EDUCATION IN AFRICA AND THE GLOBAL FUTURE: NIGERIAN CONTEXT

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Abstract

Education is as old as humanity and it's the bedrock of the nation. Aristotle holds that man desire to know and the quest for knowledge is the nature of man. In African continent, educational heritage has been there even before the advent of Europeans with their own education and methods. However, European education and methods did not yield much for Africans as education is globally aimed to bring enormous change and development, as it brings one out of darkness into enlightenment, discovery and creativity. Thus, the problem here is that even in this contemporary era, African nations are not yet developed and have not attained one goal among the millennium sustainable developmental goals. Africa with their education and methods is incapable of solving their major problems. Practicability or workability of African education is questionable and Africa is still bedevilled with catalogue of problems and challenges, ranging from under development, poverty, and corruption to bad leadership, human trafficking, insurgency, economic recession, youth restiveness and the likes. Using analysis and evaluative methods we look at educational heritage and methods prevalent and original in Africa like apprenticeship model and other non-formal education models and with enormous emphasis on productive or practical learning, sustainable development can gradually be achieved. Through functional education, skill acquisition and practice of skills, from the elementary stage African children and youths will be better informed, formed and reformed. This will gradually make the African youths to be really productive and of course remedy some problems prevalent in the continent.

Keywords: Education, Africa, Nigeria and global future.

Introduction

Idea rules the world is an old maxim that portrays the value of education and knowledge is really power as have been testified by various great men and women in the world. Education is of utmost important. And education is not a scam as some Nigerian youths usually say nowadays. The aim of education in global is really geared towards development of man and man's environment. African under development is reflected in African educational system and method and education sector is not well looked upon by the government of the day, owning to bad leadership and corruption. Owing to this, not much improvement is made in educational sector in most African countries, especially in Nigeria.

Africa surely will not be left behind in the world's sustainability development and developmental goals (SDGs). Though it is laughable, that at this very moment, Africa has not met up with the number one goal out of the seventeen sustainable goals or sustainable development goals which is a global goal or a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all by 2030. They were created with the aim of peace and prosperity for people and the planet while tackling climate change and working to preserve oceans and forests[1] The 17 SDGs were adapted by all United Nations member states in 2015 general assembly, with 169 targets to reach or to be achieved by 2030. The goals and targets are universal, meaning they apply to all countries around the world, not just poor countries. Here are the 17 sustainable development goals to transform our world:

1. No poverty; 2. Zero Hunger; 3. Good Health and well being; 4. Quality Education;
5. Gender equality; 6. Clean Water and Sanitation; 7. Affordable and clean energy;
8. Decent work and Economic Growth; 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure;
10. Reduced Inequality; 11. Sustainable city and communities; 12. Responsible consumption and production; 13. Climate action; 14. Life below water; 15. Life on land; 16. Peace and justice, strong institution; 17. Partnership to achieve the goal[2]

Nevertheless, on the part of Africa, there is much hope in voyage when one looks at the immense available human and natural resources in African countries, Nigeria inclusive. If bad leadership and corruption is eradicated in Nigeria nowadays, development will surely be enormous.

However, this write up is centred on number four goal, Quality Education. We concentrate in promotion of African education and heritage for global future using African heritage in education and culture in Africa and in Nigeria as well. We now define some terminologies and plunge into deep analysis as well. We briefly begin with globalization and African future oriented globalization especially in the field of education.

Global Future

When one talk of global future, we mean globalization or modernization in some aspect of the nations' development like education, information, health care, culture, economy and others. In the field of education, education is said to be global when students are taught their history, culture, values in order to shape them into global citizens who can contribute to diverse communities as well as try out new ideas from different cultures[3]. Global learning should enhance students' sense of identity, community, ethics and perspectives taking and foster the ability to define and

advance equity and justice with respect to human and natural systems, and this is the goals of global education[4]. Looking at Nigerian education, one sees it's still in continuous struggle to attain global education, quality education and action learning; likewise other African countries.

