Reinvigorating Literacy Learning and the Current Educational Systems with the Values of Indigenous Education and Schools in Achieving the Millennium Development Goals

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Abstract: Dramatic world economic changes have prompted most developing countries to reassess their varied educational programmes as well as the cost and benefit of such educational programmes. Most educationists have advocated the need to declare a state of emergency in our various educational systems which are not meeting the challenges of the 21st Century and neither helping to realize educational inclusion in the context of functional education lifelong learning, Education for all and realisation of the United Nations' Millennium Development goals. It is in the light of this development, that this study advocate the integration of the values of African Traditional Education System (ATES) and of Indigenous schools, embeded in Islamic and Quranic Schools into literacy learning and Nigeria's educational system. Thus the study reviews the concept, processes and facilities for indigenous education and schools in Africa. Discrepancies between school education system and the alternative systems are than outlined. How these could constitute a potentially cost-effective means of access to education to a larger clientele through the inculcation of basic skills, African values, apprenticeship scheme, functional, vocational education among others, that are relevant to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Key words: Reinvigorating literacy, current educational system, indigenous education, Millennium Development Goals

INTRODUCTION

According to Wagner (1985, 1989, 1999) dramatic world economic changes have prompted most developing countries of the world to reassess their varied educational programmes as well as cost and benefit of such educational programmes. Collaborating this submission of Wagner, Omolewa (2001) suggested that most developing worlds would need to declare state of emergencies in their various educational systems if such nations truly intend to achieve educational inclusion in the context of realizing functional education, lifelong learning, education for all and millennium development goals. Sadly, enough, much of African education is still following adaptations of the colonial mindset, featuring a keep-up with modern pedagogy, to the neglect of indigenous learning and teaching resources. Poverty, amidst indigenous people finds its root in colonization, the disfunction of indigenous education, economic and socio-political systems, social exclusion and the abrogation of indigenous peoples' individual and collective rights. Hence, the need to refuse packaged or prefabricated solutions by avoiding every kind of cultural invasion, covertly or overtly. This is with a view to establishing that developing worlds, Nigeria inclusive, are still part of the global village. Hence the past, present and future of education in Africa is of importance, if we intend to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

It is also pertinent to note that there have been a lot of controversies or challenges going on regarding the correlation between education and functional literacy as end result for labour productivity and economic development, while others have sought to know the internal efficiency and effectiveness of the entire educational systems in Nigeria (Omolewa, 2001; Chris, 1999; Adeyinka, 2006) among others.

Many scholars including Omolewa (1981), Occiti (1973, 1994), Majasan (1967), Adeyinka (2006) and Sarumi (2001) to mention but a few, have established that before the introduction of European culture into Africa, education in the continent was purely indigenous, as it is peculiar to the indigenes of such communities. This at the continental level, is called African Traditional Education (ATE). The ATES was prevalent in Africa before the advent of western education. Every member of the society have access to ATE, while the entire community was the teacher and guardian of morality and education of the younger peoples of the community (Awolalu and Dopemu, 1979; Mbiti, 1977) The strength of the ATE cannot be over-emphasised, these include functionality, practical values, socio-moral virtues, lifelong and

comprehensive educational inclusion values, service orientation values, participatory and community focused, integrated curriculum, just to mention but a few (Sarumi, 2001). Prominent studies Majasan (1967), Shelson (1974), Tiberondwa (1978), Adeyinka (2000) and Coetzee and Roux (2000) confirmed and corroborated the relevance of ATE. Although, this is not to say that it does not have some weaknesses. It has!

The arrival of colonial administration in Africa and the Christian mission led to the emergence of western culture which culminated in western education with special emphasis on literacy and purely academic work. This lured Africans to start sending their children and wards to western schools with the belief that it would offer them ample opportunities for further studies, lucrative and prestigious white collar jobs and earn them respect in the society.

This study will also look into the indigenous schools as represented by Islamic schools and Quranic schools, since Islamic (Quranic) schools are among the least studied educational institutions in today's world, even though millions of children in notable countries are attending such schools for either part or total completion of their education (Wagner, 1999). A comparative study of Islamic schooling in Indonesia, North Yewez, Senegal, Morocco and Egypt found substantial diversity in these schools, both across and within societies (Wagner, 1989).

