

An Assessment of Some Factors Militating Against Quality Education Transformation Agenda in Nigeria

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Abstract:- Globally, education is seen as a driving force and universal phenomena which allows all human societies to develop the requisite knowledge, experience and skills for self preservation and growth. Achieving these largely depends on the quality of education provided by the state. However, the falling standard of education from primary to tertiary institution has remain a major problem in Nigeria's education, the quality of the products of various institutions leaves much to be desired, and graduates of Nigerian tertiary institutions are unemployable for their deficiencies. In fact, the pathetic state of education in the country epitomizes the intensity of decay and degradation as well as illustrates the endemic hopelessness, despair and uncertainty under which Nigerians live. However, its in view of the above, the paper intend to look at some factors militating against quality education toward actualizing the present Nigeria transformation agenda. These factors include: overcrowdings, examination malpractice, and lack of updated reading materials, lack of good leadership and excess corrupt behavior, abject poverty, lack of qualified teachers, poor links between education and employment opportunities, uncheck privileges and immunity given to lecturers, and lack of democratization of schools administrative process among others. The paper recommended that government should provide sufficient funds and the schools management should be democratic in nature among others.

I. INTRODUCTION

It is not in dispute that the standard of our education in Nigeria has sunk to the lowest levels especially in the last three decades. Retrospectively, our educational system then was the envy of many here in Nigeria and elsewhere (Babalola 2009). In an article headed -Education in Nigeria: Same putrefying story of Rot'' written by Suleiman Olarewaju and Kimle Awosiyen. Published in the Tribune of 3rd October 2008 quoted as follow:

The Products of our first universities especially the six at Ibadan, Ile Ife, Lagos, Benin, Nsuka and Zaria compared very favorably with those of any universities in the world, they were sought after by universities at Harvard, Cambridge, Oxford and London for post graduate degrees. When they were eventually admitted, they recorded record-breaking performances. They were offered the best

jobs on graduation by the multinational companies and other big corporate bodies. Those who choose to remain and teach in the universities either here or abroad ranked favorably with their foreign colleagues (Babalola 2009).

Unarguably, the states of Nigeria educational systems have changed geometrically leading to the unprecedented decline in standard and otherwise. Today a large number of graduates from our learning institutions are a shame to showcase any where. Most of them can not justify the award of their degrees, according to Oroka (2008) that no Nigerian Universities rank among the first 5,000 universities in the world. Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, University of Benin, Benin City and University of Lagos, Lagos state were ranked 5.834th, 6809th 7318th and 7601th position respectively, and no one was rated among the world top 500 Universities of the third world countries, in Africa top 100 University, they ranked 44th, 65th, 78th and 79th position respectively.

It is in respect to these, President Goodluck Jonathan included education as part and parcel of his transformation agenda. However, in order to achieve the educational reform as part of Nigeria's transformation agenda, the paper intends to assess some militating factors that are likely to prejudice this dream. The paper is divided into four main part, part one is the introductory part which we just dealt with, part two is concern with conceptual framework and part three has to do with an appraisal of some factors likely to affect the Nigeria's educational transformation agenda, while part four proposes possible remedy that one hope will help promote and engendered education transformation in Nigeria before conclusion.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The world quality is perceived differently by various professionals who often use the term, while for instance an accountant sees the quality of a product in term of cost effectiveness, a customer is likely to judges it on the basis of its reliability. While an employer will view it based on performance and achievement of his employees. However,

quality is something everyone consider good and want to have. (Cole 1996 cited in Sanusi *et al* 2009). Quality has to do with whether something is good or bad, it is about standard of something when compared with other things. It therefore presupposes there is a standard set. In manufacturing industries standard or quality of products can be assessed against an original product or against customers. Quality control is therefore directed at determining to extent at which a product meets that standard. Several agents have been put in place in order to assure control of quality.