Africa/African Nations
Africa is the world's second largest and second most populous continent after Asia. At about 30.3 million Km2 including adjacent islands. It covers 6% of earth's total surface area and 20% of its land area. With 1.3 billion people as of 2018, it accounts for about 16% of the world's human population. Despite the wide range of natural resources, the continent is the least wealthy per capital in large part due to the legacies of Europeans colonization in Africa. Despite this low concentration of wealth, recent economic expansion and the large and young population make Africa an important economic market in the border global context. When we talk of African nations we are talking of 54 countries in Africa : Nigeria, Ethiopia, Egypt, DR Congo, Tanzania, South Africa, Kenya, Uganda, Algeria, Sudan, Morocco, Angola, Mozambique, Ghana, Madagascar, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Malawi, Zambia, Senegal, Chad, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Guinea, Rwanda, Benin, Burundi, Tunisia, South Sudan, Togo, Sierra Leone, Libya, Congo, Liberia, Central African Republic, Mauritania, Eritrea, Namibia, Gambia, Botswana, Gabon, Lesotho Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mauritius, Eswatini, Djibouti, Comoros, Cape Verde, Sao Tome & Principe, Seychelles. Included are four dependent territories: Reunion, Western Sahara, Mayotte and Saint Helena

Nigeria
Nigeria is a country located on the western coast of Africa and it's still underdeveloped, suffered much on political instability or lack of continuity in government, bad leadership which gave rise to economic and technological stagnation, insecurity and the likes. Nigeria is a multinational state, inhabited by more than 250 ethnic groups, speaking over 500 distinct languages, all identifying with a wide variety of cultures[5]. Nigeria has a diverse geography with climates ranging from arid to humid equatorial. It's bordered in the north by Niger, to the east by Chad and Cameroon, to the south by the Gulf of Guinea of the Atlantic Ocean and to the west by Benin. It is Africa's most populous country. Nigeria's most diverse feature is its people. Hundreds of languages are spoken in the country including Yoruba, Igbo, Fula, Hausa, Edo, Ibibio, Tiv, and English. The country has abundant natural resources, notably, large deposits of petroleum and natural gas. Modern Nigeria dates from 1914 with the amalgamation of northern and southern protectorates. It got her independence in 1960 and in 1963 adopted a republican constitution[6].

Education

Education is the act of teaching knowledge to others and the act of receiving knowledge from someone else. Oxford dictionary defines it as a process of learning, training and learning, especially in school, colleges or universities, to improve knowledge and develop skills[7] The famous definition of education is from Socrates who sees education as bringing out ideas of universal validity that are latent in the minds of every individual[8]Etymologically education is derived from the Latin word "educare" which means to lead or bring forth, drag out or to pull out ideas which are believed to be innate from childhood.[9] Education implies to lead out of darkness, a bringing forth into light. It is enlightenment. Education helps in socialisation, social placement, social and cultural innovation, creating a workforce, creating social solidarity and producing ideologies. Education is characterized by being a conscious effort, leading to behavioural changes in cognition, affective and psychomotor aspects. It involves planned, implemented, and evaluated teaching processes for effective learning outcomes[10]

John Dewey sees education as the process of the reconstruction of experience, giving it a more socialized value through the medium of increased individual efficiency[11] John Locke believes the purpose of education was to produce and they sought to educate one for the society in which he would live[12] Rousseau in his educational philosophy holds that people are not objects but subjects of society and education. Rousseau was strongly critical of artificial forms of society created by human reason for education, for this has corrupted the deepest nature of people[13]

Types of Education

Informal education: In the basic division of education, we have informal education and this refers to the one that can occur outside a structured curriculum, it can occur through conversation and exploration and enlargement of experience can occur unnoticed. It includes home schooling, auto-didacticism (self-teaching) and youth work**.**

Formal Education is the one normally delivered by trained teachers in a systematic intentional way, within a school, higher education or school or university. Is on regular basis, formally recognized, program is rigid and credential is gotten.

Non-formal Education includes various structured situations which do not either have the level of curriculum, syllabus, accreditation and certification associated with formal learning, but have more structure than that associated with informal which typically take place naturally and spontaneously as part of other activities. Examples, swimming session for toddlers, community-based sports programs, boys scouts and girls' guilds programs, community or non-credit adult education courses, professional conference style seminars and continuing professional development. All these patterns of education treated above are available in Africa and Nigeria.