Furthermore, in the recent times there have been the hue and cry about Africans finding solutions to their problems in terms of national development by looking inward. It is hoped that this paper would lend credence to that distress call, as the total acceptance of western education and its negative consequences on the life of our younger peoples, system orientation and national productivity cannot be overemphasized. Corroborating this submission, over the years there has been increasing concern about the relevance of school education. The deschoolers movement and activities are best appreciated in this direction. School education has tended to breed a new class of unemployed, arrogant and pompous younger persons who are deeply separated from their communities. Schooling has also failed to provide youth with the kind of education they need to survive in the 21st Century world of science and technology. No wonder that Ivan Illich of the deschoolers movement calls for abolition of schools and the floating of knowledge and skill development centres where the individuals could acquire from the early age, knowledge and skills needed for life and work in diversified global economies in the 21st Century.

Islamic schools, like other indigenous schools continue to attract many large clientele, many of whom have never attended government secular schools. Such indigenous schools should be seen as an important educational resource as they reach more clientele more deeply and effectively than the government systems in the users countries (Wagner, 1989; Aderinoye, 1997). Most of the indigenous schools provide (often as a by-product of religious training) important languages, cognition and social skills of significant potential for meeting the basic skills needs of poor and disadvantaged populations in many countries (Wagner, 1999, Kazeem, 1992).

In this study, our effort is not geared towards upholding hook, line and sinker the revolutionary recommendation of the deschoolers movement in this age of globalisation, but rather are want to suggest that the values of both indigenous education and schools could be integrated into literacy learning and the current educational systems. Hence, there is the need for future education in the global context, to embrace the establishment of knowledge and skills centres, values of Islamic schools for the use of those who have been to schools, still going to schools with a view to concretizing, the strengths or gains of the formal school. In line with this submission, Wagner (1999) and Omolewa (2001) have argued their that alternative educational programmes are the best way to reach those most in need of training and are the most cost-effective.

These alternative systems of education and their values are embeeded in the indigenous education and schools. This is being suggested for total overhauling for integration into literacy learning and current educational systems. This becomes necessary as historians of education, there is the dire need and challenges to probe into the past, problems of present day education and envision the future education delivery process in this age of globalisation from such a probe we can and build on past experiences, opportunities and facilities and on the problems inherent in the present education systems.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF INDIGENOUS FORMS OF ADULT EDUCATION

In this discussion, the term Indigenous Adult Education refers to learning by doing for the training of intellect, imparting technical skills as well as moral values. This form is also employed to include any formalised (i.e., culturally codified, recognised and/or authorised) system of instruction that did not emerge from modern European public schooling. These surviving indigenous systems generally have been over-looked in the rush to modernize and westernise education in the developing world.

Most of the time, African educationists and policy makers neglect the roles of African pedagogy and other allied forms of education. Hence, educational systems were imported from advanced countries without examining them critically on whether they suit our situation or not. The end result is the educational crisis currently prevalent all over Africa and in almost all the educational fields.

The current practices in schools and adult literacy classes drive home the point that both are acting strongly against this very important principle of African pedagogy and thus acting against African culture. As learning through practical experience is not encouraged, bookish memorisation and a lot of theoretical work have taken over, while creative and inventive thinking and doing are not qualities of the teaching and learning process.

Moreover, as the traditional adult education in Africa integrates the child in the community, the school and literacy classes divorce the children, youths and adults from African culture. Hence, the strong submission that the productive harmonisation of African education and culture in the modern world will be a meaningful utopia that needs to be realised soonest for our society to benefit from.

FEATURES OF INDIGENOUS EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Having established that indigenous adult education has a lot of relevance to educational development of Africans, it is very pertinent to look at the features of this form system of education that can grant the Africans the wider access to education and pragmatic education.

There are four basic distinguished features and these include; life as a whole; absence of compartmentalization; invisible division into basic and non-basic components and changes in indigenous education. The contents of pre-colonial African indigenous education took care of the totality of the approved life as conceived and perceived by each society. It also included the expectations of the deities and ancestors about the way of life.

According to Fafunwa (1974) as supported by Omolewa (1981) the elders in the traditional African societies engaged in participatory learning. Hence, the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values that individuals learnt were to a greater extent, common to everybody. The advantage of this system includes the fact that the education was deeply rooted in the culture of each society and as well as to enable the individuals not to be alienated by the process of the same education. To Ocitti (1994) traditional education was organised along individual life-long perspective from cradle to grave. In Africa, the lifespan of each individual was divided into life

cycle stages, which greatly facilitated the process of learning, especially the acquisition of rudimentary knowledge, skills and attitudes, needed for successful living in society. A good example is the Massai Kikuyu, Bagisu clans in East Africa where it was normal for individuals to pass from the stage of childhood through an emotional-charged ritual pedagogy called circumcision into a period of social adulthood and later on, to that of elderhood.

