



GOVERNMENT POLICY ON NIGERIAN EDUCATION AND ITS BENEFITS TO ALL MANKIND

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Abstract

Education as an investment constitutes the largest enterprise in humankind. It is the principal instrument for academic progress, knowledge, social mobilization, political survival, best morality of life and effective national development of any country. Investment in education is a necessary condition for promotion of economic growth and national development. Educational institutions including schools are established and managed through the government policies, essentially to achieve certain stated goals and objectives. There is no way the goal and objectives of an education can be achieved without putting in place certain mechanisms towards ensuring the success of the policy towards human investment and achievement. In the school system, part of the integral pre-requisites to be put in place towards the actualization of the educational goal and objectives requires adequate provision of resources, maximum utilization and appropriate management of educational policy, resources to avoid wastages and improve the quality of the teaching, learning process in the academic environment. This paper therefore examined the conceptual policy, classification of education definition, Islam and Christianity definition, and the benefits of education.

Keywords: Education, Government policy and Benefits.

Introduction

The quality of every society is largely predicated on the quality of its education and educational policy system. In the light of the apparent constraints on educational policy their efficient utilization for maximum result need not be over emphasized. Adebayo (2001) posit, that there has to be administration in any organization as long as an organization consists of people brought together in hierarchical set-up making use of tools, equipment, human and material, all in the quest of attaining the goals for which the organization is established.

By the role that education plays in the benefits of individual and collective lives of people, no amount of consideration put into its improvement can be too much. And given the abysmal level to which its quality has descended in Nigeria, any consideration given to its resuscitation now cannot be too soon but rather belated. Nigeria has witnessed policy reversals and somersaults in several sectors; this is particularly noticeable in the education arena. It is however curious how successive leadership expects to achieve or galvanize development through the instrumentality of education. It is pertinent to note that a nation 's level of development is mirrored by and dependent on the quality and quantity of human capital which is linked directly to humankind development and it is germane to state that education is the pivot.

National Policy on Education which spelt out the philosophy and objectives that drive investment in education (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) 2004). The individual and societal needs; realities of the Nigerian environment and contemporary global demands seem to underscore the goals of the National Policy on Education in Nigeria which took its cue from the 1969 National Curriculum Conference and a follow-up seminar in 1973 comprising stakeholders in education, voluntary agencies and external bodies to deliberate on appropriate framework or policy on education. The result of these was the final document titled the (National Policy on Education) with a maiden publication in 1977, the second, third and fourth editions were done in 1981,

1998, and 2004 respectively (FRN, 2004). The policy and issues involved in the different tiers of education (from pre-primary to tertiary) are discussed in brief after the segment on clarification of concepts.

Clarification of Concepts

Begin with the remark that there exist rather different conceptions of education, we have approximately the following definitions of education:

“Education is the socially organized and regulated process of continuous transference of socially significant experience from the previous generations to the followings. The main way to receive an education is to take a course of training in the system of educational institutions.”

According to this definition, education was the process of transmitting and receiving. And what we were seeing in the most of our classrooms were in excellent accordance with this formulation. “Who is not ready to the lesson? Who did not prepare their homework?”, asked a teacher. Visible on the faces of the students is a mixture of astonishment and sympathy to the teacher. “What is he saying? What homework? We came here to receive a transfer. Have you a transfer? If “Yes” give it to us! If “No” leave us alone!”

Hegel examines the notion of education in his work “Philosophical Propaedeutic”. It is quite interesting that this examination he included in the part of his work named “Duties of the Individual to Himself”. Just so! Not a transfer to be received but a duty, and not merely a duty but the duty of the individual to himself.

“Man, as an individual, stands in relation to himself. He has two aspects: his individuality and his universal essence. His Duty to Himself consists partly in his duty to care for his physical preservation, partly in his duty to educate himself, to elevate his being as an individual into conformity with his universal nature.”

