Planning and Financing Education for Socio-Economic Growth and Development of Nigeria: Comments and Challenges

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Abstract
This paper identified that education has attracted huge investments over the years with only little level of development to show. It however indicated that certain shortcomings attended the administration of the formal and the non-formal education systems. The paper also threw light on the failure to provide education the needed allocated budget according to contemporary global development requirements which is 26% of the National budget. It also noted the error in wrong manpower deployment to duties that are not relevant to areas of skill training. This paper examined the planning of education with particular emphasis on the Nigerian experiences vis-à-vis previous educational programmes and policies, implementation and financial implication. It is noted that Nigeria has toyed with various education programmes, which implementation were faulty and consequently collapsed. It was noted that lack of adequate preparation, lack of foresight and inaccurate projection were mainly responsible for the failure of educational plans and policies in Nigeria. Other factors include premature assessment and evaluation, under-funding and political instability. Measures to enhance improved result were found to include adequate monitoring of fund, improved attention to planning and funding of pre-schools and vocational centres, and improved understanding between the politicians and academic regular facility inspection in schools for accurate action. The paper recommended that learning contents should be integrated with the job contents that are provided for in the national development plan. Government is advised to increase its concern on the funding and management of the system. Government is also urged to ensure stability in polity, and eradicate bottleneck and corrupt deployment practices by civil servants.

Keywords: education, planning, financing, development, growth, economy, manpower, investment

BACKGROUND
Educational policies are guiding principles and courses of action deliberately adopted by relevant governmental authorities to influence and determine educational decisions. In developing nations like Nigeria, new educational policies evolve to meet the demands of individuals and interest groups e.g. 6-3-3-4. Educational policies originate from a variety of sources but become legalized through the legislative, executive and judicial arms of government. The role of ideology of the dominant group in a society in determining the education policy of that society cannot be ignored. For example, free basic schooling (FBS) in Kenya, Education for self reliance (ESR) in Tanzania, America’s Liberal educational policies, the South Africa’s segregated school system (during apartheid regime). Education for Development is a reflection of the value of the dominant groups in those societies.

In Nigeria, there have been various educational programmes and policies such as 6-3-3-4, UPE, UBE, free education, public-private-partnership, adopt-a-school, etc. One important aspect of these programmes is their cost implication since no implementation can take place without finance. Usually the government bears the larger portion of the cost of implementation. Education has often been identified as an instrument of development of societies and individuals. Hence as a way of life, it serves as a means of transmission and preservation of the core issues in every culture. Although three types of educations are known to exist, the type under focus in this paper is the formal education. It is the formal education most societies tend to build their national hope and aspiration upon because of its competence in the instrumentality of production of high level skilled manpower for administrative, scientific and engineering utilizations.

National economic and socio-cultural growth and development have been under pursuit through the application of products from the investment on education by every successive government in Nigeria. The momentous hope on education as the route to solution to Nigeria’s national problems picked up more rapidly at the eve of independence, Nigeria had 39 well-established universities in 1996, Federal Government (1997) but now has well over 92 public and private universities as at 2008.
The provision of great number of learning institutions at all levels of education has been on the increase since independence because of the high demand by children and adults. The demand, which was as a result of expected economic benefit, has however, been attended by harsh problem in diverse regards. The problems could be summarized as manpower, financial, material and management or administrative inadequacies.

The huge problems inherent in education, which include the inadequate capacity to absorb a good percentage of those who demand for enrolment at all levels are what have often made government to move from policies whether strategic or not. An example is public and private ownership rights policies movements, especially during the second half of the 20th century.

The polity has been pushed up and down to provide educational opportunities because of the constitutional demand not to deny the rights of any of its citizens to acquire education. This has also been because of the government awareness that it is with the education of the citizens that the objectives to achieve industrialization, socio-economic and political development can be realized. The hope to attain rapid progress in growth and development in national affairs led to the introduction and spread of programmes toward the development of skilled manpower in various fields. To this extent, the Federal Government of Nigeria’s Constitution gave power to the other levels of government, private individuals, and organized bodies to establish schools at all levels through the legislated laws by the national assembly, Federal Government of Nigeria (1999).

The pursuance of education toward national economic growth and development was the basis for U.P.E and the recent U.B.E programme. The expectation had been that opportunity should be offered to the learners at the lower levels of education in order to avoid talent wastage, which derives from ignorance or poverty of the parents and guardians of the beneficiaries. The question that may follow in this regard is: why has the system not brought a change? Could it be as a result of the wide spread educational activities or due to population problem? Have these and other experiences been shadowed by the problem of funding, inadequacies among teaching manpower, and inappropriate deployment to progress in Nigeria educational economy?

