E-ISSN: 1116 - 3240 P-ISSN: 3026-9334
MPRI-JAIMR | INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF AFRICAN INNOVATION & MULTIDSCIPLINARY RES.
VOL. 08 NO. 2 – APRIL, 2025

NOMADIC EDUCATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.70382/mejaimr.v8i2.037

Abstract

The importance of nomadic education to national development cannot be over-emphasized. The neglect of any segment of the population of a country can be a potential time bomb, especially if that population contribute significantly to the nation's economy just as the nomads deed. Education is the birth right of any Nigerian child and this right has been enshrined in the nation's constitution. Nigeria as a nation needs a functional nomadic education system that can equip the teaming population of the nomads with requisite knowledge, attitudes and skills to enable them relate and adapt successfully to the rapid socioeconomic, cultural and political changes in the society for national development. This paper examined the implications of nomadic education as it relates to national development. It thus examined nomadic education from the perspectives of moral development, socio-cultural development, economic development and political development in the Nigerian society.

Keywords: The Nomads, Nomadic Education in Nigeria, National Development, Nomadic Education for National Development

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Some of the recommendations made were: that, government should declare state of emergency on the education of the nomads and strengthen the provision of Such attractive incentives like school meal program, free education, scholarship for higher education to the successful completers ofthe basic compulsory schooling. Government should also provide adequate security to ensure the protection of the lives and properties of the nomads as well as improve the condition of service for teachers in nomadic schools to sustain them and boost their moral.

Introduction

Nomads are an ethnographic group who wander from place to place with no fixed home. Their movement is necessitated by their economic activities, be they cattle rearing, fishing, hunting or craftworks (Jekayinfa, Yussuf, Bolaji, and Esther 2020). Nomadism is as old as humanity and it is a common characteristic of human reaction to hostile or unfavourable conditions on their livelihood. Tahir G., Mohammed N. & Mohammed A. (2018) stated that all over the world, the phenomenon of Nomadism is generally recognized because nomadic groups constitute a sizeable portion of the world's population. Nomadism is influenced by a number of factors and these factors are dependent upon the nomadic group in focus. For instance, pastoral nomads are compelled to move largely in search of pasture and water for their cattle. Owing to their nomadic nature, they do not erect permanent structures in most cases.

The National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) was established in 1989 by the defunct Decree 41 now Nomadic Education Act, Cap N20 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 2004, to cater for the educational needs of the socially excluded, educationally disadvantaged and migrant groups in Nigeria, (Federal Republic of Nigeria: FRN 2017). These segments of the population have serious limitations to equitable access to basic education through the conventional education system as a result of certain occupational and socio-cultural peculiarities. FRN (2017) stated that; out of the estimated 10.4 million migrant groups in Nigeria comprising pastoralists, migrant fisher folks and migrant farmers, about 3.6 million are children of school age of which only 519,018 are currently enrolled in schools. Arising from this, it can be seen that the participation of nomads in existing formal and non-formal basic education is abysmally

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low.Nigerian government was worried that a segment of the country's population was living without the rudiments of literacy and numeracy in the western sense. Imornivwerha&Enaibe (2024), states that, in an effort to educationally carry along these people, the government realized that their lifestyle, work, roles, environment and peculiar needs do not permit them to attend normal sedentary schools, despite their importance to the economic life of the nation. This group must be carried along in terms of education for the achievement of the national objectives. In order to give basic education to this group, the Federal Government launched the National Nomadic Education Programme in 1986.

Nomadic education has been an effective approach to enhance emancipation from illiteracy, dependence, retrogressive and unprogressively level of a sectional part of the nation to make nomads develop themselves. (Olokede, 2006). Nomadic education is a special educational package designed for the children of nomads in Nigeria to enable them take advantage of Western Education without obstructing their nomadism. The nomads are also the backbone behind the production of milk and meat in Nigeria. In spite of their contributions to the country, they have been socially and educationally marginalized, deprived, denied and disadvantaged (Ohanazoeze, 2006).

