

4/11

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Abstract

This paper examines emerging issues in Nomadic Education in 21st century Nigeria. The challenges facing the education of nomads were identified, which include, among others proper integration of nomads into the mainstream society, inadequate or unqualified teachers, inadequate materials and teaching methods. Thus, the current provision of this kind of education, by Federal Government, through the National Commission for Nomadic Education is only a start but not the final panacea to the serious problems facing contemporary nomadic education in the present era of global development. There is the need, the paper argues, to improve the means of teaching and communication today. The paper agitates for equality and fair economic opportunities. It proffers solutions to the problems, which include; the suggestion that the government should assume full responsibility for making nomadic education a national issue in the 21st century Nigeria and that government should introduce a satellite tracking system to locate the nomads easily and to facilitate communication with them both within and outside our national borders.

Introduction

Nigeria, just like any other country in the world, is addressing competitive structural ideology of global competition. This is in a bid to improve economic sustainability, political and social security and the general well being of individual citizens in the country. The nation recognises the significance of education to development; thus, issues of serious concern would continue to emerge for redress. In particular, is what is happening to nomadic education in Nigeria, especially in terms of teaching.

Nomadic education is a rural education that is essentially meant to integrate the nomadic people who are living in bush encampments, moving from one place to another in search of food for themselves and their animals. Jayeola – Omoyeni (2000) posits that, teaching in the nomadic communities requires the demonstration of positive values toward personal development in the home and the society at large. He further maintains that, the methodology or pedagogy of teaching in the nomadic communities is different from the pedagogy adopted or used in the sedentary school system due to their peculiar life style. This therefore means that there is need for advancement in the pedagogy of the education of the nomads in Nigeria. We also need to further improve the value of the Nomads and the kind of education they receive in the 21st century when global socio economic and political changes are having a reaching consequences on all sectors of human life.

The domestication of animals remains a key factor in the livelihood of pastoralists the world over. It is therefore, important for government to look into how to meet the occupational and educational needs of nomads. The present education system of nomads is only adhoc and not holistic. It only engages them in horticultural aspects of agriculture. There is the need to combine horticulture and pastoralism. These aspects when combined are capable of increasing food production that will support not only dozens, but hundreds of people.

In 21st century Nigeria, the government is engaged in planning a society that everyone will work toward increased productivity and engage in sustaining societal economic values and social stability. The pastoral community in this case is transformed technologically by improving nomadic education programmes to meet the present challenges globally. That is why Macionis (2006, p. 92), opined that:

Once a society is capable of producing a material surplus, more resources than are needed to support day-to-day living-not-everyone has to secure food. Some make crafts, engage in trade, cut hair, apply tattoos, or serve as priests.

To Macionis (2006), the pastoral community is to direct its focus towards diversity in occupations and more complex features of economic productivity to meet current global economic challenges. However, this is only possible through education, which is to be provided by the governments of the various countries. The major educational problem facing the pastoralists has to do with achieving the reality of integrating the minority group into the mainstream of the larger population of the country. The education programme, meant for such category of people should have relevant immediate and long-term methodological approaches to the basic needs of the people, in such a way that it would sound and appear meaningful and satisfactory to them. It is noteworthy that in Nigeria, this has been done or provided for in the existing policy on nomadic education, but there is the need to revisit these provisions and make them capable of confronting the present global technological challenges and integration. It is a fact that, the issue of globalisation and the education of nomads have far reaching implications and challenges that call for immediate remedial action.

Generally speaking, the primary aims of education are the provision of functional literacy and an ability to contribute meaningfully to society in matters of National development. In view of the above, education is everybody's right irrespective of group, location or occupation. This means that, education of nomads is equally their rights as Nigerian citizens. Thus, the present picture in the special education provided by government for Nomads leaves much to be desired. There is the need to get them to be more involved in social, economic and political issues of national importance at the national level.