African Education in Antiquity (Nigerian Experience)

British missionaries in the 1840s introduce formal western education in the country. The Methodist and Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS) started first and were supported by the government especially in building of elementary or primary and secondary schools. While Catholic missionaries later came and helped a lot to make education what it is today, owing to their pattern of pure formal education, for it is not just for learning service and songs as in Anglican CMS. Before the advent of colonial masters and British missionaries in Nigeria, traditional/Indigenous education and Islamic north- education have been in existence. Through the latter, children are drilled in the teachings of Qur'an and Arabic alphabets. While in traditional education, students are taught practical skills needed to function well in traditional society. Children learn to sweep village square, clear bushes for farming and likes, and other things they need to become adults. Girls learn domestic skills while older boys go for apprenticeship to master craftsmen. The primary purpose of traditional education is to continue passing on those skills, facts and standards of moral and social conduct that adults consider to be necessary for the next generation's material advancement.[14]

African Educational Heritage (Apprenticeship)

When we talk of traditional African heritage, we mean the beliefs, moral values, and practices that distinguish us from one another. In this society, the future of the society is dependent on its young people as the "youths are the leaders of tomorrow" The youths are educated and brought up to take up their duties and roles in the society[15] In discussing about heritage we have natural and cultural heritage, but we limit this research to educational heritage which is also one of the things handed down from the ancestors as in the case of apprenticeship discussed below. African traditional education is solely based on apprenticeship and it really yielded much fruit to the Africans of yesteryears.

African Apprenticeship Education

African traditional education was based on apprenticeship, and each young person has to learn a trade or profession, which was an informal form of education after reaching a certain age, the children in the community would learn from the members of their community in a specific profession. This Africa traditional education focused on the training and skill development of the individuals in various local communities. It enables every member of each community to be gainfully employed. It had its foundation in the five principles of preparedness functionalism, communalism, perennialism and holisticism[16]

Educational methods include: storytelling, discussion, teaching, training and directed research. Education is the primary vehicle through which children and even adults use to learn the norms, values and skills they needed to function in society

Western Education towards Problems Solving and Development

With the level of development available in the western worlds and even in the Asian countries and when one also recollects their intellectual productivity exemplified in what they produce for themselves and for the African nations, one must immediately see the utility of their education and educational methods and systems. This is never the case with Africa and with Nigeria in particular. Nigerians are not benefitting much with their education and this is giving wrong signal to the youths who now have started to disvalue education and rushing into ill or wrong sharp practices like yahoo, yahoo plus, ritual killings and other gambling bets. Many graduates from Nigerian universities are roaming about the streets without jobs and this is failure on the part of Nigerian government and teachers and even on the part of the graduates themselves as if quality education is impacted, entrepreneurial skills must be included, just to make graduates productive themselves and never to stay idle and be waiting for government job. Africans have to wake up and embrace quality education like the westerners or the Europeans and the Asians who are not mad with university education that is solely meant to obtain certificate, rather even in their primary and high school education, the students have already acquired enough skills to be productive and useful in their lives and countries and are eager to rush out into the work force to showcase their skills and talents and are ready to perfect them through practice and efficient production.

Devaluation in African/Nigerian Educational Standard

Owing to the invasion of European into Africa in 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and of course with their weapons of colonialization, Africans and of course Nigerians witnessed a serious devaluation in Africa education. Africans take up completely the white man's education and methods and almost abandoned the apprenticeship system of education which we know is skill acquisition and developmental based. Western education brought to Nigeria was based on concepts and foreign concepts indeed and this is carried out in the nursery primary schools in Nigeria till date. Example 'A' is for Apple" while we see European and Chinese children in media very busy learning and practicing skills as in cloth weaving and fixing of various types of gadgets and electronics, Nigerian kids and pupils are busy learning how to recite Nigerian thirty -six states and capitals and once learnt, he or she is then considered to be very brilliant. Nigerian theoretical education without practical application of skills kept Nigeria backwards as far as development is concerned. Nigeria rather than being a productive country is a consumer or consumption country. This non productivity added to corruption and bad leadership contributed much in making Nigeria, the giant of Africa to be a poor and under developed country.

However, the woes of Nigerian education include wrong curriculum and teaching methods, Poor teacher education, high rate of drop out of school students, lack of incentive or motivation in educational programs, Poor education policy and lack of implementation of education policy. In Nigeria, there is poor funding on education as education always gets low percentage in the national budgets. This poor funding

by government caused by corruption as politicians divert funds or embezzle funds meant for education to their individual pockets and most of these funds are meant for provision of instructional materials, training of teachers and building of comfortable blocks for better teaching- learning programs. Others include incessant strikes by academic or teaching staff union of universities (ASUU) non- academic staff or teaching staff of universities NASU and senior staff association of Nigerian universities (SANU).