Nomadic Education in Nigeria

Nomadic Education is the qualitative functional inclusive basic education for the children of pastoral nomads, migrant fisher folk and migrant farmers outside the regular formal education systems (Abdulrahman 2015). Nomadic Education has the vision of integrating the nomads into the national life by providing them with relevant and functional basic education and improving their livelihood skills, levels of income and productivity as well as equipping them to compete favourably in the nation's socio-economic and political affairs (FRN 2017). Nomadic Education serve as a prime mover and work in concert with all the Universal Basic Education (UBE) stakeholders for the actualization of qualitative education for the nomadic populations in the country.

Nigerian government realized that the provisions of the Nigerian constitution and National Policy on Education which strongly urge the government to provide equal educational opportunities to all Nigerians cannot be achieved unless a special educational provision was made for everyone including people in core remote areas of the country including nomads in order to access both formal and non-

formal education. The implementation of the Nomadic Education Programme (NEP) was then aimed at providing access to quality basic education for nomads in Nigeria, thereby boosting their literacy and exposure levels (FRN 2023).

The National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) was set to achieve the following broad goals in Nigeria:

- To integrate nomads into national life through relevant qualitative and basic functional education.
- To raise both the productive and income levels of nomads, as well as boost the national economy through improved knowledge, skills and practice of nomads.
- Formulate policy and issue guidelines in all matters relating to nomadic education in Nigeria.
- Provide funds for: (a) The research and personnel development for the improvement of nomadic education in Nigeria. (b) The development of programmes on nomadic education. (c) The provision of equipment and other instructional materials, (d) construction of classrooms and other facilities relating to nomadic education.
- Establishment, management and maintenance of primary schools in the settlements and grazing reserves carved out for nomadic people,
- To determine the standards of skills to be attained in nomadic schools.
- To arrange for effective monitoring and evaluation of activities of agencies concerned with nomadic education.
- To liaise and corporate with other relevant ministries and agencies.
- To receive block grants and funds from the Federal Government or any agency authorized on that behalf and allocate same to nomadic schools based on any formula approved by the Federal Executive Council.
- To act as an agency for channelling all external aids to nomadic schools in Nigeria.
- To ensure effective inspection of nomadic education activities in Nigeria through the sections in the Federal and State Ministries of Education performing duties relating to nomadic education.
- To collate, analyse and publish information relating to nomadic education in Nigeria.
- To undertake any other action desirable for the promotion of nomadic education. (FRN, 2023).

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Nomadic education employs different approaches to accommodate the nomad's way of life and peculiarities. It employs regular school, on-site school, mobile school, distance learning, radio and television education etc. (Usman& Amir, 2022) Imonivwerha and Enaibe (2024) identify the following as some of the identical Problems that hinders the implementation of nomadic education in Nigeria:

1. Shortage of Grazing Land; the nomads are compelled to move from time to time looking for favourable places to graze their cattle, this action seriously affects their educational attainment. In some cases, there is a stereotype hatred and suspicion among the nomads and farmers due to shortage of grazing field and water, which usually result into conflicts and clashes.
2. Underfunding; lack of fund syndrome that has become the slogan of the Nigerian government, this has also affected the successful implementation of the programme. The amount of money allocated annually for the programme is hardly enough. This has led to the death of infrastructural materials and the non-replacement of decayed/ dilapidated facilities and equipment.
3. Lack of Supervision and Monitoring; Supervision is an essential ingredient of effective school system. Most nomadic schools are located in areas that are not easily accessible which affects their supervision.
4. Transfer of Teachers; the transfer, of nomadic teachers to conventional schools without replacement is a big problem. Most of the teachers in nomadic schools were given special training by the NCNE. Sadly, some of these teachers work out their transfer themselves as a result of lack of motivation from the government and the fact that they sometimes face dangers and hazards in the bush.
5. Health Problems; not only do the animals face hazards from the tsetse flies and shortage of water which may affect their health. The nomads themselves also fall sick with no access to adequate health services.
6. Attitude of the Nomads;in spite of the fact that the government is trying to bring the programme to limelight, the attitude of some of the nomads is very discouraging. They lack interest in this lofty programme. Many of them especially the girls do not complete the programme.

