

ADDRESSING EDUCATION CHALLENGE FOR BUSINESS WEALTH AND INNOVATIVE-SYSTEM MAXIMIZATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Common factors that may contribute to societal development are education, economy, environmental sustainability, social and cultural up-liftment, control and/or enhancement in one or more societal domains of overpopulation or resource depletion, corruption exposure, endemic violence. Thus, sometimes societal flow or development or fall into another evolved level, in some cases – precipitating in a collapse or revolution – may be due to factors such as, established political institutions, restrictions of trade, inequality and significantly, education diversity or diversity failure and/or loyalty or lack of loyalty to established education philosophy or education reforms. This paper examines the trend in the educational development of Nigeria from pre-colonial times to the present, presenting an, overview of the progress made, overall status of education development in Nigeria, problems been encountered and desirable direction for the future.

Keywords: Education; Education development gains; Economy; Innovation-system

Introduction

Education is one of the earliest social services to be introduced to Nigeria. One of the major objectives stated in the Nigerian National Policy on Education is the provision of equal educational opportunities to all citizens at different levels of education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). Initially, the majority of primary and secondary educational institutions were established and run by missionaries. A relatively few were government-owned. In the post-independence Nigerian constitution, education was on the concurrent list and was virtually left to the then Regional governments, with the Federal government legislating on broad policy matters. Besides the establishment of the University of Ibadan (which was established in 1948) and a few non-missionary colleges in Lagos which, preceded the post-amalgamation education, all other non-missionary educational institutions – came later and were, inherited by their regions of location with the attainment of independence in October 1960 (NBS, 2012). This paper examines the trend in the educational development of Nigeria from pre-colonial times to the present, presenting an overview of the indigenous, traditional, Quranic and western-type education before and after independence with a view to highlighting the progress made, overall status of education development in Nigeria and problems been encountered especially access, funding, discipline and proposing desirable direction for the future.

Pre-amalgamation

Indigenous education which represents the type of education offered in the pre-literate era, within the community, was taught in the geographical area which consists Nigeria by community members who possessed specialised skills or abilities in various fields of human endeavour. Besides, the community offered traditional education that was community-culturally comprehensive such that it provided training in physical, character,

intellectual, social and vocational development, amidst its limitations however (Mkpa, 2015; Rotimi, 2005; Bakare, 2021; Cube, 2023; Andrew, 2022).

In Nigeria, for one, people depended on the power of their memories to facilitate the retention and transmission of all learned ideas to forthcoming generations in, the absence of writing – post-amalgamation. But memory could fail, and in the event of the death of a custodian of some useful information or skill, all, was lost. In most communities too and, prior to the introduction of formal education, boys were brought up to take to whatever occupation their fathers engaged in and in some cases, sent to other masters as apprentices to learn various vocations of, farming, trading, craft-work, fishing, cattle rearing, wine tapping, traditional medicine, blacksmith, archery, tree climbing and wrestling and; life etiquette. All these stimulated the learners' sense of rationality and thus, advanced the learning process cum development. (Mkpa, 2015).

On the same basis of community-indigenous education, girls were often expected to stay back at home to either learn; domestic chores such as cooking, sweeping, weeding the farmlands, hair weaving, decorations of the body, dye production; or the like from their mothers. There were, however, little or no cases of unemployment therefore generally, as in the case of the boys, the girls did almost exactly what their mothers trained them to do, in spite of geo-political variations in the scope, extent and diversity of the taught skill, however. Thus, traditional or indigenous learning in most cases in Nigeria trained individuals to fit usefully into their society by learning and practising economic skills for self-sustenance; adapting to their role expectations and contributing to the development of their society (Saint, Hartnett, and Strassner, 2003; Mkpa, 2015; Rotimi, 2005; Bakare, 2021; Cube, 2023; Andrew, 2022).

