



Assessing the Roles of History and Policy of Education in Promoting Inlusiveness and Skill Development in Nigeria's Secondary Education

ELEMS-IKWEGBU Helen Ngozi, PhD

Department of Educational Foundations, Rivers
State University, Rivers State, Nigeria.

helen.elems-ikwegbu@ust.edu.ng

Abstract

Secondary education is a decisive lever for social transformation in Nigeria, and educational history and policy plays a crucial role in creating awareness of the implication of the various issues in education. This paper assesses the role of history and policy of education in fostering inclusive learning environments and equipping secondary school students with the competencies required for national development in the 21st century. It traces the evolution of Nigerian educational policies from the colonial era to contemporary reforms, drawing from the educational mandate of 1925 Memorandum on Education for complete education system in the then British Colonies which included Nigeria, and highlighting efforts aimed at expanding access, addressing inequality, and integrating skill-oriented curricula in the post-independence Nigeria. Despite these policy initiatives, such as the National Policy on Education and the Universal Basic Education framework; challenges persist, including inadequate implementation, outdated pedagogical approaches, and socio-economic disparities that limit inclusive participation. The paper argues that re-examining the foundations of educational policy provides valuable insights into addressing these gaps, emphasizing that a historically informed and policy-driven approach to secondary education is essential for nurturing inclusive growth, innovation, and sustainable development in Nigeria. It recommends aligning history education with practical skill acquisition, critical thinking, and civic engagement to build a more equitable and productive society.

Keywords: History of Education, Inclusivity, Policy, Secondary Education, Skill Development

Introduction

Nigerian educational history and policy have a significant influence on the educational system, especially at the Secondary level where inclusiveness and skill development are being promoted. Legacies from earlier schooling models have created both challenges and opportunities in the form of who gains access, what is taught, and how achievement is valued. At the same time, national priorities call for inclusive participation and the growth of relevant skills, especially at the secondary level of education which is divided into junior and senior. The historical backdrop and existing policies have a huge influence on meeting the objectives of secondary education in Nigeria. This paper makes a practical case for linking the study of

the history of education with policy choices that shape secondary schools today. Analysing their effectiveness in promoting inclusiveness and skill development at the secondary level of education. It clarifies key concepts, reviews recent reforms, and proposes actionable measures on finance, curriculum, teaching, and assessment to advance fairness, strengthen competence, and support sustainable development across diverse communities in Nigeria.

History of education is the study of past educational practices, taking note of their strengths and weaknesses so as to build a better future. UNESCO (2020) defines history of education as the study of how ideas, institutions, and power shaped schooling over time, with attention to consequences that still influence classroom practice. In this view, historical analysis does not simply narrate events; it explains how one event is related to the other and possible factors that must have facilitated or hindered its progress or development. In agreement, Okorosaye-Orubite (2022) corroborates that history of education goes deeper to give a broad study of the role of education, not in its institutional forms alone, but in terms of all the influences that have helped to shape the younger generation. This conceptual stance opens a pathway for defining policy with precision, while keeping the analysis anchored to inclusion and the skills demanded by a fast changing economy.

Policy explains the way and manner a set of guidelines or instructions came into existence and the extent to which it is being applied. A layman may view policy as certain instructions guiding the behaviour and activities of people to achieve expected objectives. Thus, Elems-Ikwegbu cited in Elems-Ikwegbu (2023) defines policy as a set of guidelines that identifies or explains the functioning or tenor of individuals in any given organization. It is formulated through a process. A policy only succeeds when diverse learners participate fully, and progress reliably.

Going forward, inclusive access to education entails two inseparable commitments: access which ensures that every child can enter and remain in school till the completion of the programme, and inclusion which demands ensuring that once inside, every child learns meaningfully regardless of gender, disability, geographical location, conflict status or socio-economic background. Inclusion goes beyond physical presence in the classroom. It demands that the teaching methods, learning materials and school cultures accommodate diversity so that all learners achieve competency ((Ainscow, 2020).