National Development

Development as a concept varies in terms of description, in a layman's view, development is seen as a process, situation or course of dynamic change. It can

also be perceived as a state, condition or an indicator of a particular phenomenon. Adindu (2017) describe development as an upward shift from one point to another over a period of time in a positive direction. Ifeanacho, Ubah and Obiajulu (2023) define development as a multi-dimensional change process involving reformation and repositioning of the holistic socio-economic system of a nation in order to improve the quality of human wellbeing. These multidimensional processes consist of social, political and economy aspect of humanity, and they are the tripod framework which shouldered the socioeconomic formation of any society (Okowa, 2005).

The word national, according to the Longman dictionary of contemporary English, refers to a phenomenon that embraces a whole nation. The term national development is very comprehensive. It includes all aspects of the life of an individual and the nation. It is holistic in approach. It is a process of reconstruction and development in various dimensions of a nation and the development of individuals.

Ogbonnaya E. (2020), opined that national development includes full-growth and expansion of our industries, agriculture, and education, social, religious, and cultural institutions. Moreover, national development implies the development of a nation as a whole. It can be best defined as the all-round and balanced development of different aspects and facets of the nation viz. political, economic, social, cultural, scientific, and material (Bhawna, B. 2016). Adindu (2017), reported United Nations Decade Report (2018-2027) has defined "National development as growth plus change. Change in turn is social and cultural, economic, qualitative and quantitative" Broadly, development of the nation encapsulates such parameters as: (i) Development through a planned national economy, (ii) Increase in agricultural production through application of modern technical know-how, (iii) harnessing industrial production, (iv) Development of human resource, (v) Application of science and technology in the production sector,(vi) Provision of mass education and (vi) Provision of various facilities to meet the needs and aspirations of disadvantaged, deprived and poorest of the poor segments of the population (Lawal, T. and Abe, O. 2011).

The above assertions on the concept of national development are buttressed by Todaro, and Smith, (2006) who vieweddevelopment from the modernization paradigm;as a multidimensional process that involves the sustained elevation of the entire society and social system towards a better or humane life. They

identified three basic components for understanding development namely; sustenance, self-esteem, and freedom. In the context of the paper, national development can be described as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation. This is best achieved through development planning, which can be described as the country's collection of strategies mapped out by the government through a blueprint known as a national development plan. Nigeria like any sovereign state has had several development plans whose objectives cantered on national development.

Implications of Nomadic Education on National Development

Nigeria is often described as a developing country because of the absence of many indices of development like infrastructure, access to quality education and medical facilities. Education certainly is one of the ways through which a nation becomes developed. Children go to school to learn and be educated in order to function better in society and raise their social standings. One of the objectives of conventional education generally, and nomadic education in particular is to adequately equip the children with the necessary skills and knowledge needed for effective participation and contribution to national development (Audu, O. 2016). Nomadic education if effectively implemented has the ability to bring about sustainable development that can bring anticipated peace to the nation. If education is embraced by the nomads, their approach would change. Since education is the pivot on which all developmental strata are baked, education is bound to create a permanent change on the lives of the nomads. By sensitization and reorientation of norms, values and beliefs, nomads are bound to accept settlement in the ranches, the offer earlier rejected by them.Education is an instrument par excellence for effecting national development (FRN 2013). National development is the ability of a country to improve the social well-being of its citizens through the provision of such social amenities as medical care, infrastructure, quality education and other social services. This paper therefore, examines the implications of nomadic education in Nigeria from the angle of moral development, social development, economic development and political development as follows:

Moral Implications on National Development

Moral education refers to the general role of the education process in developing a sense of

moral values in the society. The moral aspect of a child's education is ultimately aimed at raising the level of moral judgment and behaviour to the optimum as required by the society. Nomadic education system seeks to place a central emphasis on the teaching of the rights and interests of other people and what is considered to be right and proper (Denga, 2011). Nomadic education has the ability to develop moral and social consciousness among the nomads to enable them uphold the moral and social values of their societies and the nation at large. The knowledge acquired through formal education assists citizens to bring desirable change to their community in particular leading to national development in general. Morality as observe by Denga (2011) is basically concerned with the development of sound character in the child so that virtues like goodness, rightness, truth, respect for law, and authority, forgiveness, honesty, sympathy, diligence, self-imposed discipline and obedience among other virtues are internalized by the populace. One of the important aims of the nomadic education system is the inculcation of six value clusters one of which is moral and spiritual values in inter-personal and human relation. This includes, specific moral values of being God fearing, honest, responsible and forgiving. The question one may ask is: is the nomadic education system in Nigeria achieving this very important aim of developing a sense of moral values in the nomads, which would consequently lead to national development?

Socio-cultural Implications on National Development

In most societies, standards of behaviour are passed from one generation to the next. It is theduty of every functional education to transmit the culture of the society from one generation to the next. Education will be meaningless if it is not directed at solving societal problems, conserving the cultural heritage, inventing and discovering new ideas and technologies that are essential tools for cultural improvement (Denga, 2011). Education thus, should be the agent of economic, cultural, religious, political, military and social development of the nation. Through education, youths learn the customs, traditions, beliefs and lifestyle of their people through literature, history, civic education, social studies and so on. Several activities abound in the school like drama, and religious instruction through which the youths learn how to act certain traditions and also develop into morally correct citizen who is loyal and obedient to rules and authority leading to social development.

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Nomadic education has all these characteristics as the conventional education and if adequately implemented, the nomads will have the necessary socio-cultural values that make them citizens that are loyal to the laws of the land and contribute to the nation building. The question one will ask is, has the nomadic education system in Nigeria been able to bring about cultural and social development which could lead to national development? As Abekhale (2009) puts it, Nigeria is currently witnessing a lot of maladaptive behaviours from the nomadic population that put the integrity of the nation at stake. The behaviour of nomadic population is fast eroding and requires urgent and concise action. Many nomads no longer have dress code, their behaviour
has changed and become meaningless, respect for elders is almost becoming history. The security in the nation leaves much to be desired. Cases of kidnapping and ritual killings and other social vices related to the nomads are heard or read on the news almost on daily basis. Nomadic education has the ability to bring about

Economic Implications on National Development

Any functional and efficient education system should be able to improve the economic development of the nation. One of the major economic functions of nomadic education is to ensure that the needed manpower for economic development is trained. This can help the society to reduce povertyamong its people by enabling them to employ effective tools of production. Apart from the above, nation building and industrialization is a major aim of education in general and nomadic population cannot be left out. Thus, producing citizens with appropriate occupational skills and knowledge to plan and manage the economy efficiently through education can lead to improving the status of the nation's economy. The focus of nomadic education in Nigeria among others, is the training of nomads to have the necessary skills to engage in production, create wealth and develop the nation.

Harbison in Agbo (2014) asserts that human resources constitute the ultimate basis for the wealth of nations, capital and natural resources are factors of production; human beings are the active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organization, and carry forward national development. If a country like Nigeria with over ten million population of nomads; is unable to develop their skills and knowledge to utilize

them effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop anything else. In Nigeria, people's standard of living to a great extent depends on their level of educational attainment, apart from chance factors and inheritance of wealth. Looking at the situation in Nigeria now, one would see that most of the nomads are no longer patient, have no commitment and no aspiration because, the nomadic education system is not functioning well. Nomadic education has the potentials of improving the nations GDP, bringing about poverty reduction and reducing the menace of unemployment for the nation to prosper.