The absence of compartmentalisation seems a striking feature of indigenous education as it was not subjected to division or segment it as occurs in modern schools. What was learnt in the indigenous education was dependent on availability. The learning process was not the same all the time and there was no fixed time and venue. This does not make indigenous education under study, weak as situational learning is being entrenched into Western education, as the world is now talking about education permanent, education inclusive, University on Air and University without walls. All these developments in the provision of wider access to education are borrowed from the African indigenous education.

The third feature of indigenous education is its invisible division into basic and non-basic components. African indigenous education embraced the whole culture or approved life pattern of the people. Individuals could only learn those aspects of culture, which would make him become an active and useful participant in the family and community. Hence, the need to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes which would make him useful to his family and society. This could be regarded as basic education for all members of society.

On the other hand, there are other knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, which were useful to learn. These skills include ironwork, basketry and pottery making and playing musical instruments. Like western education, indigenous education in the pre-colonial period possessed many other knowledge, skills and attitudes or values, which can be acquired on voluntary basis. For example, among the Yoruba, farming was a compulsory subject, whereas, act of drumming, weaving and others were electives. In the Massai land, being a pastoral was the major way of life, supplemented by agriculture and hunting, while among the Akan of Ghana the compulsory education was the occupation of one's father, which is farming. Electives included hunting, palm wine tapping, crafts such as basket weaving and wood carving.

The last feature of indigenous education is change in the system, as no educational system (whether modern or traditional) is static (Majasan, 1967). Each education has its in-built mechanism for growth, development and sometimes for resistance to some changing circumstances. The major reason for change in indigenous

education is the process of acculturation, which is as an outcome of cultures contact. According to Osokoya (1989) Nigerian indigenous education came into contact with Islamic education as the latter had been introduced to Nigeria before Western-oriented education. Islamic education had spread to Hausa land as early as 14thC and its impact was seriously felt as by 1913 there were 19,073 Quranic schools and enrolment of 143,312 students in Nigeria. In the Northern Nigeria for example, the culture of the region became Islamic similar to the effects of western education brought by the Christian missionaries and the colonial masters in the southern regions.

These culture contacts, which led to a new order in the educational system of Africans, necessitated the bridging of the gap between the new order and the traditional ways of life. The Phelps-Stoke Commission of the early 1920 was so critical of conflicts between the new and the old orders. Thus, schools as introduced by the Christian missionaries and colonial masters were recommended to be transformed from being alien to what they termed truly traditional or community institutions.

Moreover, such schools if they were not to alienate the natives from their culture and natural environment must be adapted to the needs of the individual and community. The commission apart from recognising the fact that principles being strongly emphasised by Western education were good in respect of their countries felt these were also desirable for Africans. The Phelps-Stoke Commission strongly emphasised, the development of character in the promotion of healthy living, acquisition of agricultural and industrial skills and improvement of family life. Hence, the new policy on school education calls for the need to urgently indigenise education and schooling by integrating it with good elements of traditional education. Also, there is the need to adapt the new education to the condition, needs and resources of traditional society. No wonder that some philosophers now advocate the de-schooling of the society (Illich, 1971).

The operational definition of term employed for indigenous education in this paper includes a system of instruction that is not a direct descendant of modern European public schooling which includes Islamic or Quranic school. This makes it mandatory for us to look at its features as well. According to Wagner (1999) Islamic or Quranic schools are among the least studied educational institutions in the contemporary world. Yet Quranic schools have adapted themselves to a variety of cultural barriers within each society. These schools can as well vary dramatically within societies, primarily as a function of the last several decades of modernisation (Wagner, 1985).

Further, Quranic schools' modernisation has led to significant changes in pedagogy and curriculum. In Senegal and some other parts of Africa, stead of encouraging rote learning, which is often difficult for children to understand, Quranic school teachers are now trying to teach spoken and written Arabic as a second language. The point one is trying to make here is that Islamic schools continue to attract very large numbers of children, many of who never attended Western education schools.

