



**POSSIBLE WAYS OF REDEEMING THE COLLAPSING NIGERIAN
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM: AN APPRAISAL**

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Abstract

Education has been considered a key cum very important structure of the human society. By implication, education is derived from the noun educate which implies to impart knowledge. It is note worthy to establish that education is divided into two main forms of formal and informal education. Formal education can simply be taken for that form of education that uses a well- planned curriculum. It is usually carried out by personnel who are well and specially trained for that purpose otherwise considered as teachers. On the other side of the same coin, informal education is the one that takes place at home which usually is considered the child's first point of call upon birth. The two basic forms of education in truth complement each other. None can therefore claim to be more important than the other. In recent times in Nigeria, it has been observed that education has seemingly been relegated to the background and its importance so much compromised and undermined. Infact, the genuine purpose of education has been defeated and abused by almost all and sundry as none take its impact for a pint of salt. Both teachers, learners and various stake holders are caught in the web as its benefits has been marred by malpractices and corruption. This research is an effort at exposing the causes, dangers and possible ways out of this ugly doldrums in Nigeria. Data collection methods as the questionnaire, interview, textbooks, newspapers and internet were adopted. The functionalist theory was considered most appropriate as

theoretical framework for analysis, thereafter, recommendations were made.

Keywords: *Possible, Redemption, Collapse, Nigeria, Educational System.*

INTRODUCTION

The imperativeness of the educational system in any nation developing nation like Nigeria has been seriously harped or overemphasized by scholars To some scholars it is considered the hub. That in essence shows its level of relevance. By the above statement, it means that all the things that has to be done to become to any individual to become relevant is basically learnt. This makes the teachers very important, the learners important and the learning environment necessary. It must be said that virtually everybody knows what ideal learning entails. But the ideal learning does not hold water in Nigeria. Both the learning process and examination stage has turned into a thing of very serious worry. This is because quacks have flooded the system with almost nothing to impact. This makes the learners to have learnt nothing even at the point they are adjudged to have completed various programmes, this infact is devastating and ridiculous. Another aspect of this problem which must be mentioned is that many people see teaching as the last resort. This in essence means that they take up teaching because, they have no other reasonable means of livelihood and survival and that alone shows that they are not motivated to impact knowledge. They are only after the meagre salary that are usually given which the use to keep body and soul together, so to speak. Still in another view, the stakeholders of are not living up to expectations this is demonstrated and orchestrated by little or lean resources they invest into education while expecting large profits or output.

Purpose of Study

The main purpose of this study is to determine possible ways for redeeming the collapsing Nigerian educational system.

Specifically, the study sought out to:

- 1) Identify the extent to which Nigerian educational system has rotted or decayed.
- 2) How the decay has affected the image of education in Nigeria.
- 3) Assess possible ways that be adopted to remedy or save the Nigerian educational system.

Significance of Study

This study focuses on the possible ways of redeeming the collapsing Nigerian educational system. The findings of this study will be of immense benefits to the governments at various level. This is because it will provide them answers to the decomposing Nigerian educational system. It has also been discovered that one of the problems making the educational system to fail in Nigeria is poor policy formulation and implementation process. Another point remains that Nigeria's educational sector is poorly managed. The reason for this statement remains that people charged/saddled with the responsibility of managing the Nigerian educational system are not technocrats in education as appointments have been seen to be practically and primarily based on settlement grounds rather than on merits.

Another set of people that will benefit from this study are atake holders in education. This study when completed will open the eyes of the stakeholders to understand how they are being undone with the high level of decay being experienced in the system. This is because people will with time lose confidence with what we have here regarding education while seeking qualitative education elsewhere even across the coast of the African region irrespective of the cost implication.

Parents too stand to benefit immensely from this study as they will be exposed to the level of decay associated with the Nigerian educational system at the moment while we seek for a way out. This is because before now, parents would always think that they are doing good for their children while exposing them to examination malpractices and foul means to pass examinations simply because they fear for their children failing examinations and not labouring so hard to pass examinations.

Students stand to benefit also from this study as they also will be made to understand how lowly rated their certificated will be rated if they continue with the way they are going both in and outside the continent.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided this study.

- 1) To what extent has the Nigerian educational system rottened
- 2) To ascertain the extent to which the decay has affected the image of education in Nigeria.
- 3) Assess possible ways to remedy the decomposing educational system in Nigeria.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study was carried out as a descriptive survey or study in Owerri, Imo State.

