EDUCATION FOR NATION BUILDING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA; A PARADIGM SHIFT

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ABSTRACT

The need for education in both developed, developing and under-developed countries has been harped over time. This is because education has become the bedrock of nations developed. It has been discovered that all facets of the human endeavour requires education to do well, therefore this has made various countries in the world today to embrace it and give it a pride of place ,Nigeria inclusive. Though it has been said that Nigeria and like many other countries has adopted education to develop, much still needs to be done to achieve the main objectives or goals.

Keywords: Education, Nation Building, Sustainable Development, Nigeria, Paradigm Shift.

Introduction

Scholars and stake holders in many and popular quarters has established that education in Nigeria has to be re-engineered far away from the present British oriented one if the country wish for a sustainable national development, including the millennium development goals (MDG'S) she subscribed to as a member state of the United Nations. The educational system British – oriented has been faulted as working to mitigate the achievement of a sustainable development targets In relation to the above, culture and other variables is mooted as a key factor in achieving sustainable, human

development and economic development. Hence it had been submitted that Nigeria's education and the educational system would have to be re-invigorated so as to give more or holistic room to the indigenous cultural contents in our educational curriculum and practice. However, this world takes into account the culture dimension of national development in Nigeria to reflect the pivotal role of culture for national development, including the particular context of the MDG'S. this paper would provide forward-looking reflections on integrating culture dimension in drawing our educational policies and programmes as catalyst for sustainable national development, even as it is believed that a culture centered approach to education is all that is necessary for Nigeria's sustainable development process

Definition of terms
The concept of sustainable national development
In the words of Okorafor, C.U and Ahamefula E.I (2007:95), development can be taken in terms of improvement in socio-political and economic wellbeing of the people and the society in general. Basically, no generally acceptable definition of development exists, though it can be looked at socially, economically, politically etc and can equally be viewed in terms of improving in capital cum technological knowhow of the society. However, in the words of Onyeze(2016:1) in Okorafor&Ahamefula(2007:96) development is a multi-dimensional process which involves the totality of man in his political, economic and social relations among others and therefore has political, social and economic implications.

Sustainable national development, therefore, is the continuous, preserved and entrenched development of the whole country that encompasses its, social, economic and political wellbeing and the totality of the growth and improvement of its citizens and social institution.

The Concept of Nation
A nation can simply be taken for a people, group of people or persons who make up a particular place, they boast their population, government, location and has the capacity to control its territory from external interference whatsoever.

The Concept of Culture

It has to be stated that there does not exist any generally acceptable definition of the concept of culture, however, for our purpose, we shall consider the following.

In line with Otite and Ogionwo (1979:44) culture is defined as the complex whole of man's acquisitions of knowledge, orals, beliefs, art, custom, technology etc, which are shared and transmitted from generation to generation. In other words, culture is the total way of life of a people. Culture is an inevitable element of human societies. No society exists without culture. There are different perspectives in which the concept of culture is viewed, especially in a multi-cultural society like Nigeria. Hence Okoroafor an Ahamefula2007:40 posit that all human societies, notwithstanding their sixes or density possess culture which manifest both n their behavioral and attitudinal dispositions these cultural manifestations, distinguish people from their daily social behaviors.

EDUCATION IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN SOCIETY: The British Oriented Approach:

It has to be mentioned that the British educational system was introduced into Nigeria between 1822-1882. This followed an intensive missionary activities and expression in southern Nigeria. Within this period, the Church Missionary society (CMS), the Wesleyan Methodist missionary society, the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM), the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the Qua Iboe Mission, The Primitive Methodist society and the Basel Mission firmly established themselves in this area. Up to a1882, the colonial government in Nigeria paid little or no attention to the education needs of the people and the field was entirely left to the missions. Ezeala, Romanus in Ikwuegbu P.N (Ed) (2007:136-137) states that this was the period of exclusively Christian missionary education in Nigeria. The missionaries introduced book learning "and vocational training in their programme aimed mainly fat conversion of the people, moral training and inculcation of British ethics in the people of Nigeria rather than the overall development of the Nigerians and Nigeria as a nation. This was done at Abeouta, Lokoja and Calabar the CMS, Church of Scotland encouraged vocational training in agriculture, carpentry, bricklaying, etc. the RCM introduced industrial training for delinquent children at Togo near Badagry. The aim was not literacy parse but to make the people ready for easy