Moreover, if majority of African children benefit from indigenous education such indigenous schools should then be perceived as important educational resources. These indigenous schools reach more deeply and perhaps more effectively than many government schools, into the poorest, most traditional and least accessible regions of the countries concerned. It has been established that indigenous education as represented by the traditional system of education in this paper the indigenous schools represented by the Quranic schools provide important language, cognitive and social skills of significant potential for meeting basic skills, needs of the poor and disadvantaged populations and neglected audiences in numerous countries.

Studies by Kazeem (1992), Sarumi (1994) and Wagner (1999) have established that traditional and contemporary Quranic schools share a number of common basic features with modern secular schools. Regardless of the regional variations, Quranic schools teach children to learn in a structured setting, respect the teacher, use language and recite in unison, encode and decode the alphabet, become a moral person, a good citizen and more recently, do basic arithmetic. These features compete favourably with most secular pre-school and primary school settings in developing countries.

Looking at the above features critically, Wagner (1999) stated that the sacred quality of the Quranic text coupled with the strong motivation of children and parents towards Quranic learning, provides an additional stimulus for learning that many secular schools cannot boast of.

THE CONCEPT, PROCESSES AND FACILITIES FOR INDIGENOUS EDUCATION IN THE PRE-LITERATE AFRICA

According to Ocitti (1994) education, learning and training are not recent inventions for the many ethnic groups of Africa. They are integral part of life and a find of permanent thing among the people of Africa. Hence, the people diversified a bit by creating new form and contents of education adapted to changes, which have

occurred in their environments. The traditional societies have specific principles, methods and instructional arrangements for education, learning and training. Hence, theirs were decidedly different from the type of schooling that was later introduced by the missionary societies and colonial administration during the last century.

We now take a look at the concept, processes and facilities for indigenous education, including its non-formal features in the pre-literate Africa. The indigenous education practices of the Yoruba people of Western Nigeria and that of the Acholi indigenous education in Uganda will be examined as case studies. In the traditional society, the contents of education were those, which would enable the citizens to take their rightful place in the community (Ojo, 2000). As the children, adolescents and adults learnt the geography and history of their community, they were taught topics like local hills, valleys, rivers and plants, the time to expect rain and drought as well as the right time to plant, hunt, fish and reap.

In most African societies, indigenous education promoted proverbs and riddles to teach the child to reason and to take decisions. Adults as well refreshed their mathematical ability in games such as Ayo. This game promotes reasoning, agility and intellectualism. This is prevalent in the indigenous education of the Yoruba of the South Western Nigeria. Traditional adult education involves the ongoing process of life by providing unbroken contact between the process of education and the life of individuals. Moreover, traditional adult education encompasses all aspects of life be it social, cultural, political, economic and intellectual. It also includes physical, spiritual orientations, various forms of judicial systems and community and comparative affairs. The child and adult engaged in social interaction at home, among the peer group and the community at large. In Yoruba land, education is supposed to be lifelong. Parents served as teachers, initiating the children and adults into socio-cultural uprightness of the society.

On cultural basis, the adult was made to acquire various cultural values, prevalent in the society. This was done through imitation, dancing and observation. For example, at ritual festivals and coronation participation. In the realm of politics, traditional adult education met the needs of the Yoruba society; powers are normally conferred on certain people to govern the community. Those exercising powers include the Obas, Baales and the Bales. Others may include priests, elders and the Ogboni's (secret cult members). These rulers encouraged and ensured that peace, law and order reigned. The King (Oba) engaged in an informal training before he assumed the kingship position, he was also introduced to the societal norms and values.

In the economic sector, the Yoruba people engaged in various trades and also trained in all available occupations, such as traditional medicine, hunting, sculpturing, weaving, building and drumming, among others.

Traditional religions, which include traditional festivals re-enact historical events, provided opportunity to show the expressions of gratitude to the Supreme Being. It also provided the local population with courses in the history of the locality, accounts of their origin, stories and legends about different families. Intellectual training was also promoted through brainwork and tasks like incantations, learning the family history and local history.

Traditional adult education in Yorubaland also promoted character development. Its contents include character development and socialisation process, introducing adults into society. Much is taught through greetings, keeping hygiene and observing taboos; while in moral uprightness, unlawful sexual contact is frowned at and any adult, who raped, liable to severe punishment. Needless to say that good acts were also rewarded. The system of adult education also encouraged the apprenticeship system as part of a holistic education process. In this system, there is no room for mediocrity but perfection. As such, an apprentice will display the adequacy of the skill acquired before he can be allowed to practise.

