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NOMADIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME: IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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Abstract

The research work is set out to assess the relevant of nomadic education programme and its implications on educational system. The authours adopt logical reasoning in conducting this research (qualitative). The article observed that Nigeria as a whole face many fundamental challenges despite federal government Inclusion of nomadic education programmes which started in middle seventy's when Nigeria as a nation implemented her first indigenous policy on education. Nomadic education programmes have been welcome and accepted by Nigerian citizen as education given to immigrant fisher men, herdsman and farmers which their nature occupation makes them to move from one place to another in search for their livelihood. To guide this study, two research questions were created. Education as one of the key concepts was examined which etymologically seen as, educere, means to lead or draw out. With the activity of the nomads in Nigeria, which disrupted their children right to free and compulsory education, nomadic school were open as steps towards improving mass literacy in Nigeria. Despite federal government provision of nomadic education facilities, there are problems everywhere which include poor funding, outdated school facilities, attitudes of nomads, poor curriculum materials, lack of quality teachers, and attitude of the parents towards formal education and poor control and management of nomadic education facilities to reach every nomadic school even at the remotest location. With the above challenges on the implementation of nomadic education programmes in Nigeria, this research work concludes with the recommendations that Arrangements different from our conventional school system should therefore be made for this mobile group of people because it is clear that their occupational circumstances debarred them from participating in modern education.

Keywords: Education, Nomadic, Educational System, & Programme

Introduction

Nomadic education is the first six years of basic education provided to the children of the disadvantaged nomadic population in the country. The nomads are classified into three groups namely; the pastoralists, the migrant fisher men and the migrant farmers. Increasing efforts by the Federal Government of Nigeria makes development expert to provide basic education for nomadic people. Nomadic education has for instance been described as "Education of Traders Children" in the United Kingdom. In Iran, it is education of rural migrant

people in Iran. While in Nigeria, it is education for tribal population known as Nomadic Herdsmen. Nomads are those whose occupation makes them wonder from one place to another. They could be referring as mobile community because they cannot be identified with fixed address throughout a given period of time. This is because their type of occupation demands movement from one place to another in search for better environment that will help to promote their lives beyond.

Based on the description above, Nigeria has two categories of nomads namely, the pastoralists and the

migrant fishers. The pastoralists are dominated by the Fulani people, while the migrant fishers are mostly people living by the riverside, which combine fishing and farming. The Federal Government of Nigeria in her Universal Basic Education (UBE) Guidelines 2004, Act 4 Part B highlighted the goals on education for all as a mean of improving literacy rate among Nigerian citizens even in their remotest geographical zone. The reason for the inclusion of nomadic education policy in Nigeria was that the people are educationally disadvantaged. In addition, nomadic education is the type of education which aims at inculcating the right types of values and attitudes for the survival of the individuals and the Nigerian society; it also aims at training the mind of the nomad to understand the world around them with reference to scientific critical thinking. Accordingly, Israel⁸ stated that nomadic education should enable the recipients acquire appropriate skills, abilities and competences needed for a worthwhile living in the society. The national policy on education specified the short term and long-term objectives of nomadic education-the acquisition of basic functional literacy and numeracy.

In more specific term, the nomads like other people need education in order to share their joy and happiness which is the primary concern. Universal Declaration of Human Right in Articles 26 of the 1984 as cited in Aderinoye states that every child has the right to education. Education of every child shall be tuition free at least in the elementary level of education. In Nigeria, the constitution stated that government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities for all and Nomadic children are expected to enjoy this educational service as other children in Nigerian schools.

Education is viewed by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN2014) as indispensable for both progressive leadership and enlightened followership. In recent years, there is an increase in the efforts of the Federal Government to improve literacy. The Universal Free and Compulsory Primary Education Scheme launched in September 1976 and the Mass Literacy Campaign in Nigeria from 1982 to 1992 are examples of such efforts. Equal educational opportunity for a child

must include the provision of special formal learning experiences that will not adversely disrupt the life style of the learner. The declared intention of Universal Primary Education (UPE) at its inception in 1976 was, to cater for all Nigerian children even at their remotest location, but failed due to improper implementation of government policy in her educational blue print.

In the same vein, the launching of Universal Basic Education is a foundation for acquisition of further knowledge, skills and competencies in diverse fields. It involves a variety of formal and non-formal educational activities. The UBE Scheme was formally launched by President Olusegun Obasanjo on September, 1999. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) UBE's Blueprint aims at equipping an individual with knowledge, skills and attitudes which would enable him:

- I. live a meaningful and fulfilling life;
- II. contribute to the development of the society;
- III. Derive maximum social, economic and cultural benefits from the society and discharge civic obligations competently.

To make the scheme a reality, on May 27th 2000, Chief Obasanjo officially registered pupils for UBE in Abuja which he also emphasized on nomadic education as a step to eradicate illiteracy in Nigeria.