It was therefore delimited to the following variables:

- 1) Identifying the extent to which the Nigerian Educational system has decayed.
- 2) Assessing the factors responsible for the decay of the Nigerian educational system
- 3) Determining ways of improving the Nigerian educational system.

Conceptual Framework

This segment of the work is on the review of conceptual framework, theoretical framework, empirical review and summary of literature review.

The Concept of Possible

Capable of being realized, possible implies that a thing may certainly exist or occur given the proper conditions, a possible route up the west face of the mountain, practical implies that something may be affected by available means or under current conditions.

Redemption

According to dictionary. Come, the word redemption is considered an act of redeeming or atoning for a fault or mistake or the state of being redeemed. On the other hand, it means deliverance, rescue, purchase as of something sold.

Collapse

In accordance with Merriam dictionary 2022, the word collapse simply means to fall or shrink together abruptly and completely: fall into a jumbled or flattened mass through the force of external pressure, to disintegrate or better still to crave or fall in or give way.

Nigeria

Officially the Federal Republic of Nigeria is a country in West Africa. It is geographically situated between the Sahel to the North and the Gulf of Guinea to the south in the Atlantic Ocean.

It covers an area of 923.769 square kilometres (356,669 sq ml) and with a population of over 216 million. It is the most populous country in Africa and the world's seventh most populous country. Nigeria borders Niger in the North, Chad in the north east, Cameroon in the east and Benin in the west.

Nigeria is a federal republic comprising 36 states and the federal capital territory where the capital is located in Abuja. The largest city in Nigeria is Lagos, one of the largest metropolitan areas in the world and the second largest in Africa.

Educational System

Simply put, educational system comprises of everything that goes into educating public school students at the federal, state or community levels, laws, policies and regulations. Public funding, resource allocations and procedures for determining funding levels.

Theoretical Framework

Functionalism

Functionalism is a theory about the nature of mental states. According to functionalism, mental states are identified by what they do rather than by

what they are made of. This can be understood by thinking about artifacts like mousetraps and ways. In particular, the original motivation for functionalism comes from the helpful comparison of minds with computers. But that is only an analogy the main arguments for functionalism depends on showing that it is superior to its primary competitors: identity theory and behaviourism contrasted with behaviourism, functionalism retains the traditional idea that that mental states of thinking creatures contrasted with identity theory. Functionalism introduces the idea that mental states are multiply realized, Encyclopedia Britannica (2022).

In that regard, education is considered the heart of any nation that tends to develop, that points to the height of its importance. In the contemporary world, there is no society that will develop without quality education. Therefore, education is seen to play a key or pivotal role when it comes to the development of a nation. Therefore, it must be treated with utmost attention and seriousness.

Going by the above, functionalism is deemed suitable as theoretical framework for the study.

Empirical Review

Under this segment, we shall examine studies and factors that have militated the implementation of educational policies and programmes in recent time.

It must be stated here that efforts have been made to develop education in Nigeria since independence in 1960. Various policies in the interest of education have been formulated, some have been taken yielded the expected fruits while some others have not.

One thing that must be said is that it is quite unfortunate that these efforts have produced the desired effects.

The state of education in Nigeria is still very deplorable. It is so bad that some resourceful Nigerians prefer to send their children to Europe , America and even small African countries such as Ghana that has just few universities as against over sixty universities in Nigeria that lack adequate learning facilities.

Apart from the general problems of policy implementation common to most countries, especially those of the third world countries. Some factors have been identified as peculiar to Nigeria and seriously inhibiting her educational growth. It is no longer news that Nigeria is the giant of Africa in terms of resourcefulness as a major oil and gas producer.

Ironically, most Nigerians live below the poverty line of one dollar per day. The following reasons among others account for the deplorable situation.

Instability of Government

So, as educational policies are formulated by various governments, political instability has stalled or discouraged the political will to implement such policies. As new governments come in quick succession and with relative uncertainty, continuity in policies could not be guaranteed. Every political player or politician has always been in a hurry to help him/ herself before being displaced by another group. This has affected educational policy implementation and programmes in Nigeria.

Corruption

If anything has contributed greatly to the stagnation and collapse of corporate development of Nigeria, it is this virus corruption.