Although the traditional education offered by the community was comprehensive in providing training, learning, skill and self-development, it however had its limitations and needed more diversified education to help

extend access of women to education, revive great spiritual value and cultural heritage, spread and consolidate political and social influence, evolve more informed and sophisticated, multi-skilled administrators cum scholars and also address growing and increasing labour force employment issues, handle employee-on-the-job demand. Thus, in the geographical area that includes Nigeria, records show that, Islam and the tradition of Islamic learning was first accepted by a Kanern ruler, Umme Jilmi (1085-1097) and subsequent rulers, Dunama I (1097-1150) and Dunama II (1221-59), such that by the end of the 13th Century, Kanern had become a centre of Islamic learning (Fafunwa, 1974).

Thereafter in the early 14th Century, Islam was brought into Hausa land by traders and scholars who came from Wangarawa to the present day Kano (Nigeria) in the reign of Ali Yaji (1349-1385). Before long, most of what later became the north of Nigeria was islamised since Islamic education brought along with it Arabic learning – Arabic – being the language of the Quran and therefore perceived as having great spiritual value. Arabic and Islam were taught simultaneously in primary schools. As a result of the political and social influence which Islam and Quranic learning conferred on those who possessed it, many rulers employed Islamic scholars as administrators. The Jihad by Uthman Dan Fodio helped to revive, spread and consolidate Islamic studies and extend access to education even to women. Thus, before the arrival in present day Nigeria of the Western type education in the 19th Century, Islamic learning had been established. Islamic studies had also penetrated the Western parts of Nigeria before the arrival of the Jihadists; but the Jihad strengthened the religion of Muslim where they presumed it to be weak (Mkpa, 2015).

Further, much of the educational work in southern part of present day Nigerian, prior to amalgamation and prior 1882, was done by the missionaries almost without government assistance. However, from 1882, the Government began a bold intervention in education by; promulgating codes and regulations, guidelines and policies on organisation and management of schools even, appointing inspectors and availing grants to schools to, ensure academic school quality. Invariably, community, missions, and government-colonial assistance and efforts led to the

establishment of the School of Surveying (1908) (Rotimi, 2005; Bakare, 2021).

On the other hand, Western-type education and its tradition, began seriously in Nigeria with the arrival of the Wesleyan-Christian missionaries at Badagry in 1842. According to Mkpa (2015), Western-type education, has obviously been the most successful in meeting the overall formal educational needs of her students in Nigeria's educational history, in the present and may continue far into the future. Emphasis of this type-education was also on character training thus, between 1842 and 1914, about ten different Christian missions had arrived and begun intensive missionary and educational work in Nigeria. Schools were built and the missions struggled for pupils/members amongst the proliferating primary schools established by the different missions. Although literary education in the four regions, philosophy and areas of reading, writing, arithmetic and religion was predominant, most of the missions established primary schools initially, with little emphasis laid on, secondary and higher education. This new education (missionary education) prepared the receivers for new job opportunities of, teaching, church evangelism or church pastoring, clerk and interpretation job roles (Mkpa, 2015).

As the struggle for students and members increased amongst the schools and missions across board came, the establishment of CMS Grammar School, Lagos, in 1857 due to agitations by influential church members, rich merchants and, emigrants living especially in Lagos. Thereafter, the western-type education developed faster in the south especially than in the north probably because of; the scepticism of the Muslims about the impact of Christian missionary education and the existence of about 25,000 Quranic schools already in place by 1914. Thus, the arrival of Christian-western education met stiff opposition all over the north. However, in some parts of the north of present day Nigeria, the Christian missionaries did succeed to establish schools, at times, in

collaboration with, Government (Saint, Hartnett, and Strassner, 2003; Mkpa, 2015; Rotimi, 2005; Bakare, 2021; Cube, 2023; Andrew, 2022).

Post-amalgamation

Support for education and higher sophisticated learning institutions increased post-amalgamation especially with the establishment of higher institutions of education earlier in the 1940s through to the 1960s. Basically, Nigeria's higher institution is a creation of British colonialism. Yaba Higher College (1932) which later became Yaba College of Technology (1947) and the School of Surveying (1908) – a pre-amalgamation school, were the first higher institutions, post-amalgamation, before the, first university (formerly University College, Ibadan) was established in 1948. Within the same period (1914-1960), support for Islamic education came from some northern Nigerian leaders, especially Abdullahi Bayero, (Emir of Kano), who, on his return from Mecca in 1934, introduced new ideas by building a Law school for training teachers of Islamic subjects, Arabic as well English and Arithmetic (Mkpa, 2015)

