



**DESIRABLE CHANGES IN THE NIGERIAN
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AT THE TERTIARY
EDUCATION LEVEL FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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Abstract

This paper overviews the challenges being faced by the Nigerian tertiary education system and the desirable changes needed to facilitate national development. In the process, problems bedeviling the sector such, as lack of adequate lecture theaters, modern teaching facilities and unqualified personnel, were highlighted. The desirable changes needed to improve the sector were proffered, thus paving the way for national development. Recommendations include the need to inculcate the love of teaching in teachers, encourage Entrepreneur Training and the inclusion of ICT in the process of teaching and learning for national development, among others.

Key Words: Desirable Changes, National Development, Tertiary Education

Introduction

Education is a positive and permanent change of behavior as a result of experience or learning. It takes into its enclave the formal training that is given in schools and colleges, which enable the recipient of such experience to be able to read, write and calculate. Behavior change (education) can be through a formal method (intentional) or an informal (non-intentional) one (Dan Asabe, 2006). The concept of education could also mean the specialized training that is given on the job to enable one to acquire skills in certain fields, such as agriculture, blacksmithing, motor mechanic, pottery, tailoring, etc. Education is therefore the training of the entire person to enable him not only to be able to read, write and calculate or to be proficient in a given job, but also to enable him/her fit in a society. As rightfully held by Denga (2000):

Education is the total, complete and positive development of an individual from the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains; that is, physically, intellectually, morally, socially, emotionally and attitudinally. It is a process of learning to live as a useful member of the society. In summary, an educated man or woman is a refined gentlemen or woman socially, morally, physically, intellectually and aesthetically in a positive direction.

National Development

National Development, on the other hand, is the general improvement in the living conditions of the people in a nation, which includes the socio-political, the cultural, the economic, the geographic, the environmental, the educational and the legal. National development is the kind that is all-encompassing, taking into its bosom all the aspects of human endeavor, such as, to pave the way for a balanced development.

The Relevance of Education to National Development

The prosperity of a country depends not on the abundance of its wealth or fortification, but rather in the number of its cultivated citizens, in its men of education, enlightenment and character. Along this line, Charles (2005) held that,

“The learned and the intellectuals were endowed with the faculty of reason and not faculties of spirit and appetite. Progress is ensured when leaders, indeed human beings were endowed with intellect rather than appetite, which was essentially directed to just eating, working and merry making. Those who love pleasure and food should work and produce for the society”.

The Importance of Education

The importance of education to the progress and development of any nation is very crucial and, as such, the place it occupies and the role it plays are significant. Thus:

- (1) It modifies one’s mind, sharpens one’s outlook and consciousness, refines one’s personality and widens one’s horizon and awakens one’s critical sensibility, all of which are desirable ingredients in nation building.
- (2) An educated man is well-informed. His culture and attitudes are well tuned and anything desired for nation building. Education is a visa to success, a passport to the unknown and a catalyst to greater heights.
- (3) Education is indispensable to societal progress and development
- (4) To provide individuals with the opportunity and encourage them to undertake researches that will ultimately bring about development in the society
- (5) To ensure that education is positively transmitted such as to do away with anti-social behaviors and instill in the minds of the people creativity and good objectiveness and values that will lead to the progress and development of the country (FRN, 2004)

The Challenges faced by the Education Sector in Nigeria

Section 18 of the (1999) current constitution of Nigeria maintains that, for the country to achieve its goals of educating

its people, primary, secondary and tertiary institutions, education must be provided for the people free of charge by the government.

On the contrary, parents practically pay for their children's education right from the nursery or primary up to university level. Lecture theatres and classrooms are not enough to accommodate the teeming number of students in all the higher institutions of learning. Furniture is grossly inadequate. In fact, universities, colleges and polytechnics have in the past and present been forced to close for months because of government's inability to fulfill its promises of fully catering for its demands. Shortage of facilities, such as suitable writing boards and classes or lecture theaters is one of the most pressing problems bedeviling the educational institutions in Nigeria. These and many more characterized many of the challenges faced by the Nigerian Education System. Thanks for the recent intervention of the Tertiary Educations Trust Fund (TETFUND) all over the Country.