Skill development as defined by World Bank (2021) is the intentional formation of transferable and technical competences that include literacy, numeracy, critical thinking, collaboration, digital fluency, civic reasoning, and work readiness. With skills defined, the discussion returns

to history and policy of education in practice. This implies that educational history and policy can become a lever for inclusive education and skill development through an inquiry approach that links past choices to present reforms.

Secondary education is the formal stage of education that consolidates foundational learning, widens general knowledge, and offers initial exposure to technical or vocational routes for transition into further study, work, and citizenship (UNESCO, 2020). This stage is a strategic hinge because it sets expectations for assessment, shapes identities during adolescence, and determines progression into opportunity structures that often reproduce inequality (OECD, 2019). Nigerian reform strategy placed secondary schooling as the platform where inclusion and skills acquisition meet daily realities. This sets up the practical question taken up next. How can history of education be taught as inquiry that builds skills while revealing the policy levers needed to correct inherited inequities across schools and communities in a credible way.

Accordingly, the thesis of this paper is that historically informed and equity sensitive policy can transform secondary education into a public good that builds inclusive participation and modern skills at the same time. The paper therefore evaluates how inquiry in history can anchor interdisciplinary projects, how inclusion standards can organise pedagogy and support, and how assessment can recognise applied competence without reproducing selection that excludes many learners. It also examines which finance and accountability rules are most likely to scale these practices across states with varied capacity and constraint. The contribution is practical guidance for decision makers and educators who must turn ambition into routines that reliably improve learning and fairness for young Nigerians in the years ahead.

Why History of Education matters for Policy and Practice

History of education clarifies how earlier choices on missions, curriculum control, examinations, and finance created patterns that still shape classrooms. Colonial reliance on mission provision privileged literary curricula and selective testing, while underfunding technical routes and rural schools (Jacob & Ensign, 2020). Post-independence embraced expansion. So, several educational policies and reforms were made to address inequalities and non-relevance. The adoption of the National Policy on Education which set forth in 1977, and revised in subsequent years (1981, 1998, 2004, 2008, not printed, and 2013 reprinted 2014) emphasizes the need for a more inclusive education and functionalism of individuals at the completion of secondary education. The aim of the policy is to provide equal educational opportunities to all children within the primary and junior secondary school age, regardless of their backgrounds. Yet, many junior and senior secondary schools still embark on teaching

theories, and rote learning to examinations rather than practical understanding (OECD, 2019). Credible reform at the secondary stage of education begins with a clear narrative of how legacies were produced and how they persist through teacher habits, assessment signals, and funding rules (World Bank, 2021). Learning from these paths helps leaders avoid repeating exclusionary designs in today's secondary school system.

A historical lens also supports an equity approach by showing which learners were left behind and why. Evidence across Nigerian states links location, poverty, disability, and language to uneven access and attainment, especially in secondary schools (UNESCO, 2020). Studies in Nigeria note that policy statements often promise inclusion but delivery varies where capacity is thin and oversight is weak (Jacob & Samuel, 2020). History nurtures identity, citizenship, and cohesion when it is taught with multiple perspectives and local voices. In this way, the subject becomes a lever for inclusive culture and for the skills that democratic life and modern work demand.

Historical Context of Nigerian Education and Policy

Nigeria's education history reflects a complex interplay of indigenous practices, missionaries cum colonial influences, and post-independence reforms. In the words of Akomolafe and Thelma (2019), indigenous educational practice was predominantly informal, community-based, and focused on life skills and vocational training for self-reliance and functionalism. Colonial education policy embraced literary curricula, and paid so much attention to examinations, which elevated grammar tracks and constrained technical options (Jacob & Ensign, 2020). From 1842, the Missionaries cum colonial educational endeavours played a pioneering role in providing western literacy. The educational provision at the time targeted on the needs of the Missionaries and colonial powers with limited access being offered to the natives. Again, the education system placed priority on religion, reading, writing, and arithmetic, while vocational training which was meant to equip the natives with essential skills was completely neglected. The 1925 Memorandum on Education came as a thunder storm to the colonial administrators as it changed the educational landscape by providing the mandate for a complete education system that would meet the local needs (Elems-Ikwegbu, 2023).