Again, Acholi indigenous education includes the ideology of communalism or corporate life, as reflected in a quadruple system of unity. To achieve these goals individuals were educated in and for the society ways of life and within the ideological parameters of communalism, survival mechanism and the principle of preparationism, perennialism and wholisticism (Ocitti, 1994). Indigenous education among the Acholi was lifelong. Child-care in general was encouraged by Acholi indigenous education. Their learning strategies include informal learning which can also be divided into two: Personally initiated strategies characterised by the process of observation, imitation and practice or social action; socially initiated learning strategies include incidental, informal and brief prolonged formal learning.

Education for living as adolescent and preparation for adulthood during adolescence is also embedded in Acholi indigenous education. This is achieved during adolescence through active participation in the life of the family, community, clan and society. Advanced folktales, hunting expeditions, communal ceremonies and dances, formal instructions and particularly apprenticeship strategies were widely employed. Moreover, education for family life responsibility and leadership training and practices during adulthood was also promoted by the Acholi indigenous education.

As adult life falls into three periods namely; early, middle and late adulthood, young adults learned what were directly related to adult life, including family education. Middle adulthood education focused on parenthood education begun during early adulthood. An important area in middle adult learning is related to food production, specialised skills in the practical arts (for example, crafts of all types) herbal medicine and learning and practising folk music for entertainments, rituals, installation of chiefs, burials and so on. Adults are also to aid the disadvantaged people in Acholi society. Late adulthood has implications for judicial, ritual, religious and political significance as such adults greatly involve in the performing of rituals. Hence, in the case of infancy, adulthood and adolescent education, indigenous Acholi curriculum during adulthood is indeed life and the Acholi children, youth and adults learn what they live.

The contents of indigenous education of Acholi society were informal. Most of the learning were achieved through personally-initiated strategies, besides apprenticeship and involuntary participation in the clan and society-wide activities such as dancing, hunting, preparation for war, purification, sacrifices and marriage, sickness, death, name-giving ceremonies and so on. The most important centre for adult learning in Acholi society is the Wang O.

THE RELEVANCE OF INDIGENOUS ADULT EDUCATION TO CURRENT EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As established, indigenous education is of much utility as it aids relevant instructional skills that are very crucial to national development. Many informal learning activities in indigenous adult education practices and the indigenous schools represented by Islamic schools in this discussion, provide important language, cognitive and social skills of significant potential for meeting basic skill needs of poor and disadvantaged populations in many countries, especially Africa (Wagner, 1993, 1999).

Moreover, this does not mean that we should abandon formal school education for the informal practice of traditional education. But the fact still remains that indigenous education will continue to complement school education and be the only succour for the children who, due to no fault of theirs, are not in the formal system. Wagner (1999) established this with the consequences of the Islamic schools, which go a long way into aiding lifelong and comprehensive education inclusion that the whole world is yearning for. Indigenous education as part and parcel of lifelong education will continue to meet the

better learning need of school leavers (younger adults), adults and even elders, Ocitti (1994). As the training of intellect is central to school education, so also is the practical education that is central to indigenous education will be of relevance to school education. This will be an important issue for educational planners, curriculum developers and other stakeholders in educational enterprise.

Early anthropologists used indigenous education as a basis for affirming the supremacy of the white race over other races. Also, the colonialists used this spurious finding to understand the activities of the natives under them. As of recent, Omolewa (2001) saw indigenous education as having the potentials for modern educational innovations in order to give school and modern adult education a truly African cultural foundation and the relevance that best suit our own system. He further advocated the return to the past and the need to stop copying the Western educational policies unexamined. Hence, the author strongly submitted that we learn from the past towards our educational development.

Other relevance of indigenous adult education include its:

- Relevance and close integration with life;
- Practical values;
- Socio-moral virtues;
- Lifelong and comprehensive educational inclusion virtues;
- Service orientation virtues;
- Participatory and community-focused virtues and
- Integrated curriculum virtues.

Fafunwa (1974), Omolewa (1981), Ocitti (1994) and Omolewa (2001) have established that most aspects of indigenous education are incorporated in the present day educational system. Functionalism, a trait of indigenous education is relevant to modern adult education, while the modern adult education practices should embrace practice and service-oriented features of indigenous education.