African Global education calls for Technological advancements
Globalization is a term used to describe the growing interdependence of world's economies, cultures and populations brought about by cross border trade in goods and services, technology, and flows of investment, people and information[17] Globalization is a term used to describe how trade and technology have made the world into a more connected and interdependent place.It is the stretching of economic, political and social relationships in space and time.Technology is what really that will help African and Nigerian education to be global; we mean employment of global technological equipment in teaching - learning situations. The western and Asian worlds have gone too far in their application of science and technology in education and communication; thus, we see Chinese children and others being taught with artificial intelligence (AI) and AI machines performing other teaching learning functions. But, as the western worlds are employing artificial intelligence (AI) in so many sectors of life and work, education inclusive, in some African countries, Nigeria for instance, in many institutions of learning and in some government institutions and offices one may not see these technological equipment and the worst still is, in some government institutions and private schools and other places where laptops, computers, projectors and other electronic audio and visual communication and instructional materials are provided, they will be there like decorative materials owing to no steady power source for the operation of these gadgets. Africa/Nigeria is still backwards in technology, steady power supply is still a big problem to Nigeria. Again, even when philanthropists donate these gadgets to schools, power source becomes a big challenge and even when a generator set is also provided, non-availability of fuel and diesel still makes them nonfunctional, instances could be seen when Peter Obi, as the governor of Anambra state provided laptops, school buses, sound proofs generators to most of the approved secondary schools in the state, both government, church and private schools. He helped a lot in upgrading teaching learning situation in Anambra state during his tenure as a governor. The present Nigerian leaders, president, and governors and senators should emulate him so as to rescue Nigerian education from decay and thus project it to expected quality education.

Quality Education
A quality education is one that focuses on the whole child- social, emotional, mental, physical and cognitive development of each student regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status or geographical location. It prepares the child for

life, not just for testing. And quality education is needed for development of Nigeria, Africa nations and indeed the whole world at large. this is the sole reason quality education is number four in sustainable developmental goals, by this we mean the blue print to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice. Sustainable development goals is a global goals or a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all[18] (by 2030).

Critical Evaluation
The global future of Africa education, looking from Nigerian context is faced with onerous challenges, ranging from the bad leadership of Nigerian and most African leaders, especially in their inability to provide essentials needed in teaching – learning situations.

Corruption is another challenge, especially on the part of African leaders and this has kept Africa and Nigeria backwards in the committee of nations. We have corrupt followers or citizens as well as in some places, the little efforts made by the government of the day in provision of modern teaching and learning equipment are crippled by vandalization of those equipment by those placed to be in charge or to secure them.

Another major challenge is technological advancements in African countries. African countries including Nigeria are gradually embracing technology but they are not yet vasertile like their counter parts in the western countries as United States, France and most of European and Asian nations, thus an author in his article writes:

> Looking at some countries in Africa, like Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana and the likes, we conclude that Africa is a developing continent. And likewise, with Nigerian experience, we see that Nigeria is also a developing country, not as technologically advanced as the United States, France and most European and Asian nations but the far-reaching worlds of technological revolution today has caught up with her. The remarkable achievements or advancements of science and monumental technological feats have cut across all sectors of society: Health, biomedical technology, transport, education, information and communication technology and the banking sector cannot but be over emphasized. Other amazing areas where this candid transformation has been felt are building and construction, power (electrical) generation, agriculture and military\warfare technology, industrialization and automation among others[19]

The experience in the Banking sector is interesting, even the old people who did not enjoy e-banking facilities now do bank transactions with ease from the comfort of their homes. The hand-phones (sets) or cell phones are now used to transact money and any deals beyond the usual Automated Teller Machine (ATM) transactions and Point of Sale (POS).

In the Educational sector, technologies as computers, projectors, laptops, I-pads, digital libraries and the likes have enhanced learning and research is no small measure. On building and construction, architects and civil engineers are transforming Nigeria to meet global standards thanks to computer technology and mechanization. Power generation for industrial, public and individual use have known several boosts from various sectors as hydro-electricity, solar energy, use of the inverters, and petroleum energized plants of different categories. And even of recent, compressed natural gas (CNG) has been introduced in Nigeria. It is a natural gas under pressure which remains clear, odourless and non-corrosive. It is also a cheaper, greener and more efficient alternative to the traditional patrol and diesel fuels for vehicles. This really is a big boost to business growth, industrialization and attaining comfort in our homes above others.