Compare this goal, to elevate human’s being as an individual into conformity with his universal nature, with another goal, all rounded development of personality. Hegel is talking about the intersection, not about the Union. General education must care about qualities common to all people. We must

live in the community, so the main care must be about what is common to all members of the community.

Holistic Definitions

Holistic education is characterised by (1) interdisciplinary activities that cut across traditional knowledge disciplines (2) interdimensional approaches covering all aspects of 'being human' and (3) emphasise communicative interaction between God's Word and teachers and student's daily lives. It is underpinned by Quran and biblical anchors and complemented by transformative actions whilst highlighting the implication of secular and spiritual maturation. It takes account of Barns' (2002) caution for teachers to scrutinise the implied metaphysical framework. Authentic holistic education requires teachers and students to have a God focused worldview. Consistency and coherency are required for academic achievement. Further, it requires teachers and students to understand and remain steadfast in their dealings with naturalism, postmodernism and post secularism (Harris, 2004).

Education, as defined by American scholar and biblical thinker Noah Webster, "comprehends all that series of instruction and discipline which is intended to enlighten the understanding, correct the temper, form the manners and habits of youth, and fit them for usefulness in their future stations." Webster's definition is itself a demonstration of the chief aim of Christian education a biblical world view. The Apostle Paul, in his treatise on the value and authenticity of Scripture, explains that "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for correction, for reproof, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." (II Timothy)

Defined by the Quran itself means submission to the Supreme Being and compliance with His laws, which constitutes Nature. Islam lays special emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge. Concept of vicegerent of man: According to Quran, Allah has made man as a vicegerent due to knowledge (IIm-ul-Asma), when angels argues about the vicegerent of man than Allah (SWT) taught Adam the names of some things and then Adam told them and hence proved his ability for vicegerent on earth.

This shows the importance of acquiring knowledge from the Quranic point of view (Surah AL-Baqra Foruth Ruku). Knowledge is of two types, revealed knowledge and acquired knowledge. Revealed knowledge has been given to human beings, through prophets by Allah. Acquired knowledge is that which is being acquired by the human beings through the study of natural phenomena, attitude of man and through the study of society. Quran says that, the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life, for the prosperous life on earth and hereafter, both kinds of knowledge, revealed and acquired are necessary.

It shows the basis of the educational set-up in Islam where the children are not only equipped with religious knowledge but also with acquired that is scientific knowledge so that they can live a righteous and prosperous life. That is why the knowledge in Islam is considered as the greatest gift of Allah to Mankind. It helps man to attain righteous and prosperous life. Education is the process through which knowledge is transmitted from a section of society to another section. It also reflects the philosophy on which it is based. Islamic philosophy derives its origin from the spirit of teachings of the Quran and Hadith (the saying of the Holy Prophet may peace be upon him).

Therefore, education can be view as a process of knowledge from inception of mankind in the womb of its mother, birth, and the period of his life activities, associate and balance the physical and spiritual development of humankind to the truth of life and the end of his life. Policy implementation.

Policy

Policy is a prime-mover for all important activities in a people 's life. This is captured in Anderson 's (Anderson 2003) assertion thus: Public Policies in a modern, complex society are indeed ubiquitous. They confer advantages and disadvantages, cause pleasure, irritation, and pain and collectively have important consequences for our well-being and happiness. Policy has been defined by McKinney and Howard (1972) and Adamolekun (1983) as course

setting involving decisions of the widest ramifications and longest time perspective in the life of people or an organization.

Anderson (2003) after noting that Public Policy also may be viewed as whatever governments choose to do or not to do, and classifying such as perhaps being adequate for ordinary discourse, provides a more precise definition of policy thus: a policy is defined as relatively stable, purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern. The characteristics of this definition are as follows: the first is that policy is relatively stable. The second is that policy is purposive. The third is that policy is a course of action to be followed. This entails, as Anderson posits that policies consist of courses or patterns of action taken over time. (Anderson 2003). Policy consists of two major parts-goals and strategies for attaining the goals which translates to policy.