Meanwhile, our educational policies are unAfrican which make the younger adults engage in bad practices such as certificate racketeering, immoralities and un-cooperative attitudes.If the aims, goals, contents and methods of Africans are focused, all these problems would not have surfaced. If African indigenous education can accommodate change, the modern adult education practices must not be close-ended. Hence, there are lessons the systems can learn from each other. As literacy acquisition and other forms of learning take place in Islamic schools, although there is no reliable statistics to back up this, a notable finding was that Quranic pre-

schooling was a significant factor in promoting children's literacy skills during the early grades of public primary schools (when compared with children with no pre-schooling). It is of interest to note that the cognitive (learning) impact of Quranic pre-schooling was basically equivalent to modern pre-schooling in some African communities (Wagner, 1999).

It is established that indigenous education/ indigenous schooling have to be included in our educational policies if we want the educational system to be rich in content and become a comprehensive educational inclusion policy that will suit the yearnings and aspirations of Africans. Instead of viewing indigenous education and indigenous literacy as impediments to or competitors with development policies, national planners would do well to consider such alternative education practices as resources to be tapped.

COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION AND THE EMERGENCE OF LITERACY AND WESTERN EDUCATION IN AFRICA

It has been established in diversified literature that colonial administration in British West Africa did not intervene in education before 1842 (Osokoya, 1989; Omolewa, 2001; Fafunwa, 1974; Adeyinka, 2006) to mention but a few, as everything was left in the hands of the Christian Missions while it could be deduced that the history of Western oriented Christian Education in Africa could be linked with the history of western education in Europe during and after middle-ages, the Christian missions realized the importance of literacy in their evangelization process as their schools were religiously-oriented. No wonder that the Northerners in Nigeria perceived western education as Christian education that would only compound their problem and convert their children and wards to Christianity. This and/or late acceptance of western education may be one of the reasons for the educational imbalance or gap between the North and the South in Nigeria till today. But the gap reinforced and strengthened the alternative educational system of Islamic and Quranic school in the Northern parts of Nigeria and in other West African sub-region.

Furthermore, when literacy was introduced people started recognizing the added values it brought for development, such as immense potentials of written word and the alternative means of communication which is provided, preservation of knowledge and its utilities, viable and documented transactions (Omolewa *et al.*, 1998). The worst side was that literacy was also considered on its facial value as it could not be culture

free. According to Omolewa (2001) corroborated by Adeyinka (2006) the Christian missions which were using their Sunday School movement for promotion of literacy (Kwa Hagan, 1979) rather than consider the possible implication of literacy on the Nigerian society started investing in the unexamined cum-imported educational system as children were enrolled in schools and Adult literacy classes established for out-of-school youth. The confidence reposed in the system culminated in community school relations. The church's monopoly on education lasted for more than thousand years.

In Nigeria, the christian missionaries came between 1842 and 1860. First to arrive were the Wesleyan Methodist, who landed in Badagry in September 1842, followed by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) December, 1842 and the American Baptist. Finally the Roman Catholic (RCM) arrived in 1860. The Christian missions started building churches to make converts and schools to train people in the 4R's-reading, writing, arithmetic and religion. The Christian mission did not have the intention of providing more than primary education and the training of teacher of catechism, interpreters, clerks and cooks.

Moreover, various studies have established that literacy has its shortcomings which include lack of panacea to individual and societal problems (Omolewa, 1981; Omolewa and Quallette, 1997; Aderinoye, 1997; Majasan, 1967; Fafunwa, 1974). According to Omolewa the attitude of the products of literacy class and western education was nothing to write home about. Agreeing with this view was Dr. Walter Miller, a medical missionary in the then Northern Nigeria who lamented as follows Bribery and corruption is rampant in all offices. In the African hospitals, drugs, injections and even treatment are illegally sold. Theft is becoming so universal and there is a callousness towards suffering and pains (Miller, 1947).

In the same vein, in August 1915 a Nigerian official with the colonial Department of Education. Henry Carr, also lamented that:

- Not only is their stock of positive knowledge altogether inconsiderable on leaving school, but there is hardly a sign of the growth of mental power and self-control. They are, speaking generally, not intelligent, not reliable, not fitted for positions requiring independent judgement or resourcefulness. When left alone, they fall into divers temptations, ruin themselves and bring sorrow on their families (Herbert Macauley Papers, University of Ibadan, Kenneth Dike Library).