In realization of Nomadic Education through the UBE Guideline, the specific objectives of Nomadic Education according to Emmanuel; Gunde& Maigona (2018), are as follows:

- i. To expose the nomadic child to formal education
- ii. To inculcate the spirit of humanity and make him realizes himself as a member of the Nigeria Society.
- iii. Enable the nomadic child take part in the development of his immediate environment and the country in general.
- iv. Make the nomadic child able to improve his living conditions, thus eliminating the hardships and constraints in his life.
- v. To help modernize his techniques of herdsmanhip and animal management.
- vi. To help the nomadic child to appreciate moral and religious practices.

- vii. To assist the nomadic child to develop rapidly, fully, physically and intellectually so as to cope with the demands of the contemporary world.
- viii. To help the nomadic child to develop initiative.

With the above positions stressed by UBE guideline compelled the researchers to study the activities of nomadic education programmes. Nomadic education is a programme designed for the children of nomads. Educating nomadic children would help in making the child to be able to improve his/her living condition that is, making the child able to improve his/her living conditions, the hardship inform of poverty, health care delivery to help him/her modernize his techniques of herdmanship and animal management.

To realize these goals, the researchers believe that equipping nomadic Nigerians with formal education would bring about huge improvement in the country's socio-economic status since the nomads were largely responsible for meeting the country's huge demand for meat, dairy, and other animal-base proteins.

Besides, nomadic Nigerians are not only Fulani herders but also the immigrant fishermen whose nature of business compels them to move from one place to another, and the itinerant farmers who have to go about searching for water sources for irrigation farming. Accordingly, Akinpelu⁹ sees the contemporary definition of 'nomadic' refers to any type of existence characterized by the absence of a fixed domicile.

Statement of the Problem

The present discussion, therefore, is an attempt to examine the problems of nomadic education programme and its implications in educational system in Nigeria. The researchers therefore identified the following as major problems that nomadic education programme in Nigeria which received less attention nationwide.

Defective policies: Nomadic education in Nigeria is plagued by defective policies which have not translated the objectives of the programme into tangible realities. The programme is deterred by instability of the students, inadequate finance, wrong school assessment

and placement, lack of data and cultural and religious factors. This as a result has hampered the development of the Fulanis.

Lack of insufficient funds: The dearth of funds has remained a huge albatross to the progress of the scheme. Education budget has continued to fall short of the required funding needed to move the education sector forward, and this has also adversely affected the nomadic education arrangement. Some States that have started nomadic schools are challenged by the cost of administering the programme effectively.

Instability of the nomads: The uncertain movement of the nomads is affecting the smooth running of the programme. It affects educational planning and the monitoring of the students. This affects the motivation of the teachers who cannot do a proper assessment of the programme.

Research Questions

- i. What are Nomadic Education and its implications for Nigerian educational system?
- ii. What are the principles of Nomadic Education programme and its implications for Nigerian Educational System?

Concept of Education

The term education is a derivative of two Latin words, *educare* and *educere*. The verb *educare-educatum* means to bring up, to raise, to mould or to train. From this root meaning, education is viewed as the act of training or moulding a child or a learner in into a valuable or better person. Akinpelu (1993) corroborates this particular idea of education as the act of shaping the personality of a child in such a way that he becomes a better person and learner. This shaping is not limited to knowledge and skills but it includes values and motives, which make the child's behavior meaningful.

The other etymology of education, *educere*, means to lead or draw out. This is related to the English word 'educate', which means to make something latent to come into view. From this etymological definition, education

could be viewed as the process through which latent ideas that are in individual's minds are drawn out. This idea of education shows that human beings are born with innate knowledge. This rationalist's epistemic model of education believes that the essence of education is to develop the child's potentials.

The etymological meaning of education, which is to bring out the inherent ideas in learner's mind and to make sure that these ideas are geared towards moulding the learner as improved person, ignites other views of education as articulated. Peters (2015) stated that Socrates and Plato, who modeled their philosophical thought on the elenchial or dialogical method of inquiry, viewed education as an act of making an individual aware of the knowledge he possesses.

In this vein, researchers observed that this knowledge is being conscious of the virtuous way to act, and "it must involve ... the standards immanent in forms of thought and awareness, as well as the ability to attain them". Virtue and knowledge, therefore, are one and the same. Akinpelu believes that education is the process of acquisition of virtue, which enables one to attain happiness. The goal of all human beings is the attainment of happiness, and happiness the greatest good anybody can seek. That is to say virtue is knowledge, because: (1) all living things aim for their perceived good; and therefore (2) if anyone does not know what is good, he cannot do what is good because he will always aim for a mistaken target; but (3) if someone knows what is good, he will do what is good, because he will aim for what is good.