Education Policy

There exists in Nigeria, a national policy on education contained in a document, the most current edition of which is 4th edition (2004). Its first edition was published in 1977 (National Policy on Education, 4th edition 2004). This does not mean that there was no education policy pre-1977. The current document on the national education policy divides the subject into four broad categories; pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary education and provides a set of policies to govern each category. Each category as discussed in brief below opens up with its own definition. Starting from pre-primary, and ending at tertiary education.

Pre-Primary Education

The National Policy on Education (FRN,2004) which shall be referred to as NPE in short defines the early childhood pre-primary education as the education given in an educational institution to children prior to their entering the primary school. It includes the crèche, the nursery and the kindergarten. It stated further in paragraph 12 of the policy document that the responsibilities of government

for this level of education shall be to promote the training of qualified teachers in adequate number, contribute to the development of suitable curriculum, supervise and control the quality of such institutions, and establish pre-primary sections in existing public schools.

Basic Education

Basic education in Nigeria is of nine-year duration comprising six years of primary education and three years of junior secondary education. The national policy on education says that it shall be free and compulsory, and should include adult plus non-formal education programmes at primary and junior secondary education levels for adults and out of school youths (FRN, 2004). Paragraph 17 of the National Policy on Education states that primary education is that given in institutions for children aged six to eleven, and that since the rest of the education system is built on it, the primary level is the key to the success or failure of the whole system. The duration for this level of education is currently fixed at six years.

Secondary Education

This is defined as the education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary stage (FRN, 2004). The broad goals of secondary education shall be to prepare the individual for: (a) useful living within the society; and (b) higher education. The specific objectives are so varied and ambitious as those of the basic education and are contained in paragraph 22a-h. Core subjects; pre-vocational electives; non-prevocational electives in junior secondary school and core; vocational electives; non-vocational electives in senior secondary school are clearly spelt out in the policy document (FRN, 2004). Issues such as methods of certification and general provisions were documented in paragraphs 28-30.

Tertiary Education

This is the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, mono-technics including those institutions offering

correspondence courses (FRN, 2004). The goals of tertiary education in Nigeria are broadly stated in paragraph 59 of the policy document on education to include the following:

1. Contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training;
2. Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society;
3. Develop the intellectual capacity of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments;
4. Acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society;
5. Promote and encourage scholarship and community service;
6. Forge and cement national unity; and
7. Promote national and international understanding and interaction.

The above goals are to be pursued through teaching, research, and development; virile staff development programmes; generation and dissemination of knowledge; a variety of modes of programmes including full-time, part-time, block-release, day-release, sandwich etc; access to training funds such as those provided by the Industrial Training Fund (ITF); Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES); maintenance of minimum educational standards through appropriate agencies; inter-institutional co-operation; dedicated services to the community through extra-mural and extension services, with the benefits education.

Benefits of education.

The benefits of education are many. Not only will you personally benefit from receiving an education when it comes to income, career advancement, skill development, and employment opportunities, but your society and community receive benefits of education as well. Societies with higher rates of degree completion and levels of education tend to be healthier, have higher rates of

economic stability, lower crime, and greater equality. For more surprising benefits of education, read on.

Benefits of Education; Are Societal and Personal.

Those who get an education have higher incomes, have more opportunities in their lives, and tend to be healthier. Societies benefit as well. Societies with high rates of education completion have lower crime, better overall health, and civic involvement.

Poverty Reduction

Lack of access to education is considered the root of poverty. Not getting an education can lead to a cycle of poverty. However, [access to education can mean getting out of that cycle.](#)

1. Healthier Lifestyle

People with better education tend to [live longer](#) and have healthier lifestyles. According to [research](#), people with higher education have a one-third lower risk of heart disease. Degree holders are also [less likely to smoke and more likely to get regular exercise.](#)

2. Experimentation and Diversity are a Benefit of Education:

A personal benefit to getting an education is the opportunity to grow as an individual, experiment with what you are passionate about, and find yourself. You will be exposed to a diverse set of people and ideas which expand the mind.