Lord Lugard the first governor of Nigeria also made and shared misgivings about the products of the school systems, as being unreliable, lacking in integrity, self-control and without respect for any constituted authority. He further said Education has brought to such men only discontent, suspicion of others and bitterness, which masquerades as racial patriotism. As citizens they are unfitted to hold posts of trust and responsibility where integrity and loyalty are essential (Lugard, 1965).

There is no mincing words that most of these comments represent the position of Africans on the values of the school system. And if the terrible aspersions on the characer of the youth of Nigeria today are all true and not altogether biased, then, there has been something radically and utterly wrong with the whole system of education in Nigeria.

Moreover, the impacts of school education in Africa include:

- An unexamined western system of education and ways of life;
- Gradual decline of enthusiasms for agricultural pursuits, entrepreneurship, apprenticeship and vocational training;
- Preference for the unavailable white collar jobs;
- Erosion of culture and African values;
- Unemployment, gangsterism and undesireable behaviours and
- Limited access to holistic learning and realisation of the needs of the society and lack of alternative African structures that would enrich individual and the communities at large.

Having pointed out the deficiencies, the deschoolers movement rightly pointed at the dire need to return to the root, retrace our steps embrace and integrate the traditional African educational system into our current educational programmes.

Therefore, the likes of Adeyinka (2006), Fafunwa (1974) and Omolewa (2001) kept on reiterating the fact that universal basic education no longer serves the purpose, aims and objectives of education for lifelong experience in the age of globalisation. To worsen the situation the Federal Government of Nigeria is contemplating abolishing or privatizing unity schools. A true education must inculcate values. But schools, particularly in third world countries serve only the elite in the modern sector and degrade those who are in the traditional sector. It also reinforces the meritocratic element in society by participating in a repressive ritual upward social mobility. The masses of the people are trusted to believing that education is a status providing and liberating instrument,

whereas it simply serves to make them addictively dependent on the services of formal system of education (Illich, 1971).

With all said and done, despite all the ills and vices of the school system, it cannot be easily scrapped in this age of globalization in order to realize the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). But there is the urgent need to save our youth from the agony of commodity-knowledge that is not life fulfilling, lifelong and life-wide.

POLICY ISSUES, OPTIONS AND FUTURE POLICY THRUSTS

Without mincing words, it has been established nationwide that the current educational system and its structure are terribly deficient and that drastic steps have to be taken if it is to meet up the realisation of the seven cardinal goals of education (Fafunwa, 1974) and at the same time help to meet up inclusive education and the challenges of realising the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

According to Churman as quoted in Adeyinka (2006):

- Education should serve to forge abilities. Future education policies should focus on eliminating evil and promoting benevolence, promoting original human nature and discarding the negative aspects of the human mind. Education should impart knowledge and expound mysteries.
- It also ought to care for living beings, understand cosmic turning, follow human moralities, cherish virtue and do good, understand science, treasure civilization and conduct oneself as a decent person with rationality and a clear mind, in an upright and noble manner.

The fact of the case is that formal system or western education cannot solely realize this if we want to achieve the MDGs. There would be the need for stakeholders in education to introduce in the nearest future the principle of a complementary learning into the current educational system, as it contains the fruitful potentials of much educational and social reforms that would make education more life-fulfilling and rewarding. The strengths of African traditional education system should be integrated into the current educational system in Nigeria, as ATES is not tied to rigid curriculum and structured and manipulative examinations nor certificated knowledge. ATES encourages children to understand the working of society with a view to changing it for good, ATES makes them to understand the world, acquiring skills and values in the context of lifelong learning.

African countries, including Nigeria should look into setting up a new kind of educational system peculiar to their cultural environment through knowledge acquisition and self-actualisation. The foreseeable system should encourage apprenticeship scheme, vocational education, mentoring and community participation in education devoid of rigidly structured curriculum. Where every learning institute would prepare learners for lifelong education, acquisition of both theoretical/technological and speculative intellectual knowledge. The nearest future should also look into provision of a totally comprehensive education system, both in policy and structure for all children (educable and disabled).

Moreover, the other viable policy options for the future would include transforming the present education and institutions into knowledge and skills acquisition centre, where children, youth, adolescents, adults can acquire skills and knowledge of their choice. It is then the objective of education in Africa and Nigeria in particular can be fully realized.