On the other hand, incompetence on the part of some lecturers to discharge their assigned responsibilities effectively and efficiently is another problem hindering the much aspired National Development through Education. This is so because there are some lecturers that are only in the teaching profession by accident or because they could not get any suitable job that offers an attractive salary. Some of them often cannot express themselves in the official medium of communication, for

effective teaching and learning to take place, nor are they competent in the subject matter. It is these kind of lecturers that do not perform their duties efficiently and effectively. Often, some of them compress a whole semester's/term's courses into a few lectures, lasting not more than 50% of the time allocated to a course per semester, thereby shortchanging their students and the nation, the end result of which has been catastrophic, for it is the products of these higher institutions of learning that graduate without the necessary skills to compete or at least be proficient in whatever they may find themselves confronted with. Some of these lecturers are so lazy that when examinations, tests or assignments are taken by their students, they hardly do the marking by themselves. Rather they give the scripts out to an incompetent person to mark and record it for them, thus creating an avenue for cheating and victimization (Fagge, 2010).

In addition, some of these apathetic lecturers do favor students by not properly supervising the writing of projects by such students in return for a reward, which usually culminates into a serious set back for the schools, the system and the standards, thereby denting the image of educational establishments and further creating a void between professional and unprofessional teachers. The end result of that takes a toll on the country national development.

The Problems of National Development in Nigeria

The issues surrounding Nigeria's development, according to Fagge (2010), are very intricate and present a serious challenge to the Nigerian Nation. They include:

(1) **Corruption:** This simply means the dishonest exploitation of power for personal gain or extreme immorality, depravity or even an undesirable change to illegally benefit from a situation (Encarta, 2007). Fagge (2010) maintains that corruption thrives in Nigeria largely because the most basic things that people need to use in their lives are not immediately accessible, and the fear of poverty drives people in public offices to ensure that, not only do they liberate themselves from poverty, but their unborn progeny as well. Like a demonic instinct, once they start, they don't know where to draw the line, leading to depraved situations, a typical example of which happened recently when many Nigerian political office holders were found to have stashed looted funds to the tune of Billions of Dollars in both foreign and home Banks, on the one hand, and their cohorts claiming they could not afford to pay workers salaries, on the other, leaving the country in a mess that has never been witnessed in history. Thus, corruption is intrinsically linked to underdevelopment, as long as a person's normal income does not provide him with a decent living, i.e. afford the basic needs of life, the door will always be open to bribery and corruption.

Moreover, corruption involves wide variety of practices. A simple example is the collection of bribe to give favor to an

undeserved person or giving the bribe so as to receive the favor undeservedly to the disadvantage of other people. This trend has permeated virtually every sector of the country and the economy, as there is hardly any venture without some form of fraudulence or another. Uniformed-agents of the government openly set trap on the roads for the people whose life and property they are supposed to protect to collect bribe. Sometimes, drivers even get killed for refusing to succumb to give bribes. This and many other problems have crippled many attempts of the country national development and meaningful national integration, thanks to the recent efforts by the incumbent government of Nigeria

(2) **Selfishness:** This means concern for one's own personal desires/interests to the detriment of other equally important or more important interests. In Nigeria, leaders/Political/office holders clearly show preference for their tribes/kinsmen over other Nigerians on virtually everything: Business-opportunities, contracts, developmental projects, scholarships, etc.

(3) **Tribalism:** This is the loyalty or allegiance to one's tribal group at the same time looking down at any other tribe, which many a times leads to hatred that has always been a major source of dissention and conflict. A typical example was evident recently when the above problem nearly led Nigeria to disintegration (Fagge, 2010).

(4) **External manipulation:** This in essence refers to the ability of capitalist countries of Western Europe and America to exert

their powers and control underdeveloped countries of the world, Nigeria inclusive, to get them to do their bidding for them at the expense of the countries' interest and the interests of its teeming populace.

(5) **Poor data-base:** This simply means insufficient access to systematically arranged data, on past plans, structured so that it can be automatically retrieved, utilized or manipulated data on which to build present plans and make arrangements to accommodate the future plans.