For instance, National Agency for Food and Drug Administrative Control (NAFDAC) is one of the bodies put in place in Nigeria to control the spread of and use of sub-standard and fake drugs within the metropolitan. West Africa examination council (WAEC) and National University Commission (NUC) are all related agency put in place to control supervises and regulate quality education in the country. Coming to the state level for instance, we have the universities disciplinary committee, examination malpractices committee, etc all these are to make sure that academic standard remain a priority. Suffice to say, quality basically is a system for setting standard and taking appropriate action to deal with deviation outside permitted tolerances (Cole 1996 cited in Sanusi *et al* 2009).

Concept of Education

Education can be conceptualized both as a process and as a product. As a process after a careful definition of its purposes, it is concerned with the contents or more broadly the curriculum which refers to what learners should learn. It is also concerned. With the methodology with which to facilitate effective internalization of the curriculum by the learners, As a products, education can be seen as a tools which can enable nations (and the individuals that composed them) realize some of their survival and developmental goals (Federal Republic of Nig. 2004). As a tool, education can and should contribute to an economy by providing industrial, commercial agricultural and multiple other social services skills to the citizens. To accomplish its role as a tool for the development of the economy, adequate planning is required to ensure that the curriculum is made relevant to the existing and future materials and non material needs and demands of the society, thus through the curriculum the physical fitness, social, economy and technical skills as well as moral values of the individuals are developed. To effectively employ education as a tool for societal development in Nigeria, the federal government formulated in 1973 and published in 1977 the National Policy on Education which has been revised for the fourth time in 2004. The policies consider education as an investment for effective national development and provide guideline which if implemented could facilitate poverty reduction. For instance, the policy devotes a section on science, technical and vocational education wherein the importance of acquisition of practical skills, attitudes understanding and knowledge relating to occupation in various sector of economic and social life is stressed.

Concept of Quality Education

To ensure quality education is the aspect that present educational managers the most challenging task, quality are one instrument use for measuring sufficiency, efficiency and inefficiency is an institution. That is when a standard is set and the institutions are able and capable to meet up with the standard and expectations. According to Sanusi *et al*, quality education simply mean education of higher standard, productive and accurate in solving social reality, quality education are educations that prepared student for constructive thinking, when the product are compare with the products of any other related institutions world wide, the product remain productive, sufficient, accurate, effective, sound-minded and articulate, hence we say quality or standard set on a trend of goals have been achieved.

Cole (1996) since quality is all about something good henceforth, quality education is an education of high priority that usually determined the extent of national development. Quality education is phenomenon's which allow all human societies to develop the requisite knowledge, experience and skill for their self preservation and growth. The phenomenon of human development revolves around how man applies knowledge to master and control his environment, nations rose and declined or fell commensurate with the seriousness or otherwise with which they look education. History has also taught us that although the availability of local resources mattered, lack of them did not constitute an obstacle to growth once the required knowledge exist. Therefore quality education is not only necessary but mandatory for any socio-economic development.

III. FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST QUALITY EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN NIGERIA

Education is a vital instrument in development efforts. In order to make development agenda work, the human resources must be developed, not only is education a criterion in measuring development, it is also an instrument utilized in enhancing development, Dike (2001) argues that socio-political and economic development of a nation depends on the quality and educational attainment of the population. However, the state of education have been compromised by many factors, for instance, the issue of overcrowdings which has compromised quality of education remain one worrisome syndrome in Nigeria educational system.

The National Policy on Education (2004) specifies and recommends the teacher student ratio of 1:35/40 for primary and secondary school levels respectively. The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) recommends the teacher student ratio of 1:25/ for colleges of education and in the Universities, the ratio differs according to the existing faculties such ratio range from 1:6 - 1:24, among its faculty such as Agriculture, Art & Islamic studies, Law, Social Science, Education, Science, College of Health Science, Veterinary Management Science (M.J. & Idris 2006). This is against the background that with this, the teacher can effectively

manage the class and carry out/his or her teaching process. Regrettably, however what we are experiencing today in Nigeria is far from been reality.