It is found in all aspects of human endeavour, education inclusion. Its prominence has earned our nation a place of negative prominence in the world. Adesina (2004:16) noted. The 2004 corruption perceptions index released by transparency International (TI) the watchdog on global corruption ranks Nigeria as the third most corrupt country in the world.

Still yet, in 2003, the organization ranked Nigeria second a one step improvement from the previous position as the most corrupt country in the world.

Although then President, Olusegun Obasanjo was uncomfortable and disputed the rating then, many Nigerians agreed that it was correct. This is because corruption pervades all segments of Nigeria's national life. Despite enormous oil and gas wealth at the disposal of the country, basic things or necessities of life such as food, shelter, portable water, electricity, good roads and education have become luxuries to the citizens.

In another development, in recent times, unfortunately, senators who are seen as senior citizens unexpectedly demanded an inducement before they would approve that Nigerian children should go to school.

The Nigerian educational system has been on the ground for years now and it is neglected and abandoned with impunity (the emphasis is mine)

The current state of Education in Nigeria,

It has been harped by UNICEF over the years that all children no matter where they live or what their circumstances are, have the right to quality education. It has also been observed that even though primary education is officially free and compulsory about 10.5million of the country's children aged 5-14 years are not in school. Only 61 percent of 6 -11 year olds regularly attend primary school and only 35.6 percent of children aged 36-59 months receive early childhood education. In the North, of the country, the picture is even bleaker with a net attendance rate of 53 percent. Getting out of school children back into education poses a massive challenge.

Gender like geography and poverty is an important factor in the pattern of educational marginalization. States in the North- East and North-West have female primary net attendance rates of 47.7 percent and 47.3 percent respectively. Meaning that more than half of the girls are not in school.

Possible ways of redeeming the collapsing Nigerian Education

By and large, it must be established that the Nigerian education system is lying flat at the moment, but much need to be done in order to save the situation. In view of the above, here are the likely things that could be done.

1) Value re-orientation

It is necessary to establish that as things stand now, our people already have certain set beliefs which determine approaches to life. When it come to Nigerian education at the moment , the people already believe in the system being seen as corrupt. Efforts to change the perception and beliefs of our people should be on top gear in order to achieve the expected outcome. Virtually all the media channels need to get involved in this activity of re-orienting our people and needs to be followed up. It does not only end in getting people to believe that we can get back on track with a

positive change in our education we need to follow it up with genuine action plan or efforts.

2) Increasing the Allocation of Education

In recent times, it has been discovered that the allocation being meted out for education is small compared to other sectors

There is need now to increase and improve the allocation usually given to education.

This is because various things pertaining to education has sky rocked and immensely too in recent times. Such things as salaries of lecturers, teachers, infrastructure among other costs.

This paper is of the belief that if this is done, it will go a long way in re-activating the Nigerian educational system.

3) Professionalizing Teaching Profession

Another thing that must be established is the fact that teaching must be professionalized. This means the training of would-be teachers should be taken seriously. This really will be re-positioning teaching profession. It is necessary to establish that the salaries of teachers should be revisited and reviewed upwardly. This will encourage teachers to give their best.

4) Licensing of teachers

As it stands at the moment, quacks have messed up and flooded the field of the teaching profession in particular and education in general. It is on record that many practising teachers are have baked teachers so to speak. On the other hand, certain others are not licensed to teach. This situation must be addressed and brought under control.

Conclusion

The truth of the matter remains that the Nigerian educational system has collapsed. On the other hand, the government and other stake holders have all decided against speaking up over the issue for quite a long time now. This is because they take a deep thought over what they need to do to address the ugly situation. On the other hand, the solution the solution to this problem may not be far -fetched but it only depends on the approach and the masses bracing up for the change. The change must be welcomed

though at the take-off stage it might seem difficult but it will truly surely re-shape and shake-up the educational system and make it even better.

Recommendations

Having concluded the work, we make these recommendations.

- 1) The government at various levels should take up the task of re-shaping Nigerian educational system.
- 2) The people should understand that the poor image of the Nigerian educational system truly paints an ugly picture and should make case for its repositioning.
- 3) Teaching already practising in the field should feel indebted to improve their training and credentials,
- 4) The allocation being given to the educational sector should be increased.
- 5) Educational policies should effectively and religiously be always implanted when made.

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