al. (2023), who highlighted that cash scarcity and withdrawal limitations negatively impacted the ability to obtain and utilize necessary instructional resources for effective teaching in upper basic schools.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the effects of Nigeria's Federal Government policies on cashless transactions and naira redesign on teaching and learning in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State. The findings revealed that these policies negatively impacted the teaching of religious studies and hindered the acquisition and use of instructional materials by upper basic schoolteachers. To address these issues, it is recommended that the government thoroughly evaluate policies to prevent adverse effects on citizens, particularly in education. Collaboration between federal and state governments is essential to ensure that teaching and learning processes are not disrupted. Additionally, measures should be implemented to support teachers, such as simplifying salary access, providing transportation assistance, and ensuring the availability of instructional materials, to promote effective teaching and learning in religious studies.

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