The significance of this study is derived from the fact that an assessment of the process of education for national economic, social and political development has not given room for a cheering song in Nigeria. It is agreed that the country has moved forward over the years but that stability has not been witnessed in terms of manpower quality job output, and commitment to national goals pursuance. Aghenta (1983 and 1985) stated that quality in education refers to materials supply, adequate funding, job performance competence, management of staff and students, etc. Therefore, since Nigeria was expected to develop its economy through the efficiency and effectiveness of its educationally trained citizenry, but with seeming no success, it is the focus of this paper to assess what influence education has had on the development of Nigeria as well as to have a view of the problems, and the challenges ahead. That again became a major reason for this study.

Skilled Manpower Development Utilization

A nation cannot achieve the purpose of educating its citizens no matter how well effort had been made to ensure quality output from the schools, unless the school graduates are scientifically deployed to functions. Efforts are made from the early stage of enrolment in education to pick out fields of learning. It is with the same scientific wisdom that the deployment of high level manpower should be processed to ensure corresponding high level job output.

The essence of differentiating fields and specifying areas of educational training is to attain adequacy in the application of acquired skill in job situation. In other words skills training and job contents are interactive. It was to avoid this as a missing link at the lower levels of education especially with those that could not get further to higher institutions of learning that the junior secondary level was introduced. Emphasis was placed on skill training at junior arm of the secondary level to avoid manpower wastage.

The scale of national hope was that the millions of Nigerian children and youths who would later turn into adults without higher educational skills were to be technically trained so as to be functionally productive at least in their later life situations. The experience only resulted as national education disaster. The country was ill-prepared and those whom the system was designed to benefit as students and their parents or guardians were not ready to accept the system let alone making it useful. Rather, they regarded it as a “backward structure”. The pattern exists till date mainly in name but not in productive skill training as it was structured in the policy design.

Prospects and Challenges of Educational Development in Nigeria

The need for urgent educational training and manpower development policy review therefore becomes inevitable especially as there is a wide gap between the large population of educated manpower and the low level of growth in the economy.
Lack of steady growth in national economy and the necessary implication calls, therefore, for a comprehensive reassessment of manpower development and the utilization strategies in Nigeria. Adequate application of acquired skills is required to be strategic to realize and advance the objectives of national development plans.

What should be inherent in the educational objective is the goal to meet the supplies of all basic needs of the society. Thus the trained individuals who are to produce the requirements should be deployed to different functions relevant to their skills. It is only then the mission of governments in the funding of education will be purposeful. This should also form part of the basis of government’s reliance on educational experts in situations of critical decisions according to Nwagwu (2002).

It will be painful if in spite of the huge annual budgetary allocations to the education sector and the increasing manpower development output figures, Nigeria does not move near breakthrough on the hope to achieve self-reliant economy. Some of the issues that need urgent attention toward solution to be economic incept in the circumstance are instability in polity, national decisions on self-reliant economy through adequate funding of education, civil service bottleneck over financial disbursement toward the running of education, favoritism and corruption in manpower utilization decisions, employment creation through the encouragement of establishment of small scale industries, funding and infrastructural provision toward technological development, etc.

Nigeria can now boast of high-level manpower output in various fields. This has been achieved as a result of government’s huge investments of capital and manpower resources in the education sector. The country has good numbers of personnel with PhD, Masters Degrees, and first – degree holders. All these together with other certificates holders are the hope of the nation’s economic development in the future. The higher degree holders are those who should initiate programmes and actions for the training of the rest level of education to work on toward the attainment of national development.

To make the utilization of knowledge and skills meaningful, efforts must be made to define the purpose and objectives of the training from the beginning. Hence it must be known who would be cleaners, messengers, craftmen, administrators, technicians, technologists, engineers, teachers, accountants, medical doctors, lawyers, farmers and others.

Personnel distinction and classification should be relevant so that the training at all times will be based on manpower requirements in accordance to functional specializations and distributions in work environments. Nigeria has not quite followed this principle all along. Instead the higher institutions of learning have kept enrolling and graduating manpower with no concern for functional utilization. If accurate employment statistics were to be available, it will be discovered that not half of our graduates have been deployed to skills related duties in work places.

Increasing annual graduate population experience ran through the institutions of education. The effect is that the experience, which is akin to those of other institutions at all levels places the output of manpower force in structural imbalance in relationship with job availability. Experience shows that this is why supervisees in some government organizations are fewer than supervisors, as well as managers more than the staff. Yet government is the highest employer of manpower than private organizations. The decision makers who make provision for school enrolment should take this into consideration from the beginning if the challenges to integrate Nigeria into the world development practices are to be attained in the near future.