With increasing literary and education awareness and want from 1882, the Government began a bold intervention by promulgating codes and regulations, guidelines and policies on organisation and management of schools. Government also began to appoint inspectors and to make grants to schools to ensure quality. Thus, between 1882 and 1950, many codes and regulations were issued by Government to regulate the quality of education in various parts of the country. In fact by 1952 and before 1960, each of the then three regions – North, East and West – enacted and operated new education laws (the West in 1955, both the East and North in 1956) whilst the initial test-run at Universal Primary Education Programme started in the West and East in 1955 and 1957 respectively (Mkpa, 2015).

The West African Examination Council (WAEC) was set up in 1952 as a corporate body charged with the responsibility of conducting examinations in the public interest of West Africa. This examination were to qualify candidates for certificates which were equivalent to those from similar examining authorities in the United Kingdom (Adeyogbe, 1992). Furthermore, in 1959, the Federal government set up the Sir Eric Ashby

Commission to identify the high-level manpower needs of the country for the future school evolving in, curricula, taught and skill-learning cum education. Invariably in a bid to consolidate education development gains and in her appraisal of the need for education, the Ashby report posited that education was indeed the tool for achieving national economic expansion and the social emancipation of the individual (Aliu, 1997). Thus, recommended the establishment of four Federal Universities in the country, and presented some vital courses for them. Five universities, instead of four, were subsequently established and opened as follows: University of Nigeria, Nsukka (1960), Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (1962), University of Ife, Ile-ife (1962), University of Lagos, Lagos (1962), and University of Ibadan. Before this, whilst the University of Nigeria, Nsukka was already effectuating teaching and learning (not in University capacity probably), the University of Ibadan was well consummating teaching and learning as University College, Ibadan (established in 1948). University of Benin was later established (1972) and as at 1999, Nigeria had forty-one universities made up of; twenty-five Federal, twelve State and four Private-owned universities amongst which are specialised universities, including three Universities of Agriculture, seven Universities of Technology, as well as a military university, the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna. The specialised higher education institutions focus on agriculture, medicine, sciences and technology, visual arts, maritime, oil and gas, entertainments, entrepreneurship and teachers' education (Saint, Hartnett, and Strassner, 2003; Mkpa, 2015; Rotimi, 2005; Bakare, 2021; Cube, 2023; Andrew, 2022).

Post-independence

Whilst the education institutions and tertiary educational institutions such as Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology, University were set up and established in the bid to address specific areas of national needs during the years preceding amalgamation, the National

Universities Commission (NUC) was established in post-independence in 1962, with the primary task of co-ordinating the orderly development of the Nigerian university system and maintaining its academic standards. Following the establishment of NUC, in 1977, the Joint Admission and Matriculations Board (JAMB) was created to regulate the admission of students into the universities, taking cognisance of available spaces and federal character. Afterwards, student enrolment in universities rose from a mere 1,395 in 1960 to over 250,000 by 1998/9 academic session (Mkpa, 2015).

The education challenge

With a population of 300 million and ample natural resources, Nigeria is Africa's sleeping economic giant or somewhat, deformed giant. While one-third of its population pursues a life style oriented in various degrees towards Europe and North America, the other two-thirds struggles to survive on less than one dollar per day (World Bank, 1996). Wrapped in a culture noted for industry, creativity and initiative, some Nigerians prefer to apply these talents to questionable or illicit pursuits, while many others expect government to provide the cure for their economic and social ills (Sainta, Hartnett, and Strassner, 2003).

From a global perspective, economic and social development are increasingly driven by the advancement and application of knowledge. Education in general, and higher education in particular, are fundamental to the construction of a knowledge economy and society in all nations since Higher education trains and produces the needed manpower for national development (World Bank, 1999). Amidst education development gains as revealed in Nigerian universities ranking high in reputable global higher education reports, evaluations and edu-metrics – a show of their resilience, yet, the capacity of higher education systems to fulfill the responsibility advancement in knowledge and economic construction is frequently thwarted by long-standing problems of finance, efficiency, equity, quality and governance. Thus, fulfilling the responsibility of higher education has not been the case as some schools in developing countries are becoming highly volatile and unpredictable places for students and teachers with far

reaching implications on school activities, learning and learning outcomes. Now, these old challenges have been augmented by new challenges linked to the growing role of knowledge in economic development, rapid changes in telecommunications technology, and the globalization of trade and labor markets (Salmi 2001).