The biggest appreciation of technological boost in Nigeria today however is seen in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector. GSM technologies, up-to-date android versions, smart phones, latest laptops, I-pads etc have really made Nigerians feel like cosmopolitan citizens alongside their colleagues in Europe, America, Asia and the Arabic worlds, working and communicating like partners under one assumed government. The media houses have been transformed and information base of Nigerians have been improved. Even in Religion and education sectors, teachers, priests and pastors teaching and preaching with devices like projectors, computers, I-pads and other internet sources for effective teaching and evangelization. Gospels and lectures are delivered through the internet using packages in cell phones and smart phones like Facebook, WhatsApp, Zoom meetings and the likes.

Worthy of mention is that the innovations in the different sectors of society in African countries; Nigeria for instance are not solely the product government or dividends of their governmental leadership, as many are the collaborative efforts of international and national agencies, foreign and local non- governmental organizations, religious bodies and the likes, with the leaders of the particular country in question. Taking United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as an example, which we know is an international agency that seeks to build peace through international cooperation in education, the sciences and culture. In their mission in brief, it portrays that:

> Owing to inadequacy of political and economic arrangements of governments to bring lasting and sincere support to the people, UNESCO holds that

peace must be built upon intellectual and moral solidarity of humans. Owing to this UNESCO develops educational tools to help people live as global Citizens free of hate and intolerance. UNESCO works so that each child and citizen has access to quality education.[20]

Roles of (African/Nigerian) Education both now and in the future

Education, both western and African education plays the same role of **change and transformation** on the recipients. Education is a veritable means of change or transformation, for human person and his society and environment as well. "Education plays an important role as far as holistic development of man is concerned. "First, premium is placed on the development of human mind or cultivation of mind and this is seen to be fundamental of all development. And it's from here that development starts and then reaches other sectors. Man is to be advanced holistically or integrally in both social, religion, political and in other perspectives"[21]. When we talk of advancement or development, we mean advancement of the whole man, whole facets, institution, segments, practices and values (moral and ethical inclusive). All these are under the role education plays in formation of human person. And when it is done, change or progress has been made.

African education in future will help more in **value system re-orientation and ethical sanitization.** Most Africans and Nigerians and especially her leaders are self centered and corrupt. Lack of self-discipline both as individuals and as a society and it is a major setback to the country/continent. Major problem of Africans is corruption. Corruption is the decline in ethical values, thus getting into moral anarchy, modernization of values, much recognition and esteem to riches and intellects or certificates and conceptual debasement of leadership itself, owing to the above evils, there is urgent need for ethical sanitization and re-orientation of our value system. We need to hold esteem the value of hard work and inculcate it to our youths as France Fanon said that work over and above everything defines the essence of man and defines the existence of man as well. Another is the value of truth for truth is now a scarce commodity. Others include the value of respect for the elders and superiors, self-discipline, and finally the value or respect for life which has mostly violated in our country Nigeria since the presence of Boko Haram terrorist/insurgency in 2009, Fulani herdsmen, Kidnappers, Gunmen and Bandits as well, since 2015, under Muhammadu Buhari led government and continues in this 2024 Tinubu led government.

African/Nigerian leaders must make honest effort to improve the standard of education in the continent/country. Education when improved will lead to quality education and action learning. Education helps to improve the economy of a country as it improves its capital base. Education helps in social progress and in individual empowerment as it offers employment.

Conclusion

African education and global future have high expectation as the world is globalizing with supersonic jet speed, indeed Africa is not left out. Africa is embracing more technological advancement and is gradually employing the services of AI in the continent after the examples of the western worlds and Asian countries, like Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, China and others. Like the above counties, Africa will be equally facing the moral challenges of AI and the problem of technology. However, in all indication, as we praise Africans for high hope of globalization and development in educational sector in the future, there is a call for domestication of technology or Enwisdomization of technology in respect to human beings or man and to have this recourse always as "technology is made for man and not man for technology". Development in all sectors of life is for the betterment of man and not otherwise. Finally, man is not only defined or composed of intelligence alone, as conscience is also included.

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