According to the national coordination for Universal Basic education programmed (UBE) reported in the UBE news letter, that classes meant for 35 to 40 pupils had twice that number occupying them in Zamfara state of Nigeria. The Daily Sun of November 21, 2006 puts the current average teacher student ratio in Nigerian schools at 1:250 in the tertiary institution of learning. The case may be described as even much worse because abound where students often receives lectures by the window side of their lecture hall/classes simply because of over crowedness. Salawu (2006) Maintained that in our tertiary institutions of learning, cases are abound where students sit on the floor, stand by the window side and write on their laps when conducting text. Same can be testify here in Shehu Shagari College of Education Sokoto where students-teacher ratio especially combination like Hausa/Social studies, Economic/Social studies. Arabic double major, etc are more than 1:500 or 1:700 students. These without doubt affect quality education, it create difficulties in academic administration, even marking their script is tedious, as a result, teacher may give them out to unqualified or even students of similar level to assist for marking. Student unrest, religions crises, cultism are often witnessed in an overcrowded institutions of learning in the country.

Another factor affecting education in this country has to do with bad leadership, corruption and the decay in moral values. Even within the domain of the so-called intellectuals, we find high degree of corrupt activities. For instance Sanusi et al (2009) reveal the atrocity committed by well recognized Nigerians professor. Professor Oke Bukola, Former NUC secretary, Prof. Fabian Osunji, former minister for Education. And professor Jude Njoku, former vice chancellor of Federal University of Technology, Owerri all collided and bribe the honorable minister and former senate president, Wabara with his subordinates, the sum of 55million in order to increase or negate decrease of budget allocated to them. (Sanusi et al. 2009) unfortunately these increase money if succeeded will automatically go to their personal purse. it is highly disturb to see female students offering professors sexual favours in exchange for good marks or the professor demand for it.

We have also seen where schools head divert money made for provision of infrastructural amenities which have resulted into a dilapidated building. Some schools are just a block of two classrooms, In some cases pupils are exposed to risk because they experience congestion in class, some sit on the bare floor, some attend class under tree and some have to withdraw because their class is totally dilapidated (Jirnoh, 2010). There has been unpardonable inefficiency in the use of the education resources. The allocation of the federal government to the education sector has been on average of about 8percent of the total budget between 2004 and 2012. The 2012 budget is about 449.5billion, this is also in addition to the tertiary

education trust fund (TETF), a 2percent tax on the accessible products of all registered companies in Nigeria to improve the quality of education. TETF raised 130.7 billion naira in 2011 (Abubakar,2013). There is also UBEC's allocation of 63.12billion naira. Yet, the standard of education remained incommensurate with this financial allocation. according to the world bank study in 2008, federal and state government aggregate spending on education, as a percent of GDP, is higher than the average of sub-Saharan countries but on par with south Africa and Kenya, and yet learning outcomes in Nigeria are far weaker than in these two countries (World Bank, 2008). This inefficiency is attributed to the high rampart of corrupt practicing in the country. the world bank survey also reveals that funds distributed to schools for constructions were diverted to schools that were not in the registry and where the construction were not taking place, and these could not be traced by the construction teams (Ngozi,2012).

The problem of attaining quality education in Nigeria could also be trace to the poverty situation of the country, according to Mahadi (2008) shows that there is correlation between high level of poverty and cascading education in Nigeria. Poverty is one of the most serious problems confronting Nigerians today and it is generally associated with conditions under which people live (NAPDP, 2001). Also, it is a phenomenon characterized by deprivation, physiological, social and human rights Freedom which exist at both individual and household level and at the community or national level. Studies have established this beyond reasonable doubt that children from less privilege homes are more brilliant, talented and acquired skills faster than most of those from wealthy families but as a result of poverty, these people find it difficult to send their children to schools even though they did, the children pay no serious attention because of starvation and hungry and these affect the education they receives.

Another factor affecting quality education in Nigeria is the poor link between education and employment opportunities. According to Ajeyalemi (1987), Traditional educations in Nigeria as in any other African country emphasized on functionalism as people were trained in specific jobs. However, there has been very little link between the formal type of the education inherited from the colonialist and procedure work. The type of education was elitist in orientation and ill-designed for preparing Nigerian youth with the appropriate attitudes, knowledge, skills and motivation needed for transforming their rural and urban slum areas into modern societies, instead it was esoteric and it emphasized the development of manpower interested in white collar jobs and not in manual work which is needed in the modern sector of the economy such as the civil services and modern industry. To buttress this, Indabawa (2001) stated that modern education only emphasizes on instrumental goals that is only employment oriented. Therefore when learners complete an educational programme without commensurate assurance for modern sector jobs, society sees a mismatch and lack of synergy. This of course discourages participation, given that

no serious meaning is even attached to learning itself, after all schools do not teach and gain employment from their formal training.