For education to be used to turn Nigeria into a self-reliant nation in economic terms is to integrate skills, honesty, justice, loyalty and national interest with work performance. At the moment, education seems to be alone on its own and increasing the temple of evil vices like ethnicity, tribalism, parochialism, injustice and corruption in Nigeria. No much emphasis is placed on character with the view to attain discipline, initiative, creativity and outstanding productivity that can lead to economic breakthrough. It is argued within the civil service in Nigeria that initiative by junior and middle class personnel toward national development is offensive to some senior officers. Such leaders will not like initiative efforts of their subordinates to materialize performance assessment. All these must be reversed to let educated manpower become effective and rewarding to the nation. It is for this prospect that Nigeria has continued to invest huge amounts of money and human resources on education so that it could attain national development.

**Educational Planning and Financial Implication**

Ajayi (2001) defined Educational planning as the process of taking decisions for future action with the view of achieving pre-determined objectives through optimum use of scarce resources. It could be deduced from this definition that three basic functions are involved in educational planning, namely;

(i) Pre-determination of objectives  
(ii) Decision making  
(iii) Optimum use of scarce resources
WHO PLANS EDUCATION

The planning of education for the country lies within the jurisdiction of the government represented by the planning activities of the various relevant educational agencies. According to Ajayi 2001: is, no meaningful educational planning can take place in the absence of quantitative and qualitative data. To this end, there is need for educational planners to collect and analyze relevant data concerning the educational system which will serve as a basis for policy formulation and execution regarding the future development of education. Data required for efficient and effective planning of education include: Data on enrolment ratio, data on entry rates, data on promotion rates, data on repetition rates, data on drop-out rates, data on wastage ratio, data on transition rates, demographic data, data on educational institutions and data on expenditure.

Financing Educational Plans and Policies

Based on the unpleasant condition of the country, the federal government saw the need for proper re-orientation, redirection and re-focusing of educational programmes and plans. The Universal Basic Education (UBE), launched by President Olusegun Obasanjo on September 30, 1999 is a step in this direction. However, the purpose of the scheme and basic constitutional provision attached to the scheme leads us to the questions such as:

i) Will government provide adequate remuneration and motivation?

ii) Are adequate facilities available – classrooms, seats, laboratories, libraries, offices etc?

iii) Has government trained adequate qualified number of staff?

The observed financial crisis in education the system in recent time has the tendency to increase pressure on the already strained resources. Lack of infrastructure, obsolete equipment, dilapidated buildings and non-availability of teaching and laboratory equipment/materials are common at all levels of education in Nigeria. All these, are obviously an offshoot of the poor financial situation in the education system, and they have far-reaching negative implications for education and national development. Obviously, more schools (at all levels) are springing up across the country – private and public. But consequent upon the problems mentioned earlier which summarily bothers on under-funding, students are made to receive sub-standard education. Poor schooling, ignorance, poverty, unemployment or underemployment can much be instrumental to acts of hooliganism and other forms of crime. The persistence of such trend would further lead to underdevelopment consequent upon low productivity, just as what obtains in Nigeria.

According to Callan et. al (1997), private financing of higher education could contribute immensely to improving both the financial situations of the institutions and their quality of education. And privatization of public institutions that cannot improve on their standard would not be a bad idea. However, such measures should be cautiously implemented, so that university education would not be only for children of the rich. For instance, Olusegun Obasanjo (Nigeria’s immediate past president) established his own university before he vacated office, if such ambition is nursed by politicians and others at the helm of affairs, what will be the future of public universities in Nigeria? And how many of their children will school in Nigeria or attend public universities? I guess none.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This paper aimed at examining the efforts of government in planning and financing education for growth and development in Nigeria. The following parameters were examined: investment in education; teacher qualification; educational plans and policies in terms of adequate preparation, foresight, projection, assessment and evaluation; underfunding and political instability. It also considered whether monitoring of fund, attention to planning, funding of pre-schools and vocational centres, understanding between the politicians and academics and facility inspection in schools enhance improved results of education for national growth and development. The paper adopted a basic research method by collecting primary data through questionnaires that were prepared based on the above parameters. Interviews were also conducted to drive home the opinions of the respondents, where appropriate and possible. The population of the study consisted of all the Deans of the Faculties and Schools and the Heads of Departments in the Universities, Colleges of Education, the Polytechnics and Mono-technics in Nigeria out of which 1200 were stratifically sampled from 12 higher institutions (2 each from 6 geopolitical zone of Nigeria) out of which 1000 responded. The data emanating from the responses were analyzed using percentages and factor analyses model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that out of the 1200 questionnaires distributed to the sampled Deans and Heads of Departments in the Nigerian tertiary institutions, only 1000 (i.e. 83.33%) of them returned the questionnaires while 200 (i.e. 16.67%) failed to return. It was found out that most of those that did not return were from the far North and new private universities. There were substantial returns from all the first and second generation universities, colleges of education and the polytechnics.