The future of technology in education should also be taken seriously where internet and its network would be a major resource for students and teachers alike. Teleconferences will be larger part of future education, computers will be available (Desk and Laptops) for students/learners/teachers/facilitators. Availability of computer software for most course practicals burn in CDs and the gradual working towards a paperless society/learning environment, will be achieved.

Future policy in education should also provide the widening access to holistic education which is readily available in the alternative systems of education, widely discussed in this study. This would afford Africans, including Nigeria, in this age of globalisation to fully develop their intellect, benefit from scientific and technological developments and contribute their quota to the development process.

There must also be widespread literacy whose scope must have gone beyond the 3Rs. It should be perceived as a basic human right and key to lifelong learning and skills to functional competences in scientific, technological, social and political literacy. This would be the bottom line of education for all in the nearest future. This is in line with Akinpelu (2005) submission that though the school would retain its primacy of place as the avenue of education, there should be several other alternative agencies of education that would offer their own type of education which should be equally reorganized and funded by government. Whatever is good in the western education system could be accepted and incorporated into the content, process and facilities of ATES with considerable emphasis on universal access to schooling and preparation for self-employment, service to state and other indices of development.

The future policy should make the goals of education to include preparation of students/learners for production work and cultivation of human sensitivity skills for the complex society of the day. The goals should reflect on technological and economic development of individuals and society, as well as political, moral, social and religious values. To realize the economic objective, education should be more closely linked with employment and manpower development with a view to promoting self employment and individual entrepreneurship.

The curricula of the future should cater for divergent individual potentialities and multisided societal needs, with increased emphasis given to development oriented vocational and technical hands on programmes such as trades, crafts, agricultural, technological, industrial and commercial skills. The activities of the National Directorate for Employment (NDE) should feature in the reformed school curriculum, thus breaking down the rigidity and irrelevance that characterize the current formal school education since the colonial days (Akinpelu, 2005).

THE FUTURE POLICY THRUST IN EDUCATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

The justification for the integration of the values of ATES and indigenous schools with a view to strengthening the current formal educational systems at all levels poses a lot of challenges for Adult and Non-Formal Education with a view to achieving lifelong learning and Millennium Developing Goals.

Adult and Non-Formal Education has been adjudged to be the only key that opens the door of development in the 21st Century and as well the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals. The future policy thrusts on education could only be realized through Adult and Non-Formal Education as it would provide the much needed complementary learning that would make education life-fulfilling and rewarding in the context of offering the second chance education. The integration of the values of ATES hold challenges for Adult and Non-Formal education in the areas of vocational education, apprenticeship scheme, voluntarism, civic education, democracy and good governance, entrepreneurship, skills acquisition and community participation, among others.

Adult and Non-Formal Education structures would be of immense benefit in mounting programmes in knowledge and skills acquisition, where children, adolescents, youths and adult can acquire knowledge and skills of their choice, notably in the provision of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and its allied tools for development, through ICT and Literacy

Learning, development of indigenous knowledge and technologies. Adult and Non-Formal Education also possesses the capability of providing widespread literacy for realising millennium development goals through its diversified literacy programme being currently perceived as a basic human right and key to lifelong learning.

The realisation of universal access to schooling and preparation for self-employment could be realised through the wider access provided by adult and non-formal education programmes embeded in basic literacy, post literacy, vocational education, democracy and good governance, open distance learning, indigenous knowledge, environmental education, women education, human sensitivity skills entrepreneurship just to mention but a few.

Having established the relevance of adult and non-formal education in the strengthening of education in Africa in the nearest future, the fact remains that the content and methods and structures of adult and non-formal education should be explored to the fullest to achieve these future policy thrusts.

If we really want to bequeath all the principles of ATES to strengthen the current educational system in Africa such as preparationism, functionalism, communalism, perennialism and holisticism that should be incorporated into the educational system in the nearest future with a view to achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

CONCLUSION

Regardless of the weaknesses of the formal system of education, there is nothing wrong in accepting some western values and education or useful aspects of the educational system of the western world. But we need to understand that the school system, if it must stay should be comprehensive, inclusive, African cultural environment-compliant and adapted to the needs, aspirations, values and occupational expectations of the local recipients of the borrowed system. This study also advocated that whatever is good in western system of education should be integrated into the existing pattern, content and methods of traditional education and Islamic and Quranic schools in Africa with a view to making us have a functional education with considerable universal access to schooling and preparation for self-employment and realisation of societal goals of education.

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