Lacks of qualified teachers is also another factor affecting Nigeria educational system in playing its role in the Nigeria transformation agenda. The teaching profession is not regarded as much in high esteem as other professions, this couple with low salary of teachers. According to a research findings conducted by the World Bank on teachers competency in Nigeria, indicated that only 75 out of 19,000 teachers tested were competent, teachers qualifications did not affect the scores because graduate teachers did not perform better than teacher with lesser qualifications (Abubakar, 2013). It is not news to find third class and pass grade graduate teaching in many of our higher learning institutions especially in the state tertiary.

Examination malpractices menace is one that has been discussed on uncountable occasions that is ought to have become uninteresting. It has seriously affected the quality of our education both home and abroad. It is one of the most serious ethical problems facing Nigerian today, more serious even than contract fraud, election rigging etc and it is the mother of all corruptions, Eromosele (2005). The incessant cancellation of student result does not only lead to direct economic loss to parents and students, but psychological and social trauma. He claimed that exam malpractice which is responsible for the cancellation of so many results by examinations bodies in Nigeria, is responsible for the loss of over 1 billion annually to the country. It is impossible to build on ethics friendly society on a foundation of labour force conceived and weaned on an educational diet of fraud, malpractices and irregularities. The battle of ethics in education must first be taught and won. Oyekanmi (2003) is of the opinion that exam malpractices is not only responsible for the decline of quality education in Nigeria, but also responsible for such malaise in the country today as medical malpractices by incompetent doctors, manufacture and sale of fake drugs by pharmacist, collapse of building by architects and engineers, massive fraud in the banks and such other ailments that threaten our society at large.

One of the problems which also affect the quality of Nigeria education and deserves an urgent checkmating is the issues of immunity given to teachers especially those of the tertiary institution. Teachers/lecturers are involved in sexual harassment than any other institutions. They molest harassed and abused female students. Meanwhile, they extort excess money from male and even female students. Many of the teachers don't even go for class, and when they do, they spend less an hour to teach and even when they teaches, they don't go street to the point and students dare not ask them questions especially when it gets too much.

Unarguably, it's common for teacher to threat student for failing exam because of their uncooperative behavior either for not buying handout, or for not greeting them outside the

school or for not dating their friends. Many times, a teacher will penalize a male student because he caught him with his girlfriend. Sometime, after passing the girl among themselves, they will still penalize her. These in many ways have negated the growth of our education for national development. The schools management need to restructure the policy guiding lecturer's immunity, the privilege and prerogative given to them is not bad, but it need to be guided, monitor, supervised, regulated and even punish the culprit. It's an insult not only on our education but on the entire country. Many innocent boys and girls have been drove out of schools because they refused to correspond or reciprocate one or two illegitimate act of some teachers.

The problem of quality education in Nigeria could also be traced to lack of proper public investment in education; there has always been poor allocation to education which has always been less than 10% (Jimoh, 2009). The stark reality is that, the system is under resourced in Nigeria. The gross under funding manifest in various forms which include; inability to attract the best minds in the land to the teaching profession because of the poor welfare package, inadequate quality staff, low staff morale as a result of one (1) above, lack of regulars training and retraining opportunities for teachers and school leaders, inadequate and dilapidated infrastructure and lack of sufficient funds in the school for administrations to execute school programmes satisfactory (Rabo. 2009). However, funding remains a prerequisite for any national developmental issues.