(6) **Poor planning implementation:** This is the tendency of leaders in the country to deviate from plans formulated and started by their predecessors in favor of a new plan. In other words, instead of seeing the already started plans through, new ones are started, which is always the reason for the continued stagnation of the nation's development process.

(7) **Lack of continuity:** A common trend in Nigeria is lack of continuity of the development projects started by previous governments. This is evident in the way political governments abandon projects started by the predecessors in favor of starting their own knowing fully well the consequence of their actions.

Desirable Changes in the Nigerian Educational system for National Development

(1) The need to integrate ICT into the Education System

To keep pace with development in computer education, Nigeria must not allow the chalkboard and textbooks to continue to dominate classroom activities in its higher education institutions. If other less affluent countries of Africa can harness the benefits of information and communication technology to help primary and secondary school students become better information users, why not Nigerian Higher institutions? If the private sector in Nigeria can embrace ICT to stay afloat, why not the education sector? The banking sector, insurance companies, manufacturing industries and multinational companies in the oil sector have embraced multimedia technology to bring innovative solutions to their current challenges. Thus, to be a major player in the global market and prepare her citizens for the new environment of today and the future, the Nigeria must embrace ICT (Shavinina, 2001)

(2) The need to inculcate the love of teaching in teachers

The need to inculcate in the teachers the love of the teaching profession is very crucial because it will pave way for a kind of teacher that will teach because he has interests in what he does. It is these kinds of teachers that will ensure the effective and efficient discharge of their assigned responsibilities, thereby achieving the goal of national development for the country.

(3) **The need for Entrepreneur Training**

Although the current minimum standard of the national commission for colleges of education has stipulated that entrepreneurship education be compulsorily taught, the need to teach and inculcate in the minds of students the right attitude to learning skills to earn a decent living is very critical. Hence, emphasis should be placed on entrepreneur education, so that the teeming graduates in the country do not have to wait for government to offer them job rather they will take care of themselves.

(4) **The need for literacy**

This must be done away with in totality for the country to achieve its goal of national development. To achieve the desired level of literacy the government must come up with programs of educating people through radio programs and teacher out-reach programs, so that people can be reached and taught the basics of reading and writing wherever they may be.

(5) **The need for sufficient database**

Data must be updated so that successive governments could have access to records of what the previous governments did, so that they can continue from where they stopped.

(6) **The need to eradicate corruption**

Corruption is the one problem that single handedly leads Nigeria to its current predicament, because almost all the problems discussed above are byproducts of corruption. Hence, if any meaningful national development is to be achieved, corruption must be done away with in totality. This can be exemplified in the following manner:

- (a) Leadership by example: Leaders have to set example by not allowing, giving room or engaging in corrupt practices.
- (b) Contracts must be given out to deserving companies not affiliates or relatives or even companies belonging to the chief executive.
- (c) Contractors must not be compelled to dole out a whopping percentage, the end-result of which is poor quality projects.
- (d) Corrupt uniformed officers must be punished by the relevant agencies of the government to deter others.
- (e) Ethical revolution must be embarked upon by governments all over the country, so that everyone will be aware of the expectations on him/her.

Conclusion

Based on the facts above, the writers conclude that the problems bedeviling the education sector and, by extension, national

development are very glaring and need urgent attention if progress is to be made in this regard. Hence, the problems identified includes, corruption, poor database, poor planning implementation, incompetence, lackluster attitude to work, illiteracy, selfishness and external manipulation.