The education challenge of higher education cultism

At independence and **the constitution of the country** Nigeria and following the first military administration, the Federal government created more states and assumed responsibility for the three Universities established by the three erstwhile regions. Subsequently, and invariably via the constitution situated after several reforms, education was sited under the concurrent list and thus, the authority of various governments – federal, state and/or local – to establish and own schools and higher institutions. The Federal and State governments alike thus, established more secondary and tertiary educational institutions, regulated their activities whilst, the central government established the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE). The National Teachers' Institute (NTI) was set up to handle primary school teachers' examinations, while admission to Universities, and more recently, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education are managed by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) (Andrew, 2012).

However due to incessant supremacy wars, bad parenting, broken homes, neglect and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and corruption, dysfunctional society, governing elite, social media and quest for fast wealth, higher education cultism and, campus confraternity wars increase, lowering standard of education, in spite of policy interventions from all stakeholders in Nigeria's higher institutional sectors. This has a counter-productive implication on educational development particularly learning, teaching and campus security and peace. Other factors such as financial inequality of the students, inadequate or unavailability of campus

accommodation, membership of parents to suspected cult groups and notable Nigerians influence, influence of law enforcement agencies, lecturers and administrators, drug abuse, transnational crimes, inadequate recreational and social event sites on campus; sustain campus cultism and confraternity wars and killings probably in the quest to get; economic and living protection, prevent being oppressed, amidst; ignorance of students and some other factors of ineffective judiciary and poor implementation of laws, poor security architecture, ungoverned spaces and underdeveloped areas militating against curtailing the menace (Ogunsanya, 2000; Eguaeon, 2008; Surajo and Karim, 2017; Ajitoni and Olaniyan, 2018).

Aside from the death, loss of livelihood and destruction of property, peace and security instability; deadly campus cult wars and killings pronounce implications on political, social and economic sphere of the society including international relations and life and living activities of cult members cum their educational development. The terror unleashed by cults in educational institutions hamper learning, creates fears, tension and insecurity in the school environment; hamper mental and psychological stamina of cult members who may become unstable during those unleashed terror periods knowing, that he or she may be a target of the upset. Criminal activities on and off campus distract school management, studies; leading to failed and longer school calendar (Ogunsanya, 2000; Eguaeon, 2008) thereby increasing out-of-school population and illiteracy. In some cases, schools academic calendar are forced to shut down for as long as these wars and killings continue. It affects the business and peaceful coexistence of the university environment, when these wars start, such that many businesses around the higher institution usually close increasing, poverty and affecting the livelihood of business owners (Surajo and Karim, 2017; Ajitoni and Olaniyan, 2018).

In order to enrich students learning and teaching processes, curbing likelihood of violence and having intelligence on likelihood of violence before it starts may address, improve, drive on and outside campuses security of higher institutions and improve on higher education administration needed.

The education challenge of distance education hindrance

Self-fulfillment of formal education lead to formal education learning taken outside the campus environment. This difference from the much traditional learning of face-to-face learning consummated teaching and learning through the special media use of; prepared correspondence textbooks, newspaper, supplements, posters, radio and television broadcast audio and videocassettes (Belanger & Jordan, 2004; Bonk, 2016; Catalano, 2015; Holden & Westfall, 2010; Neslihan & Mustafa, 2016; Özmen & Atici, 2015). The numerous advantages of availability of online learning tools provides flexibility and the opportunity to complete course requirements from nearly any location without a physical teacher. However, because by implication, distance learning involves the normal or principal means of communication through prints and technology, higher education distance learning ensues. Thus, in Nigeria's higher education process several administrative issues hinder Distance Learning. Among these are poor funding and financial constraints, lack of or low level of provision of facilities for Distance Learning programs (Jimoh, 2013). Due to this problem alone, and high cost of hard-wares required in Distance learning investment in Distance learning in Nigeria is low. Poor planning added to the poor maintenance of the tutors of Distance learning programs (remuneration) is another hindrance. This results in recruitment of staff issues affecting the proper implementation of the programs since most of the facilitators are part time tutors and are not so easy to recruit to meet the quality demanded of the program (Mbonu and Ubbaonu, 2010).