Following the independence in 1960, various reforms aimed at expanding access to education and educating the citizens for relevant skills were put in place through the outcome of conferences/summits and formulation of policies and Acts to make education productive. The United Nation Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO took the lead for educational development by organising a continental conference at Addis Ababa in 1961.

According to Okorosaye-Orubite in Elems-Ikwegbu (2023b), the conference gave important meaning to addressing the quantitative and qualitative development of education, and most importantly, ensuring that education is adapted to the social, political, economic and psychological needs of African citizens. The needs as mentioned were provided by UNESCO in Okorosaye-Orubite (2022:247) as follows:

1. Rapid expansion of quality education facilities
2. Adaptation of education to the social and economic demands of African states
3. Mass education particularly for girls, youths and even adults
4. States' commitment for allocation of sizeable portion of their budgets for adequate funding of education as well as international historical assistance
5. Urgent need for school equipment, including audio-visual and other teaching aids especially for technical, vocational and higher education
6. Production of text books adapted to the new curriculum requirements and African conditions
7. Expansion of teaching, training facilities for the supply of trained teachers to meet the demands of increased enrolment and improved education quality
8. Reinforcement of technical and vocational education at all levels
9. Expansion of facilities for the diversification of higher education course offerings

In line with the identified educational needs, the conference outlined two plans for African educational development with specific targets. The short-term (1961 - 1966) and long term (1961 - 1980) the main objective of the short-term plan was to meet manpower needs with the following targets:

1. A 50% annual increase in primary school enrolment of school age children from the existing 40% to 51%.
2. To increase secondary education from 3% of age groups to 9%
3. Special attention to be paid to the training of teachers at all levels and to adult education programme

The targets for the long-term were:

1. The attainment of free compulsory and universal Primary Education (UPE)
2. The provision of post primary education facilities for 3% of children leaving primary school
3. Provision of higher education for 20% of people who complete secondary education
4. The African nations to continually aim at constantly improving the quality of education with the following objectives:

- i. The education content to be related to economic needs, greater attention being given to science and technology
- ii. Priority to be placed on technical and vocational education at the secondary levels to equip the youth with relevant skills required for economic development
- iii. Special attention to be given to adult education and on the-job-training
- iv. Low or non-interest loans as well as tax revenues and grants to be used as sources of funds for educational development
- v. Study and research on different aspects of educational curriculum, management financing, technology and balance
- vi. The establishment of institutes for development and research in education

Based on the identified needs and recommendations the conference formulated its policies according to Psacharopoulos in Okorosaye-Orubite (2022:248) as follows:

1. Increased Coverage
2. Quality Improvement
3. Combining Education with Production
4. Curriculum Diversification/Improvement
5. Better links to Employment
6. Technical and vocational Education
7. National Unity
8. Increased Funding

The Addis Ababa Conference became a turning point for educational development of all independent African states. Following the Addis Ababa Conference were follow-up activities among which include Moscow Meeting of Experts, Jan. 1968; Nairobi Conference, July 1968; Conference of Ministers of Education and notably, 1969 Curriculum Conference which Fafunwa (2018) regarded as a major milestone in the history of education in Nigeria was held with the aim of building an education system that will interface with the national needs, aspirations and goals. During the conference, as noted by Akanbi and Abiolu (2018), a number of topics were discussed such as Curriculum Development, Teacher Training, Educational Policy, and Educational Research. The conference provided a platform for educators to discuss and share ideas on the best way forward for Nigerian education system. At the end of the conference, Akanbi (2017) notes that the main outcome of the conference were the formulation of the National Policy on Education and the adoption of the 6-3-3-4 System of Education to reflect Nigerian culture and heritage. The 1977 National Policy on Education marked a