Recommendations

The following recommendations will go a long way in minimizing incidences of corruption in the Nigerian education system, which, by extension, affects national development:

- (1) The old methods of learning associated with the use of radio, television and film do not contribute any inventive changes to traditional methods in education system. Information and communication technologies are being used in the developed world for instructional functions. Today, computers perform a host of functions in teaching and learning, as many nations are adding computer literacy as a skill student will need for succeeding in a technologically developed world and as the needed tonic for National Development (Thomas, 1987)
- (2) Nigeria cannot afford to lag behind in using multimedia (ICT) to raise the intellectual and creative resources of her citizens. This is particularly important for children whose adulthood will blossom in a cyber environment entirely different from that of the present generation (Shavinina, 1997)

- (3) For the existing social problems bedeviling our societies to be minimized, there is the need for mass ethical revolution, so that the minds of the people can be disinfected of the decadent microbes of immorality.
- (4) When it comes to employing lecturers, the concerned authorities must ensure the employment of the right kind of people, academically capable, morally upright, hardworking and dedicated.
- (5) Leadership by example; the leaders themselves must be honest because they are supposed to be the first line of defense when it comes to the issue of corruption.
- (6) Policies which respect our religious and cultural values should be initiated to promote peaceful and harmonious living between the people.
- (7) The political arena, more than any other sector, needs to be sanitized of the rotten eggs that hinder it from maturing and so enabling people benefit from its dividends. Most of the so-called elders of political parties and executives are nothing but opportunists, who are after getting rich quick. Many a times, it is connivance between the executives and corrupt politicians that good and credible candidates get swept under the party carpets, thereby cheating the people by forcing on them unqualified and money-mongering candidates who know

not why or what it takes to be representatives of the people.

- (8) Finally, the government of the day must be wary of the so-called international communities in their efforts to eradicate corruption, recover stolen funds by politicians and government officials, eliminate insurgency and radical-indoctrination of extremists.

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COUNSELING IN ISLAM: THE QUR'ANIC APPROACH AND ITS INTERPRETATION

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Abstract

The paper looks at the nature and goals of non-Islamic counseling. It defines counseling from the view point of Islam as contain in the Qur'an and sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him), the main pillars of Islamic counseling, the goals of counseling in Islam and some Qur'anic approaches to counseling. The paper concluded with a recommendation that continuous research and scholarly writing on Islamic counseling will move the field from the periphery to the centre-stage of schools' curriculum.

Key words: counselling, Islamic counselling, Qur'anic approach.

Introduction

The word 'Qur'an', a verbal noun, is equivalent in meaning to 'qira'ah' – both come from the verb 'qara'a' which means 'to read'. Thus, Qur'an literally means "reading or reciting". However, the term Qur'an has been historically used specifically to refer to the Book revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The word 'Qur'an' is mentioned in a number of places throughout the Book in reference to itself (Qur'an 17:9). Maher (2008) has succinctly described the Qur'anic counseling direction:

The Qur'an tells us that man's life in this world is but the first stage - a very short stage - of a life that continues beyond the hiatus called "death"; and the same Qur'an stresses again and again the principle of man's moral responsibility for all his conscious actions and his behaviour, and of the continuation of this responsibility, in the shape of inescapable consequences, good or bad, in a person life in the hereafter. But how could man be made to understand the nature of these consequences and, thus, of the quality of the life that awaits him? - for, obviously, inasmuch as man's resurrection will be the result of what the Qur'an describes as "a new act of creation", the life that will follow upon it must be entirely different from anything that man can and does experience in this world.

The Almighty Allah, according to Maher (2008), revealed in the following verses, which formed part of counselling foundation in the Qur'an. It runs:

“...now has come unto you the Light from God and a manifest Scripture. Whereby, it He (God) guides him who seeks His good pleasure unto paths of peace. He brings out of darkness unto light by His decree, guides them unto – a straight path” (5: 15 - 16).

The whole Qur'anic themes are about guidance and counseling, as the Qur'an attests to itself that it is “...guidance and a mercy to mankind”. It is upon these that this paper looks at the nature and goals of non-Islamic counseling, defined counseling from the view point of Islam as contained in the *Qur'an* and *sunnah* of His Prophet (peace be upon him), the main pillars of Islamic counseling goals of counseling in Islam and some Qur'anic approaches to counseling. The paper concluded with recommendations that continuous research and scholarly writing on Islamic counseling will move the field from the periphery to the centre-stage of schools' curriculum.

The Nature and Goals of Non-Islamic Counselling

Counselling, according to Gladding (2004), is the skilled and principled use of relationships to facilitate self-knowledge, emotional acceptance and growth and the optimal development of personal resources. The overall aim is to provide an