Due to distance and inaccessibility of the tutorial lecture centers by some students, for instance, the Distance learning advantages of; increased ease of communication between participants, increased students' self-propelled actions to acquire knowledge; people-empowered with education for enriched lives and, greater equality is lost (Olibie, Offor, Onyebuchi, 2016)

National innovation system, education and business wealth maximization

In recent years, the economic success of newly industrializing nations (e.g., the "Asian tigers") has been linked to substantial prior investment in human resources. Using certain strategic investments, together with particular institutional and policy choices concerning the nature of the university system, the extent of intellectual property protection, the historical evolution of industrial research & development organization, and the division of labor between private industry, universities and government in research & development performance and funding (combined to form a national innovation system) (Nelson, 1993), national innovative capacity is heavily engineering increasing; innovative capacities, promoting competition as the basis for innovation, improving human capital investments and creating incentives for innovation, investment in science and education, and also overall education growth (Stern et al., 2000).

In practice, however, the university system developed less rationally than anticipated. Enrollments in the federal universities (34% female, 59% in sciences) grew at the rapid rate of 12% annually during the 1990s and totaled 325,299 students by 2000 (NUC, 2002b). Enrollment growth rates were the highest in the South-South Region, followed by the North-East Region. Overall growth rates far exceeded government policy guidelines. In Nigeria, efforts to expand enrollments and improve educational quality are severely constrained by growing shortages of qualified academic staff, long term brain drain, combined with insufficient output from national postgraduate programs in the face of rising enrollments. Between 1997 and 1999, the numbers of academic staff declined by 12% even as enrollments expanded by 13%. The federal university system with only 48% of its estimated staffing needs filled is most hit of the public-owned universities with staffing scarcity. This shortfalls are estimated at 73% in engineering, 62% in medicine, 58% in administration, and 53% in sciences aside other para-engineering, science, business and, the disciplinary areas of arts and education disciplines (NUC, 2002b). Again, higher education enrolls a very modest 4% of the relevant age cohort. This level compares poorly with economic competitors such as South Africa (17%), India (7%), Indonesia

(11%) and Brazil (12%) (TASK FORCE, 2000). Besides, technical education is substantially neglected by policymakers and oriented to the teaching of traditional hand skills that are often divorced from labor market requirements. Thus, significant regional disparities in access are evident constraining this element of national innovation system. In this, politics has played a part. Despite these, school drop-out rates have been rising and educational standards have been reported to have declined (Onweh, 1997).

Consequently, the country's business environment is distorted and restrictive. In spite of substantial oil revenues, per capita income is lower today than it was in 1970. The non-oil economy is stagnant. A survey of international businesses working in Sub-Saharan Africa found that Nigeria is one of the most difficult countries in the world for private business (Center for International Development, 2000). On balance, the material conditions for development appear to be available, but the human and cultural conditions that enable development to occur are not yet in place.

Conclusion

Continued expansion of the higher education system has now exceeded government's capacity to serve as the principal financier of this growth. Under these conditions, local income generation takes on added importance, and also serves to reinforce policies promoting decentralization and institutional autonomy. The only significant financing reform yet outstanding concerns student cost-sharing. In practice, however, announced policy changes in the financial, governance and administrative autonomy of institutions will ideally create the opportunity for cost-sharing to evolve locally through a series of individual institutional decisions rather than abruptly the education national philosophy fulfillment. This process is well underway in several African countries (Johnston, 2002), and increasingly accepted in others (Amonoo-Neizer, 1998; Banya & Elu, 2001). In Nigeria, many authors (Babalola, 1998; Bashir, 2002; Okebukola, 1998) propose student cost-shared education to evolve continued education integrity,

expansion and development. Whether or not government decides to permit this in Nigeria aside evolving a stronger innovation-system may determine how bright or dim the future of higher education is likely to be.

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