Connecting Across Borders

The new world of digital education is helping those who get an education to connect across the globe with people from other cultures. Students can collaborate together across borders, increasing cultural awareness and worldliness of the individuals.

3. Socializing and [Networking](#) are Personal Benefits of Education

Education provides students with the space and the opportunities to meet like-minded individuals, either on a peer or mentor basis. In school, students meet leaders in their field, top professionals, and make contacts through extracurricular activities as well.

4. Pursuing Your Passion

When you feel passionate about something, you want to immerse yourself in that topic. Education gives you the space to do so. In addition, you may find new passions, or new areas of interest within your field of study.

Sense of Accomplishment

Finishing any degree whether it is a bachelor of science degree or higher national diploma, education is an accomplishment. Graduating gives students, a huge sense of accomplishment and gives them the confidence needed to go out into the world and make something of themselves.

5. Personal Development of Skills

Students are required to go through many types of assignments, discussions, courses, and more during their time in education. Therefore, they end up with a wonderful skill set that translates into the workforce. In addition, from extracurricular, students learn arts, sports, and more that help them personally in life and to connect with others.

More Productivity

Those with an education have had more on their plate, and succeeded through it. They know how to manage their time and talents and be productive. After graduation, students can carry that productive energy into the workforce.

Better Communication

Students are required to turn in written assignments, work in groups, participate in discussions, or present in front of others. This leads to excellent written communication, speaking skills, and group communication.

Critical Thinking Skills

People with an education can think, and think well. They are taught to ask questions, reflect, and analyze all critical skills for later success.

Identification of Skills

Some have skills that they have not yet discovered, and have not had the opportunity to expand upon. Education stretches the mind, exposes students to new topics, and pushes students to do better. As a result, students may find skills they did not even know they had.

Greater Sense of Discipline

Students are given increasing amounts of responsibility with each year of education they completed. It is the student's job to manage their time and create their own success, leading to self-discipline abilities for those who succeed.

6. More Employment is a Benefit of Education

Degree holders have access to more jobs. For graduates of bachelor's programs or higher National Diploma, the unemployment rate is [cut in half](#).

7. Career Entry and Advancement

University degrees prepare students for a career, or for advancement within their current field. Higher education gives the training and skills necessary for success in a specific area. In addition, many positions require a degree for entry. Some may not even look at a resume where the applicant has no degree.

8. Economic Growth

When an entire society is educated, productivity increases, average income increases, and unemployment decreases. This leads to the economic growth and stability of a society as a whole. It starts with education.

Higher Income as a Benefit of Education

Those with education beyond bachelor degree tend to have higher salaries than high school degree holders. Those with no degrees make the lowest salaries on average. For full-time workers in 2017, [monthly average wages](#) for those with National Diploma was sixty thousand naira (60,000=00), followed by higher national diploma at eighty thousand naira (80,000=00), and ninety-five thousand naira (95,000=00) for bachelor's degree holders. Those with postgraduate degrees made an average of one hundred and fifty thousand naira (150,000=00), all at starting point respectively.

9. Environmental Benefits

Climate change is a large part of the conversation today, and society needs to work together to find ways to reduce impact on the earth. Educated individuals that enter the workforce will put their knowledge of climate change into company policies, leading to increased sustainability.

10. Societal Benefits

A society that is well educated feels a higher sense of unity and trust within the community. Educated societies lift up the weak and bring a feeling of togetherness among all parts.

Promotes Equality and Empowerment

Education provides everyone with a sense of empowerment; the idea that they have the choice to change their own life and choose their path. Women with an education have better decision making capabilities and are more likely to take charge of their own lives.

Promotes Good Citizenship and Civic Involvement

Those with an education tend to be more aware of [current political issues](#), and are more likely to [vote](#). Higher degree holders are twice as likely to volunteer, and [3.5](#) times more likely to donate money than high school graduates.