significant shift towards inclusiveness, universal access to education and the importance of vocational training, resulting in the introduction of a number of reforms such as the launching of Universal Basic Education, 1999, curriculum revisions that emphasise entrepreneurship and civic studies, teacher reform initiatives, and policies for learners with special educational needs or disability (Salahu, 2020). However, over the years, there has been inconsistency in the implementation of these policies.

Persistent Challenges to Inclusiveness and Skill Development in Nigeria's Secondary Education

Secondary education is the stage where children take decisions regarding their educational career, hence the establishment of various reforms such as the adoption of the 6-3-3-4 system, the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly Goal 4 which focuses on inclusive and equitable quality education. The 6-3 cum the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme were designed to create awareness of the child's potential and help him acquire the knowledge or skill. The potential could be academic, vocational or technical. Whichever, at the completion of secondary schooling, the child will have a direction. The expectations are that every child irrespective of socio-economic background, physical ability/disability, geographical location, religion and culture will have equal access. However, translating these reforms and policies into practice across the nation has been highly challenging. These challenges as provided by scholars among others include:

1. **Teacher Preparation:** No education system can rise against the quality of its teachers. A qualified teacher is trained professionally to handle learners' diverse needs. It is important to ensure that teachers who are employed to teach at secondary level of education are professionally prepared for the task. Teacher preparation for inclusive pedagogy and assessment for learning is uneven, especially in special needs education. According to Ogunyemi (2020a), there is limited support for special needs education due to insufficient resources and trained personnel to cater for learners with disabilities. In agreement, (Akyeampong, 2019) states that teachers need ongoing coaching, usable materials, and time to plan for diverse learners. Nigerian case evidence confirms that without structured support, inclusion can become nominal and teachers revert to lecture and recall (Adeoye, 2025).
2. **Infrastructure and Assistive Technology Deficits:** Infrastructure constitute the school learning environment. Many public schools lack basic amenities such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories, workshops, assistive technology among others. Inadequate infrastructure and assistive technology hinder effective learning and skill development at the secondary level of education (Adedeji & Afolabi, 2021). Many learners, especially those

with disabilities seem to be excluded from school due to poor Infrastructure and inadequate or lack of assistive technology.

3. **Financing:** Financing rarely follows vulnerability. Budget allocations seldom include weights for poverty, rurality, disability, or conflict exposure, so schools serving the most disadvantaged face the steepest challenges (UNICEF et al., 2021). Policy analyses recommend formula funding with transparency to reduce volatility and to signal priorities clearly (World Bank, 2021). Nigerian reviews underline the gap between policy text and fiscal practice (Jacob & Samuel, 2020).
4. **Limited School-Industry Partnerships:** Inclusiveness and skill development requires industry partnerships where learners are availed opportunities for authentic projects or work exposure at the secondary stage (Sanubi & Akpotu, 2020). Global skills agendas call for community linked tasks and entrepreneurship education that connect learning to local economies (Brookings Institution, 2020). Without these links, students' performance and the overall education quality and outcome are seriously affected.

Principles for Inclusiveness and Skills Development in Nigeria's Secondary Education

There is no gainsaying that secondary education is the back bone of every nation. Nigeria is not an exception. Its effectiveness in promoting inclusiveness and skill development is dependent upon various principles that must be embedded in policy in policy and practice. These principles as provided by scholars include:

1. **Equity in Access:** Equity and access are old phenomena in Nigeria education system, especially at the secondary stage of schooling. Equity in education is to ensure fair access and impartial opportunities for every child irrespective of their challenges, while access to education is "free and unlimited/unhindered/unfettered opportunities at each level of education to obtain adequate knowledge, skills, abilities available at that level needed to optimally participate and contribute to the development in the society" (Okorosaye-Orubite in Abdulrahman & Elems-Ikwegbu, 2019:273). Going by the above explanation, equity in access can be said to refer to equal opportunity to quality education irrespective of socio-economic backgrounds, gender, geographical location or disabilities. To address this principle, special provisions should be made for marginalized groups, including children with disabilities as provided in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2014). Also, scholarships and community awareness programme for girls, especially in the northern regions are essential to improve access for girls in secondary schools (Ugwu, 2021).
2. **Relevance to Local Needs:** The current economic situation in Nigeria demands that students, beginning from the secondary level of education should acquire skills that are

applicable to local needs. This can be achieved mainly through curriculum development. For example, integrating technical/vocational training is crucial for providing students with practical skills. The National Policy on Education laid emphasis on these programmes to produce graduates who can be relevant in the job market (FRN, 2014).

3. **Quality Assurance:** Quality in education according to Garba in Okediji (2019) refers to the educational ability to meet learners' demands, this includes the learning environment, process and outcomes. Assurance as provided by Garba in Okediji (2019:259) is "the proactive means of ensuring quality in an organization." Assurance is all about having full confidence, creating conviction and no form of doubt with high level of capability for a task. Quality assurance in education as defined by Adegbesan in Abdulrahman and Elems-Ikwegbu (2019:275) is "accountability on maximization, effectiveness and efficiency of educational system and services in relation to their contexts." Quality assurance has its focus on the following: (i). Learners' entry behaviour (ii). Teachers' qualification (iii). The teaching and learning process which includes the curriculum content, its delivery and the environment. (iv). The output or outcome (Adegbesan in Abdulrahman & Elems-Ikwegbu, 2019:275). From the foregoing, quality assurance if strictly adhered to base on past experiences can enhance inclusiveness and skills development.
4. **Historical Inquiry at the Core:** History becomes a tool for system improvement when students analyse policy texts, oral histories, and archival sources to explain how past choices produced present conditions. This approach builds use of evidence, perspective taking, and civic reasoning while revealing reform levers that students and teachers can debate (Barsch, 2025). Teachers need coaching and curated source packs to make inquiry routine rather than occasional enrichment (Akyeampong, 2019). National guidance should provide sequenced tasks across grades, with clear rubrics and exemplars that show progression in analysis, writing, and presentation (OECD, 2019).
5. **Curriculum Integration:** History themes can anchor interdisciplinary projects that draw on literature, economics, science, and civic education. A unit on schooling and work, for example, can combine labour history with data analysis and community interviews to design youth service initiatives. This integration supports communication, digital research, and civic action while maintaining subject rigour (Brookings Institution, 2020). A practical step is to publish task banks linked to standards, with options for rural and urban contexts and with guidance on scaffolding for different readiness levels (Darling-Hammond, 2020). Teacher policy should support coaching, peer learning, and micro credentials in inclusive pedagogy and assessment for learning (Ainscow, 2020).