Education as the improvement of the learner's ability to reflect about things makes choices and act without inhibitions or coercions. This is to enable the learner be in-charge of himself and his environment. This implies, therefore, that "The ideas imparted by education, or released in the mind through education, should therefore be liberating ideas; the skill acquired by education should be liberating skills". The essence of education must be to make the learner self-reliant, whereby he uses his abilities to develop himself and his society.

Concept of nomadic education

Nomads are group of people who migrate orderly, logically, systematically and purposefully from one particular geographical region to the other in search of their economic means of livelihood. According to official government reports, there are three major categories of nomads in Nigeria. These are: the nomadic pastoralists, artisanal migrant fishermen and migrant farmers (National Commission for Nomadic Education, 2014). Tahir (2017) commented that the nomadic pastoralists are made up of the Fulbe (5.3 million), the Shuwa (1.0 million), the Koyan (32.000), the Badawi (20.000), the Buduma (10.000) and the Dark Buzzu (15.000). Ahmed (2019) opines that the Fulbe are found in 31 out of the 36 states in Nigeria, while other pastoralists are mainly found in the Borno plain and on the shores of Lake Chad. According to Osokoya (2021), the artisanal migrant fishermen, who are about 6.5 million in population, are found along the Atlantic coastline, in the riverine areas, and river basins of Nigeria). Similarly, the majority of the migrant farmers are found within the middle belt zones and some parts of Eastern Nigeria. Umar (2022) is of the view that the population of migrant farmers in Nigeria stands at 1.4 million.

The ultimate purpose of human existence and education is happiness. It is the function of primary education to help every pupil to have a happy childhood so that he may consequently become a happy adult. Everyone is entitled to education so as to live a happy life. This is clearly stated in Article 26 of the 1984 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as follows: "Every-one has the right to education. This shall be free at least in the elementary stages." This belief in human right to education is strongly upheld by the Federal Government. Thus, it was deliberately entrenched into the Nigerian constitution of 1979. It is stated in this Constitution that "Government shall direct its policy towards ensuring that there are equal and adequate educational opportunities for all." (Nigerian Constitution, 2014).

Education is viewed by the Federal Government as indispensable for both progressive leadership and enlightened followership. In recent years, we have witnessed an increase in the efforts of the Federal

Government to spread literacy. The Universal Free and Compulsory Primary Education Scheme launched in September 1976 and the Mass Literacy Campaign in Nigeria from 1982 to 1992 are examples of such efforts. Equal educational opportunity to a child must include the provision of special formal learning experiences that will not adversely disrupt the life style of the learner. The declared intention of universal primary education at its inception in 1976 was, to cater for all sons and daughters of Nigeria. This intention did not materialize during implementation because these 'sons' and 'daughters' did not equally benefit from the programme. The nomads could not benefit from UPE because; the Nigerian conventional school system did not suit their roles, needs and circumstances.

Assessing of Basic education curriculum contents

The contents of basic curriculum are their implementations in schools are generally considered inappropriate for the children of pastoral nomads. It does not provide practical skills to improve the livelihood of nomads. Rather, it focuses on academic achievements that only suit the needs of urban and rural children who are non-nomads. There is lack of demonstrable practical benefits for the pastoral economy. In the same vein, the quality of schools/Teachers in rural primary schools which pastoral nomads may have access to are qualitatively poor in terms of facilities and teaching staff. The management and supervision of teaching staff are not effective. Low salaries of education personnel causes some to relocate away from their urban families, leading to an unequitable geographical enrollment of schools and it is therefore very difficult to place quality staff in schools accessible to nomads.

The nomadic education curricula are unsuitable, if not an impediment, to learning. For example, the use of English for instruction at the elementary school level is inappropriate. Learning in the English language is difficult for the Fulani children who have yet to master their own language. The problem is that due to cost the government cannot develop Fulfulde language to replace English as a medium of instruction in schools. Furthermore, the curricular according to the Miyetti-Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria

(M.A.C.B.A.N.) focus on teaching irrelevant subjects like cockroach breeding, how to play basketball, and how to climb mountings, things that do not interest the Fulani or that look down upon their cultures and lifestyles. From the beginning, the colonial officers in Nigeria did not have a high regard for jobs involving the use of the hand. Niamir⁶ adds: "The formal schools provide the literacy needed in modern times, but their content is too foreign to the pastoralists as they teach the value of sitting in offices behind desks, rather than the value of the land."

Aleyidieno(2021) maintained that instead of teaching pastoral procedures, formal schools spend too much time on teaching history and cultures of societies the pastoralists least know or want to know about, conventional education ignores the desirability of the apprenticeship model, thereby closing a vital channel of skill transfer. While the apprenticeship model allows the apprentice and the trainer to have an income from the sales of charms, from donations by philanthropists, and from reciting the Koran and leading prayers in the homes of the wealthy, the formal education instead compels students and parents to make such major sacrifices in labor loss and payment of school fees.