evangelism and subsequent conversion. However, this colonial government's indifference to education policy resultant absence of an official education policy resulted in the lack of:

a. A common syllabus standard textbooks, regular school hours etc.
b. Adequate supervision of schools, buildings, teachers, pupil etc.
c. A central examination system
d. Uniformly in the condition of service of teachers
e. Adequate financial support and control.

On the otherhand, Fafunwa, A. B (1980:82) tells that the British government had no clearly defined policy on education in its African colonies including Nigeria. Its first statement on the issues of education was made by the British Privy Council's committee on educationin 1947 when it vaguely referred to made the need for securing better conditions of life and development of the African as peasant on the land. He also recounts that between 1876, the British colonial government in Lagos made spasmodic attempts to assist some of the missions in their educational work.

With the continuation of the British colonial legacy on education the story has not changed today.

Ezeala, Romanus (2015) in Ikwuegbu, P. N (Ed) 2017:138 reported that a 1950 united nations education scientific and culture organization (UNESCO) estimate of illiteracy in Nigeria was about 84.4%. By the year 1994 this number had not improved significantly. According to him, Wang (1995), out Nigeria's illiteracy rate as at 1995 as high as 68% of the entire population. The same year, UNESCO recorded that the majority of Nigeria's 32 million men labor force were illiterates. Between 1997-2010 little has changed in the military in Nigeria. The rate is put at 58%. There is the argument that if the rate continued at all time high by 2010, Nigeria would not be conceptually able to reach a technologically competitive standing in the global world.

Geographically, in rural areas, illiteracy is much greater than in the urban areas. The three main reasons being:

a. Lack of education facilities in the rural areas.
b. Limited access to education for rural people
c. Survival demands which makes families help their children out of school

For Ezeala, Romanus (M.Ed.) (2007) in Ikwuegbu, P. N (Ed) 2007 the same problems that be dogged the early missionary and colonial attempts at education in Nigeria continue to exist today to exist today in spite of the various educational programs by government such as UPE (Universal Primary Education).

Indeed, the present British- oriented education, works at mitigating the achievement of a home- grown sustainable, development target s it is not rooted in the culture and cultural orientation of the peoples of Nigeria. The British values, beliefs, norms and practices which the systems foster are at variance with those of the indigenous culture of the people; hence it is difficult for the people to find themselves in it.

Invariably, this British modelled education seems not to have largely engendered sustainable development in Nigeria. For the same reason, the millennium development goals (MDG'S) have proven too difficult to realize so far in Nigeria.

Culture: A Key Factor in Achieving Sustainable Human and Economic Development in Nigeria

It will be necessary to establish that many notable voices in the development paradigm have posited that culture is a key factor to ensure a sustainable human and economic development. While culture is not explicitly part of the 8 MDG'S, it is widely recognized that the later will not be attained in a sustainable manner without taking into account the cultural dimension of development.

Today, with the various development problems befogging Nigeria, including the global financial and economic crisis, it has become more evident that only a culturally-sensitive approach to education and development issues is necessary to bring about sustainable development. The culture and development thematic (95 million USD) under the MDG'S achievement fund provides a solid demonstration of culture's in and for development.

Egesi J.C and Akonye J.E (2011) argue that specifically, culture places a role in the MDGs, we take a look at the historical perspective of culture and that of the MDGs.