Reduces Crime

Education teaches people the difference between right and wrong, and also exposes children and young adults to experiences of others. Understanding right and wrong and having empathy reduce tendency to commit crimes. Education of a society decreases overall arrests just one-year increase of average education levels of a state decrease state-wide arrests by 11%.

Reduces Gender-Based Violence

In communities with high rates of education for both genders, gender-based violence is [lower](#). Educated persons are more likely to support gender equality, and are more likely to take efforts to stop and prevent gender-based or domestic

violence. Communities that value education for both genders are [less likely](#) to have instances of terrorist attacks on girls schools.

Reduces Child Marriage

Girls with secondary or higher education are [three times](#) less likely to marry before the age of 18. Putting education first in a society allows for girls to be seen as people who can get an education and make their own decisions, rather than just a future wife and mother.

Reduces Maternal Death Rates

Maternal death rates drop significantly in societies with high education rates. Women with no education at all are [2.7](#) times as likely to die during birth as women with 12 years of education. Women with one to six years of education are twice as likely to suffer maternal mortality. This is because educated mothers are more likely to use health services, even in low socioeconomic settings. Lack of education is also a stressor for women during childbirth. The more stressors a woman has during pregnancy, the higher the likelihood for negative outcomes.

Benefits of Higher Education

1. Career Preparation

Some people know exactly what they want to do once they enter the workforce, and some people may need higher education to get to where they need to be. A university degree is a required prerequisite for a growing number of jobs. Even if you are not sure what you want to do after graduation, it is a great benefit to go to university. Higher education will help narrow your interest and refine your skill set, showing you exactly what you are good at and what field you may want to enter.

2. Broader Practical Benefits

Getting a higher education has some practical benefits too. When you look at [income research](#), the evidence is clear that university graduates make much more than their higher National Diploma counterparts. Higher school grads tend

to be healthier as well, with [lower risk of heart disease](#), tendency towards [healthy eating and exercise](#), [smoke less](#) and [live longer](#). Postgraduates also tend to have higher rates of participation in political and community affairs, [volunteerism](#) and charitable donations.

3. Personal Development

Students go through a lot of personal development in university. Things such as critical thinking skills, time management, perseverance, communication, and presentation skills are all great assets not only for future work but for personal life as well. University grads get further in life, not just because of the degree they have earned, but the experiences they went through.

4. Pursuing a Passion and Desired Field

Pursuing your passion in the form of a university degree is the path that some people take and there is nothing wrong with that. If you really love music, studying music, then find a way to make a career out of it. University will help you get a deeper and more theoretical understanding of your passion and will also open your eyes to possible career paths and mentors.

5. Cognitive and Communication Skills

University students study hard and they study often. They are taught to think alternatively and creatively to solve a problem. As a result, university students have high cognitive ability. Courses often require [group work](#) and presentations, resulting in better interpersonal communication skills for grads.

6. Social Experiences

Do not forget that university is not all studying. The friends you make during university will be the friends you have for life. They can also act as a social net, lifting you up when you are down and encouraging you to do your best in your studies, your profession and in your life. Learning to live with others and work well with others enhances your social skills as well.

Conclusion

Education has always been a major agenda in Mankind's developmental program and aspiration, as it can bring about social, emotional, and spiritual change towards better quality of life. Education anywhere in the world is an

instrument of human capital advancement and for achieving national development. The need for a national policy to guide education cannot be over emphasized; and such a policy must be targeted at relevant to national needs, goals and aspiration. Feeling convinced? There are so much more than just these benefits of education that have being listed, and it is not hard to find some that specifically benefit you and what you need in your life. People always judge what is happening, about other people, their actions, and often make their judgements, their sentences. But any such judgement could be morally justifiable, only if he or she receives sufficient objective justification of education. In short education is an organic component that bring about humanity, morality, responsibility and devotion to the truth.

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