Table 2 shows the 5-point questionnaire prepared and pilot tested before administration. The results are as following:
**Investment in Education**

The table shows that 900 (i.e. 90%) of the respondents expressed their displeasure about investment in education. They believed education has not attracted huge investment that would boost the industry while only 100 (i.e. 10%) believed education has attracted huge investment in Nigeria. Allocation to education in year 2009 Nigerian budget takes 7.2% against the 26% standard recommended by UNESCO. (Abbas, 2009:43). This accounted for the decay in the service delivery of education in the country at the present.

**Investment in Education and level of development.**

Only 40% (i.e. 400) of the respondents believed that investment in education has brought about high level of development in Nigeria. Sixty per cent, (i.e. 600) opined otherwise. This may be true in the light of many unemployed graduates from the universities, polytechnics and the colleges of education. Many of the youths engaged in restiveness in Niger-Delta and major cities in Nigeria are graduates from these tertiary institutions.

**Teaching Qualification**

There was a tie between respondents in answering whether the teachers in these tertiary institutions had teaching qualification or not. Those in the Faculty of education believed that possessing PhDs does not amount to having teacher qualification. They believed that teachers in these tertiary institutions should have pedagogical training in methods of teaching, measurement and evaluation, psychology of teaching and administration and supervision of education which can be obtained with a minimum of Post-Graduate Diploma in Education. Others believed that possession of academic qualifications such as BSc. BA, MSc., MA, and PhD in their areas of specialization is enough qualification to teach the subject areas in higher institution. This issue is being addressed by the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria.

**Educational plans and policies**

Majority of the respondents opined that educational planning and policies, e.g. 6-3-3-4, National Policy on Education, Public-Private-Partnership, etc failed in Nigeria as a result of inadequate preparation (80%), lack of foresight (95%), inaccurate projection such as Vision 2010, Vision 20:2020, etc (75%), premature assessment and evaluation (60%), under funding (90%) and political instability and insensitivity to education in Nigeria (65).

**Education for National growth and development**

(a) **Monitoring of funds**

In the attempt to assess the measures that used to enhance improved results of education for national growth and development and how far Nigeria has feared in those areas; the respondents believed that funds allocated to education sector is not adequately monitored (80%). This is being addressed through the establishment of Education Trust Fund which monitors the projects in tertiary institutions. However, less monitoring is done by the Ministries of Education and the supervisory agents, such as NUC, NCCE, and NBTE.

(b) **Attention to Planning**

That public tertiary institution cannot accommodate the education needs of the youths in Nigeria, which brought about the establishment of thriving private universities, polytechnics and colleges of education showed that past administration had not given attention to educational planning in the country. Seventy per cent of the respondents believed that there should have been thorough projection for education in line with the growth rate since 1960s and 1970s vis-à-vis industrialization of the country to accommodate the output from these institutions.

(c) **Pre-school and vocational centres**

The result also shows that pre-schools and vocational centres were not given attention in the education scheme. Ninety per cent of the respondents attested to this. Only private primary schools have pre-school sections – nursery and kindergarten. Public primary schools do not have pre-school section. Few vocational centres that are available are grossly under-funded and hardly patronized as no parents want to send their children to them as a result of the perception of the society on the students that only those who are not brilliant enough to go to grammar schools. Yet, we all believe that pre-school is the foundation on which we not only build good educational achievements but also good family and the nation. We also believe that skilled manpower at the lower level as provided by the vocational centres – bricklayers, carpenters, painters, panel-beaters, etc. are the bedrock of any nation’s industrial development.

(d) **Politicians and Academics**

Majority of the respondents (99%) believed that there was poor understanding between the politicians and academics in spite of the fact that most often than not, the arrow-head in Ministries translated from the classroom. They supported their assertion with the fact that many ministers and commissioners of education in Nigeria both past and present, were former Vice-chancellors, professors or Senior lecturers in Nigeria’s tertiary institutions. The present President, Alhaji Shehu Musa Yar’adua and the Vice-President – Dr. Jonathan are both lecturers from the tertiary institutions/ They buttress their argument with the faceoff between the Federal Government and the Academic Staff Union of the Universities (ASUU) which paralyzed the education sector.