Political Implications on National Development

The role of nomadic education in promoting national unity, stability and security cannot be overemphasised. A functional education systemshould promote the political system of the nation in various ways. Any philosophy of education that is not geared towards meeting the political needs of the society is a meaningless philosophy. Democracy is a form of government, a way of life, a goal or ideal and a political philosophy. Nigeria is one of the countries that have democratic form of government. The citizens of democracy take part in government either directly or indirectly. Throughout history, the most important aspects of the democratic way of life have been the principle of individual equality and freedom (Gambari in Onochie 2017). Accordingly, citizens in a democracy should be entitled to equal protection of their persons, possession and rights; have equal opportunities to pursue their lives and career; and have equal rights of political participation. In addition, the people should enjoy freedom from undue interference and domination by government.

Democratic societies seek to guarantee their citizens certain freedoms, including freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of speech. Ideally, citizens should be guaranteed freedom of association and assembly, freedom from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment and the freedom to work and live where and how they choose (The world book encyclopaedia, 1993). To attain political stability in a diverse nation like Nigeria, the teaming population have to be taught how to be patriotic, and how to respect people's social, religious and cultural backgrounds. Through nomadic education, unity in diversity can be achieved, the nomads learn various political systems at home and abroad and are sufficiently aware of their fundamental human right and the rights of others. There has been

disaffection with the practice of electoral politics around the world and in Nigeria in particular the evidence was the constant declining of voters turn out.
Factors responsible include youth alienation from electoral politics, continuous marginalization of women and the disadvantaged gender from the political space as well as exclusion of the minorities and nomads from effective participation and representation. Democracy and development were unfinished business which implied that one aspect of democracy – development nexus must be pursued together to meet the yearning of the people; this can be attained through functional nomadic education in practice.

Conclusion

It is an undeniable fact that the nomads in Nigeria are by no means a poor group. They possess rich herds that are convertible to cash. What the nomad in his early twenties possesses may amount to millions of Naira while his counterpart in the university cannot boast as much. Except for the occasional outbreak of disease, insecurity and neglect by the government, the nomad is economically empowered. He makes no pretence about it and is ready to fight on for his survival. Thenomad need to be introduce to a global and competitive economy through a language that can help him in his quest for a better life, security, good health, better communication, water supply, legal rights and balanced diet.
It is clear that nomadic education has a critical function in national development. But in Nigeria, nomadic educationhas not fully played its roles in this regard. This could be as a result of certain inherent problems in the Nigerian education system generally and nomadic education in particular. First among these problems is inadequate funding. Education is no doubt, directly linked with the processes of nation building and development. Education in Nigeria has not been properly funded and this leads to poor infrastructure in the nomadic schools.
Another point to be considered here is unsteady political environment. From independence till date, there have been several administrations in Nigeria. The successive political leaders either military or civilian often suspend the existing educational policies and replace them with the newly fashioned ones which typify their own political agenda. By this, the educational policy planners are compelled to jettison a plan still on the drawing board and take up new policies which must be geared towards meeting the current political demands. This has become a serious bottleneck to nomadic education in term of achieving national

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development. Also important to be mentioned is corruption. In most cases, budgetary allocation to the sector is always embezzled, thereby, obstructing the successful attainment of the objectives of nomadic education for national development.

Recommendations

Government should abide bythe recommended 26% of the annual budget to education by UNESCO without further delay. Once this is done, there will be adequate funds to implement the nomadic education in Nigeria. Private organization and host communities should also be sensitised on the need to adequately support nomadic schools in Nigeria.

Government should declare state of emergency on the education of the nomads and strengthen the provision of Such attractive incentives like school meal program, scholarship for higher education to the successful completers ofthe basic compulsory schooling etc.

Government should also provide adequate security to ensure the protection of lives and properties of the nomads as well as improved condition of service for teachers in nomadic schools to sustain them and boost their moral.

Nomadic education curriculum should be culturally sensitive and relevant to the needs and aspirations of nomadic communities, by incorporating local languages, traditions, and practical skills into the curriculum.

Nigerian grazing reserve laws must be revisited and polish to reflect the current realities, and fully implemented to enable nomads have access to land and grazing areas to encourage their settlement.

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