6. **Universal Design for Learning:** Inclusion requires multiple ways to access content, express learning, and sustain engagement. Teachers should offer choice of texts and media, use visuals and audio supports, and allow products such as papers, podcasts, or exhibitions, all aligned to the same standards (UNESCO, 2020). School teams need simple screening tools, assistive devices, and collaboration protocols with specialists so that support is timely and normalised (Adeoye, 2025). Professional learning should model universal design in its own delivery to build teacher confidence and shared language (Ainscow, 2020).
7. **Assessment for Growth:** Assessment systems should combine examinations with validated portfolios, exhibitions, and performance tasks. Moderation protocols help ensure fairness across schools while encouraging teachers to value application and reflection (Apelehin et al., 2025). Rubrics should describe quality in clear, student facing terms and should be used for feedback as well as grading (OECD, 2019). Where schools pilot such systems, evidence shows improved motivation and richer student work products, especially when teachers receive feedback on their judging and planning (Darling-Hammond, 2020).
8. **Community and Industry Engagement:** Authentic problems from local government, heritage bodies, and employers can inform project design and provide audiences for student work. Partnerships can include site visits, oral history collaborations, and short placements that align with curriculum goals (Sanubi & Akpotu, 2020). These connections make learning relevant and help students see pathways into further study and work. Guidance should include templates for memoranda of understanding, sample project briefs, and safeguarding checklists to reduce transaction costs for schools (World Bank, 2021).
9. **Data Driven Equity:** Schools and systems should track access, participation, progress, and transition by subgroup through simple dashboards that guide action rather than compliance. Indicators might include attendance, reading growth, portfolio completion, and placement in further education or training (UNICEF et al., 2021). Data should be discussed in professional learning communities with a focus on strategies and resource use, not on blame (Ainscow, 2020). Transparent reporting can build trust and support targeted resource allocation to the learners and schools that need it most (OECD, 2019).

Together, these principles align classroom work with system design. They connect history inquiry to inclusive pedagogy, balance assessment, and community relevance, while focusing leadership attention on the learners who face the highest barriers. Sequenced implementation and coaching are essential to sustain change.

Leveraging History of Education for the Propagation of Inclusiveness and Skill

Development

History of education is deeply intertwined with societal values, policies, and practices. In leveraging historical context, nations particularly Nigeria, can address the current challenges of inclusiveness and skill development in education systems. Understanding past educational movements, policies, and frameworks can provide insights into creating more equitable educational platforms that foster skill acquisition and inclusiveness. Again, diving into the historical patterns of exclusion and injustices of the neglecting of girls' education, and marginalized communities can redirect policies at reversing the trends (Eze, 2017). This transformation is essential for equipping the current and future generations with the necessary competencies to foster sustainable development.

History courses can be redesigned as inquiry studios where students interrogate how policy choices on language, examinations, and finance shaped opportunity, then propose alternatives for their schools and communities. Teachers can guide source work, debates, and simulations that connect past reforms to present dilemmas, such as balancing examinations with portfolios or funding schools by need (Barsch, 2025). Practical exemplars can draw on living heritage and community experiences strengthen communication, collaboration, and civic action while deepening historical understanding.

Policies grounded in the history of education will be able to prioritize gender equity. Learning from gender biases of the past can help design programmes that support girls' education, addressing socio-economic barriers that exist today (UNESCO, 2020). Important also is ethnic inclusivity. Acknowledging the diverse cultural heritage of Nigeria can inspire curricula that incorporate local histories and languages, promoting cultural identity and inclusiveness (Nwodo, 2020). Going further, the evolution of vocational and technical education in Nigeria provides valuable lessons. As the 1925 Memorandum on Education provided the need to redesign education to address local needs, the regional cum nation-wide education scheme sidelined vocational/technical training in favour of formal academic pathways.

Historical evidence shows that vocational/technical education responds to market needs. Revamping these programmes can produce adequate skilled workforce suited for today's technological driven world and economic challenges. In this context, drawing from traditional education practices that emphasized community involvement can ensure that skills relevant to local needs are taught (Ogunyemi, 2020b). In this model, history becomes a practical engine

for inclusion and skills development. Based on historical insights discussed, the following steps among others can be made to foster inclusiveness and skill development

1. **Curriculum Reform:** According to Akanbi (2020), curricula can be revised to incorporate local knowledge systems, agriculture, technology and vocational skills to reflect both historical and contemporary needs. Curriculum guidance should embed universal design strategies and publish task banks that teachers can adapt, including interdisciplinary projects anchored in history (OECD, 2019).
2. **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Educational policies can be promoted through community engagement initiatives that highlight the value of inclusive education and vocational training (Ogunyemi, 2020b)
3. **Government and Private Sector Collaboration:** In the words of Akanbi (2020), drawing from successful historical models, government can establish partnerships that leverage resources to enhance access to skill training, especially in technology and vocational education.