The 17,474 political office holders take about 42% of the budget as salaries and allowances. That is a whopping N1.36 trillion as against N224 billion
allocated to the entire education sector. (Abbas, 2009:43).

(e) **Facility inspection in schools**

Majority of the respondents (90%) also believed that facilities available in schools are not regularly inspected for accurate and prompt actions to be taken on them. That supports the believe that Nigerians lack maintenance culture in all ramifications which accounted for bad roads, dilapidated buildings, rickety motor vehicles and unhealthy individuals on the street.

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<th>Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution</th>
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<tr>
<td>No of Questionnaires</td>
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<td>No of Questionnaires Returned</td>
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<td>No of Questionnaires not returned</td>
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Source: Fieldwork, 2008

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<th>Table 2. Analysis of Data</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Education has attracted huge investment in Nigeria</td>
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<td>2. Investment in education has justified the level of development in Nigeria.</td>
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<td>3. Majority of teachers have teaching qualification</td>
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<td>4. The following contribute to the failure of educational plans and policies in Nigeria:</td>
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<tr>
<td>(a) Adequate preparation</td>
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<td>(b) Foresight</td>
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<td>(c) Projection</td>
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<td>(d) Assessment and evaluation</td>
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<td>(e) Funding</td>
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<td>(f) Political instability</td>
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<td>5. The following measures enhance improved results of education for national growth and development in Nigeria:</td>
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<tr>
<td>(i) Monitoring of fund</td>
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<td>(ii) Attention to planning</td>
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<td>(iii) Funding of pre-schools and vocational centres</td>
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<td>(iv) Understanding between the politicians and academics</td>
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<td>(v) Facility inspection in schools for accurate actions</td>
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Source: Fieldwork, 2008

**CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, there have been good educational planning processes and policies in Nigeria, but the problems have often been associated with implementation. The political class has often paid leap service to education issues thereby putting the system in an unpleasant state. There is therefore the need for change of attitude on the part of the political leaders.

The planning and funding of education requires the contribution of all if Nigeria must progress at this state of its development. The need to catch up with the western world’s level of development always remind the leaders that education has been expected to bring national development about in Nigeria, but that certain problems have not allowed the expectation to be achieved. To pursue this goal, the paper looked at some events that have been experienced in the production of manpower and its utilization in the past. The discussion showed that notwithstanding the result so far, investment has been continually made in education and many graduates are produced annually. The discussion pointed out that some areas of economic, social and political improvements have however been recorded even though assessment indicates that the improvements fall far below expectation.

The paper examined the problems affecting education and indicated specific dimensions in which the non-achievement of goals has impeded national development. For example, the paper discussed that policies on manpower development output have not been thoroughly streamlined with the result that productive realities have not been experienced in Nigeria. Inadequate job opportunities and disloyalty of men and women in employment positions were also stated as some of the problems that have been a wide gap between planning and achievement of development expectations.

The discussion pointed out some prospects and challenges that should induce new orientation in the administration of education and economic productivity. They included the need to integrate learning skills with job performance requirements. The need for this was pointed out as most necessary because Nigeria is part of the global village, which is fast operating on a high level of science and technology reliance in the pursuance of economic, social and political development.

The paper also discussed the need to advance on the pursuit of non-formal education because of its immense importance in national development. The paper affirmed that products of non-formal education training usually have more determination to take risk in economic ventures and invention potential than the products of formal educational institutions. In which case, educational products would become competitive in their job output to justify claim that productive efficiency has an influence on educational policy formulation.
RECOMMENDATIONS
The following suggestions are made for the improvement of education sector in Nigeria:
1. Greater attention should be given to our pre-school elementary, secondary and vocational schools, because they form the building blocks of society’s educational foundation,
2. Government should ensure adequate provision of modern educational facilities and other educational resources needed to ensure qualitative education.
3. The political leaders should find constructive ways to work with those in academia to improve educational services. Strike should not be the only means of resolving crises.
4. Allowances, promotion, entitlement of lecturers and teachers should be given headlong.
5. Facility inspection should be made to ascertain the state of facilities in schools and prompt actions should be taken and monitored to improve the standard.
6. The success of any educational system hinge on proper planning. They should be ensured at federal, state and local government level.
7. Government should endeavour to popularize the idea of participatory management and funding of education. This requires the joint effort of federal, state and local government, communities, organizations and individuals.
8. Adequate monitoring measures should be put in place to ensure accountability in the part of every official managing the resources being made available to the education sector.
9. More vocational and technical education centres should be established and the existing ones should be well equipped and staffed.

REFERENCES


