

Nigeria

National Higher Education Equity Policy

Governance

Who is responsible for defining national policies in higher education?

- The Federal Ministry of Education and its Tertiary Education Department set the national higher education policies. The National Universities Commission supports the work of the Federal Ministry of Education with respect to universities by providing policy advice, assuring the quality of higher education in Nigeria, and regulating the establishment of new higher education institutions. The National Board for Technology Education plays the same role in the case of Polytechnics and the National Commission for Colleges of Education for Colleges of Education.

Higher Education Policy Documents

What are the current official documents defining the national higher education strategy / policies?

- Nigeria Economic Recovery and Growth Plan - 2017-2030
- Ministerial Strategic Plan - 2016-2019
- National Policy on Education (2013)
- National Policy on Special Needs Education in Nigeria
- Blueprint on the Rapid Revitalization of University Education in Nigeria (2018)

Equity Policy Documents

What broad and specific equity objectives do the policy documents identify?

- The National Policy on Education states that a main goal of tertiary education should be to “provide accessible and affordable quality learning opportunities in formal and informal education in response to the needs and interests of all Nigerians.” (NPE, p 26)
- To pursue these goals, the National Policy on Education outlines the need to have flexible learning modes, scholarships and loans, and dedicated services to the community, among other strategies. Open and Distance

education are also promoted in this document as ways of supporting equity goals.

Which equity target groups are identified in the policy documents?

- Gender
 - The Blueprint proposes specific interventions to increase the proportion of girls. In addition a number of universities have implemented specific interventions: “Obafemi Awolowo University, in partnership with the Carnegie Corporation, has implemented a Gender Equity Project to promote female participation through scholarships for female students, fellowships for female staff, sensitization and advocacy workshops, enlightenment and outreach programs, and networking with universities within and outside Nigeria” (Darvas, Gao, Shen, and Bawany, p 89)
- Students with disability (“Persons with special needs” are highlighted in the targeted equity policy and in the National Policy on Education)

Does the country have concrete targets for the participation of specific equity groups?

- The draft Blueprint prepared in 2018 contains specific enrollment growth targets for is adopted by the Federal Government, specific

Nigeria does not have a standalone policy document dedicated to equity promotion in higher education.

What specific interventions and/or instruments of equity promotion are included in the official strategy and policy documents (monetary and non-monetary)?

Monetary Policy Instruments

- Students do not pay tuition fees in federal universities, polytechnics and colleges, except for expenses related to administrative and educational services. Thus, about 45% of the students have their education fully subsidized.

Non-Monetary Policy Instruments

- Preferential admission procedures: Quotas have been in place since 1979 through the compulsory Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination, organized by the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB). “Merit is weighted at 45%, catchment area at 35%, while 20% goes to educationally

less developed states which are mostly situated in the northern part of the country.” (Opara 2017)

- Reformed admission procedures for women
- The National Open University is Nigeria’s principal distance university that functions under the National Universities Commission (NUC), online education offering opportunities to everyone
- Nigeria has drafted an Open Education Resources Policy and is developing this pedagogical tool as a means to enhance equity.
- The National Universities Commission has a specific section that deals with gender-related issues, the Students’ Welfare and Gender Issues section (<http://nuc.edu.ng/project/student-support-services-department/>).

Financial Resources

What financial resources does the country devote to equity promotion measures?

- Not available

Quality Assurance

The quality assurance criteria do not take equity elements into consideration.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The NUC is the main body responsible for monitoring progress on equity issues through the enrollment data that it collects and analyzes.

Dedicated Equity Promotion Agency

Nigeria does not have an agency dedicated to equity promotion in higher education.

Sources

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