Curriculum, in this context, is seen as activities, experiences, skills, knowledge and beliefs which the nomadic child will be taught in school. Thus, according to Federal Government of Nigeria²³ the curriculum should be life-style of the nomads. The FGN²⁴ recommended that the nomadic education curriculum will comprise:

- i. Language Arts - Under this Fulfulde, Hausa and English Languages should be taught-;
- ii. Arithmetic/Mathematics - simple Mathematics for everyday use;
- iii. Social Studies:
 - a. History of 'the Nomadic Fulani and Nigeria;
 - b. The pullo, culture including the Pulaaku;
 - c. The culture of other Nigerians;
 - d. Civics; and
 - e. Geography.
- i. Religious and moral instruction;
- ii. Elementary Science:

- iii. Animal Management, Including cattle rearing, poultry and fishing, where applicable;
- iv. Agricultural Science, including pasture regeneration;
- v. Physical and Health Education; and
- vi. Nature Study.

1. Creative Arts:

- (a) Reading;
- (b) Writing; and
- (c) Other creative activities.

2. Home Economics:

- (a) House-keeping and other related activities;
- (b) Vocational instructions - weaving, sewing, carpentry etc.

Gorham (2022) narrated that the contents of curriculum is generally considered inappropriate for the children of pastoral nomads. It does not provide practical skills to improve the livelihood of nomads. Rather, it is believed, it focuses on academic achievements that only suit the needs of urban children.

The effort to improve the quality of instruction was also approached from the perspective of relevance. This perceptive is based on the belief that the quality of any education program can be measured from its demonstrable relevance to its target populations, since the essence of education is to better the lives of recipients. Efforts to provide nomads with education prior to the inception of NEP in 1989 did not make any special arrangement for the type of curriculum and instructional materials to be used. Instead, the existing national curriculum and textbooks designed for conventional schools were adopted without any regard to the particular needs and circumstances of the nomads.

Ezeomah²⁶, Junaid²⁷ avers that why the previous attempts failed and why relevant curriculum is an important complement to high quality educational provision for the nomads. Driven by this quest for relevance, NCNE in collaboration with its Nomadic Education Center for Curriculum Development at the Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto set out to develop relevant curricula, pupils' texts and teachers' guides that address the educational needs, aspirations and peculiar circumstances of the nomadic populations.

Assessment of nomadic education

Education occupies a center stage in Nigeria's social and economic development. Education serves as the spring board for social and economic change. To Wennergren, et al (2021), "All who have mediated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empire depends on the education of the youth. The importance of education in Nigeria is evident from the large budgetary allocation in the national Development Plans. The government of Nigeria believes that learning is the primary means of upgrading the socioeconomic condition of the rural population. This population, particularly the nomads, is difficult to educate. With less than ten percent of the men and two percent of the women nomads formally literate and numerate, the number of lettered men and women in western-style education among the nomads falls below the national average.

Apart from the literacy gulf between the nomads and the non-nomads, there is a disparity in the attainment of different types of education among the nomads. To remove the chronic illiteracy among the mobile population of Nigeria, the government introduces the nomadic education programmes. The programmes have three broad goals: to raise the living standard of the rural community; to harness the potentials of the Fulani; and to bridge the literacy gap between the Fulani and rest of the society.

In reaffirming Article 26 of the United Nation's 1984 Universal Declaration on Human Rights, that "everyone has the right to education," the government of Nigeria has committed itself to literacy enhancement of the nomads. The national policy on education² stresses that "education is the birth right of every child, and (education) should be brought close to the environment of the child." The policy enjoins that:

Whenever possible, arrangements will be made for such children to assist their parents in the morning and go to school in the evening. Special and adequate inducement will be provided to teachers in rural areas to make them stay in the job.

Conclusion

In Conclusion, the 1979 Constitution of Nigeria demands that the government ensures fair learning opportunities for its citizens. Therefore, it is only right that they also partake of the same rights and privileges as the rest of us.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following are recommended:

i. Arrangements different from our conventional school system should therefore be made for this mobile group of people because it is clear that their occupational circumstances debarred them from participating in modern education.

ii. Government should work on defective policies because Nomadic education in Nigeria is plagued by defective policies which have not translated the objectives of the programme into tangible realities. The programme is deterred by instability of the students, inadequate finance, wrong school assessment and placement, lack of data and cultural and religious factors. This as a result has hampered the development of the Fulanis.

iii. There should be sufficient funds as education budget has continued to fall short of the required funding needed to move the education sector forward, and this has also adversely affected the nomadic education arrangement. Some States that have started nomadic schools are challenged by the cost of administering the programme effectively.

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