The human infant is very helpless owing to the fact that not only is it physically dependent on the older member of the society, it also lacks the pattern of behavior necessary for it to learn a lot in order to survive and function daily

effectively and efficiently in the society the child must learn the skills and other acceptable ways of behaving in the society in which it is born. It must learn the ways of the society and patterns of behavior of members of that society, which in sociological parlance is called Culture.

Though no definite definition of culture is widely acceptable, there is an agreement among scholars that it is total way of life of a people as well as the process within which their expression is communicated. Having known that culture is the people's way of life, it is worthy to note that culture functions as a driver to the attainment and sustainability of the MDGs, since the MDGs are for the people, those people's way of life should come into play to enable a striking a balance between the people's behavior and the development goals on course. Specifically, the eight million development goals (MDGs) include

    a. Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger
    b. Achieving universal primary education
    c. Promoting gender equality and women empowerment
    d. Reduction of child mortality rate
    e. The improvement of maternal health
    f. Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
    g. Ensuring environmental sustainability
    h. Developing a global partnership for development.

On the otherhand, Egesi and Akonye (2011) are of the view that as earlier indicated, these Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as laudable as they are can only be attained in a sustainable manner when the cultural dimension of development is taken into account. Hence the Unit Nations Education Scientific Culture Organization (UNESCO) Director-General, Irina Bokoba at the millennium summit in New York on September 21st 2010 affirmed that culture has a key role to play in reaching the development goals.

The power of culture to drive development was also underscored by Jean Ring who announced the launching of a two-year regional campaign for renaissance of African Cultural diversity and the dynamism of the cultural sector in Africa. For European Commissioner, Prebaigs, culture is instrumental in reaching the MDGs. He made this submission while announcing a One Million Euros strategic EU/UNESCO partnership culture in developing countries, striking a balance between social and economic interests.

However, the aim of these millennium development goals is to encourage development in the world's poorest countries. And only interplay of the indigenous culture and effort to promote the MGDs can ensure a sustainable achievement of the millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Nigeria

Strengthening and repackaging **Education in Nigeria: the key Role of culture for National Development**

It has been established that the kind of education the British missionaries introduced into Nigeria was only one that helped to proselytize and evangelize Nigerians and Nigeria rather than equipping the people to fit well into their society. There was no order in the educational system. With the later support from the British government Acculturation of the whole of Nigeria for the British religious d and society. The same situation still exists today, with little or no improvement.

However, the failure of the British system of education is that it failed to take into the culture of the Nigerian peoples. The values, norms, belief, custom, cosmological and social ideologies and practices etc of the indigenous people are not considered and given a place in the educational scheme.

The education system in Nigeria therefore needs to be re-engineered along the lines of the culture of the Nigerian people. Culture embraces all the material and non-material expressions of the people as well as the process within which the expressions are communicated. This presupposes that for any education system to fulfill its cardinal aim of catalyzing the culture and cultural orientation of that given society, it must be founded on the culture and cultural orientation of given society.

When education is overhauled, with its curriculum, programmes and policies rich in indigenous cultural contents, alongside culture, it becomes a driver to the attainment and sustainability of the MDGs, since the MDGs are for the people and the people way of life must come into play to enable a striking of balance between the people behaviors and the development goals on course. In this way, culture in education comes to play a pivotal role for National Development and the achievement of the MDGs in Nigeria.

Conclusion/Summary

By way of conclusion it is expedient to mention that the present British-oriented system of education in Nigeria has failed to actualize/catalyze sustainable

development and the achievement of the Millennium development goals (MDGs) in the country. This is because the country's education policy and operators failed to re-orient it along the lines of the indigenous culture of the Nigerian people. Culture embraces all the material and non-material expression of a people and as the process within which the expression are communicated. The process includes education. Hence, education in Nigeria must be drawn into the vortex of our indigenous culture for it to be meaningful to the people; and to be able to catalyze development, the achievement of the MDGs and ensure a sustainable national development in Nigeria.

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