Reassessing Nigeria's Education System for Inclusiveness and Skill Development through Educational History and Policy

The historical context of Nigeria's educational system has revealed that since the introduction of Western education, various steps have been taken to improve education in quality and quantity at different stages. However, the nation has faced numerous challenges which have hindered the achievement of desirable results. Since history of education provides information on past educational practices, taking note of their strengths and weaknesses so as to build a better future. In other words, it gives direction to educational practices. So, it is crucial to reassess the educational system through the historical lens and policy practices for the promotion of inclusiveness and skill development. Bellow are steps to take for effective reassessment of the education system as provided by scholars:

1. **Colonial Education Policies:** Always recognize the fact that the past educational practices had stringent access policy which favoured mostly the elites, neglecting the broader society and relevance to local needs (Adeyemi, 2013). The knowledge of past educational practices and its impact on the larger society at the time will keep giving direction on promoting a sound education system for complete development.
2. **Post-Independence Education Policies:** From UPE to UBE. Historical insights on the policies of the uneven regional Primary Education Scheme of 1955, 1957 and 1958 in the Western, Eastern and Northern Regions respectively, leading to the Universal Primary Education (UPE) Scheme of 1976 and Universal Basic Education (UBE) Scheme of 1999

can give directions to the immediate and long-term measures to improve the education system. (Okorosaye-Orubite, 2008; Ocho, 2017 & Abdulrahman 2023).

3. **Practical Education at the Pre-Colonial and Colonial Periods:** Education system during the pre-colonial period was fully characterized by practical skills to prepare the child for everyday life. The colonial administration introduced what was referred to by Okorosaye-Orubite (2022:34) as a “lop-sided literary/academic education system” with poorly planned practical education which had no pride of place and was therefore declared harmful to individual, economic, and societal growth. Drawing from this context, Nigerian education can be repositioned.

By aligning finance, curriculum, assessment, and professional learning, policy can enable secondary schools to deliver inclusion and skills at scale. Coherence, transparency, and steady support are the essential conditions for progress.

Conclusion

A system that understands its own history makes wiser choices. Nigeria can turn history of education into an applied and inquiry rich experience that strengthens inclusion and builds the competences young people need for life, work, and citizenship. The analysis shows that legacies can be addressed when finance follows need, when curriculum and pedagogy anticipate diversity, and when assessment counts application alongside examinations. Coaching and professional communities help teachers make these shifts in real classrooms. With sequenced implementation and transparent reporting, policy ambition can become daily routine. The opportunity is to connect memory with mandate so that secondary education becomes a public good that advances fairness and future ready skills for all learners. The path is practical. The stakes are national.

Suggestions

Based on the evidence from the review, the following were suggested:

1. The Federal Ministry of Education and UBEC, working with State Ministries and SUBEBs, should implement an equity-weighted school financing formula that assigns higher weights to poverty, disability, rurality and displacement, publish annual school-level allocations to build trust, and establish a simple audit and grievance channel so funds reliably reach the most disadvantaged learners.
2. NERDC, supported by examination bodies and school principals, should embed integrated history inquiry projects across junior and senior secondary, align portfolio rubrics with curriculum standards, and provide task banks and moderation guides so teachers can assess

applied learning consistently while students demonstrate analysis, communication and civic action.

3. Teacher councils and universities, in partnership with State Ministries and Teaching Service Commissions, should roll out micro-credentials in inclusive pedagogy with school-based coaching, timetable protected collaboration time, and recognition in promotion criteria so new practices spread and are sustained in everyday teaching.
4. Quality assurance agencies and State EsMIS units, with principals, should deploy inclusion dashboards that track access, participation, progress and transitions by subgroup, train school teams to use the data in improvement cycles, and require brief public reporting so evidence drives resource targeting and continuous improvement.

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