In addition, lack of democratization of schools administrative process in Nigeria is another inhibiting factors, democratization in this process is synonymous with participation. Democratization of any administration involves active involvement of the subordinates in the decision making process. It means that those in leadership positions will have to share their managerial authority with those over whom they superintend. Such involvement transcends involvement of the hand but more importantly the involvement of the mind, the heart and of the head (Ejiosu 1998). It is a managerial practices by which the subordinate become ego-involved as he perceived him-self making his due contribution to the decision making process on important matters in the organization in a democratized process. The authority relationship between the leader and his subordinate may be described as nonzero game; a situation in which both the leader and the led share authority and none is the loser. In a nutshell, it means for any body to become, vice-chancellor, provost, college Rector, Dean, Head of Department etc. must not only be democratically elected but also after been elected, they must delegate and solves issues concerning their respective sectors. Paradoxically, Most of schools today don't give any recognition to democratic process, in fact instances abound where new Deans and Head of Departments are confirmed without the knowledge of their respective staffs. Head of Department these days take decision that involves many but never consult, inform or even alert any of his subordinate, instances abound where majority of

departmental staff passed vote of no competence on their head but some power holders within the school will automatically denounce it. Lack of these cooperation between the boss and the subordinate have really affected the quality of education in Nigeria.

Finally Nigerian educational system suffered from like of updated and relevance materials such as textbooks etc. for instance, many of our academician and scholars don't write, some libraries may be equipped but with foreign books. Students have to start relating them to his own immediate environment. There is a need for our scholars to be writing, not only writing, but also relating it to social reality happening within the context of this country at the same time, many students will go to the library to search for materials relating to assignment given to them, at the end of the day, they end up doing jargons or even avoid doing it due to the fact that such relevance materials cannot be found or at best, do not even exist.

At the University level, graduate have been produced, who lack adequate and appropriate skills require to perform a job, making it difficult for them to get employment. In the computer age, there are many of our students who never use computer before, academic infrastructure in most of our famous university are dilapidated, our universities are no more center of excellence for academic achievement for which there were once well known. The embarrassing fact is that, Nigeria "the giant of Africa" does not find a place among the 20 universities listed in African (Abubakar,2013). It is sad to note that parents are now sending their children to other African countries to study, like Ghana, South Africa, spending millions of dollars, not to talk of those who send their children to USA, UK and other famous countries to study, imagine huge amount of money Nigeria government loosed annually just for those studying abroad, these money could have help a lot in actualizing the transformation agenda if invested here in Nigeria universities.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

First and foremost, we have to improve the quality of our education sectors, we should take note that only a viable education can produce the workforce that have the right skill and competences required for difference sectors that are critical to our economic transformation. The workers should be equipped with vocational and technical skills that are relevance to our contemporary situation. This is what happens in China, North Korea, India, Brazil and even South Africa. These countries gave policy priority to technical and vocational education, expanded and upgraded technical training by improving their infrastructural amenities, these without doubt recorded enviable economic growth to these countries.

As we all know, our problem in this country is not about like of resources, but inadequate utilization of these resources, therefore, our priority should be on how to manage and effectively utilize these resources. the little money given to

the education sector should be properly utilize for its purposes, the board or body in charge of way and manner these money are spend should revoke their unseriousness and be committed to their work, serious supervision on how these money were spend should be put in place.

The government should stand up for their responsibility, and we should stop deceiving our self. Presently ASU is on strike, this is as a result of lack of funding to the education sectors, the 8percent allocating to Nigeria's education sector can not solve anything serious, the country population is expanding every now and then, the enrollment to school is also increasing but provision of adequate teaching amenities such as laboratory tool and conducive environment is lacking. Some countries in Africa are already allocating up to 20% percent of their budget on education, some even more than that, Nigeria should not be different, the 2% percent given by registered companies in Nigeria should also be increase and be well managed for its purpose.

There is this popular saying that no country can developed more than the intellectual capability of its teacher, this is true because teachers produce the best of everything, here in Nigeria ,we have serious problems when it comes to quality teachers, in fact, most people that comes into the discipline are there because there don't have option. We see where teacher hardly further or even participate in conferences, the situation is even worst now, if this transformation is to work, all these problems most be tackle and take care off.

V. CONCLUSION

The paper have looked at the concept of education and quality education, the paper also identified factors militating toward actualizing quality education toward actualizing Nigeria transformation agenda, and how to over come them, among the problems, the paper made mention of overcrowd ness, bad leadership incompetent teachers, exam malpractices etc.

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