However, Nigeria in the 21st century should equalise educational life chances, upgrade and improve the learning environment of the nomads to promote conducive and productive learning. The main thrust of this paper is to highlight critical issues about the education of nomads, by improving the basis of educational provision, enhancing the chances for acquiring education, improving on the issues of stratified credentials, provide chances for employment and further improve on animal husbandry and participation of nomads to the development of the society.

Education of the Nomads in the 21st century Nigeria

In line with the provision of education for the Nomads, the National Policy on Education (FRN, -2004), states that, education is for everyone and it is the birth right of every Nigerian child. For this reason, it should be made available to all children regardless of differences in geographical location. In spite of this, Nomadic education in Nigeria is still confronted with quite a number of problems as endorsed by Tahir in Mahuta (2008) namely:

- there is dearth of teachers in terms of quality and quantity. Most of the nomadic schools have no teachers and most of those available are unqualified. There is the presence of other categories of teachers in nomadic schools other than Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) and Teachers Grade II (TC II). These teachers are, namely, Higher Islamic Studies Certificate Holders (HIS), Locally trained Arabist (LTA), First School Leaving Certificate Holders and Secondary school leavers.
- there is general lack or inadequacy of supervision and monitoring by both local and state supervisors and inspectors. This situation has to do with the lack of means of transportation for the purpose of supervision, monitoring and inspecting school performance.
- the NCNE is under funded and even the funds that are approved for it are sometimes not released in good time. Furthermore, there are some state governments who tend to refuse budgetary allocation for the programme.
- low level of enrolment in Nomadic schools.
- there is relatively high level of dropout rate of nomadic school products that passed to junior secondary schools.

413

- decaying of infrastructural facilities, inadequate instructional materials, low teacher morale and weak institutional capacity.
- lack of proper demarcation of cattle routes and grazing reserves in the country hampers the programme, because there is rampant Fulani and farmers clashes, the repercussion of which is displacing the nomadic communities and rendering them unsecured.

Nomadic Education is an issue that attracts many Nigerian sociologists of education, educationists, sociologists, anthropologists and academics around the globe. However, this type of education is not to the Fulbe (Fulani) wanderers alone, but cuts across all other ethnic groups, or people who are not having permanent homes, some of which include, the Kambari in Kebbi and Niger states and the Shuwa Arabs in Borno state. The education now given to these groups is a challenge to the National Government, this is mainly because it does not promote and preserve the culture of the people and the policy does not take into consideration the economic and social interests of the people, which would have enabled them to meet global challenges in terms of economic and political participation. That education should make them productive members of the society is not a matter of conjecture; yet, this has not been feasible.

Properly organised nomadic education should, among other things, help the nomads:

- to be assimilated or integrated into other national cultures and generally into mainstream Nigerian society.
- to realize the importance attached to economic growth, by contributing their quota to national development.
- to improve on their attitudes toward self-reliance, development and self sufficiency
- to be able to participate in politics in their localities and also acquire political awareness through education.
- to acquire land permanently for their home, herds, and also acquire permanent grazing fields.

However, the lack of proper implementation of the programme or of the structural plan of the nomadic education and its learning conditions exposes the nomads to the following:

- extreme harsh weather conditions; both heat and cold, and to date many have no permanent houses or land for building houses.
- unprotected and inadequate shelter; their entire families are endangered, by being exposed to various hazards including insect bites and pests.
- the nomads are driven from place to place; this undoubtedly causes them to be friendly as well as hostile towards people, friends and neighbouring communities.

The level of integration is very slow in nature, in view of the fact that they are reserved by nature and have conservative attitudes. Education for the nomads has gained strong support from the Federal Constitution of Nigeria, 1999. Subsequently, policies and workshops to actualise this, followed. The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) outlined the objectives of education, to cut across every child and citizen of Nigeria among which are:

- the inculcation of national consciousness and national unity
- the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of individuals and the Nigerian society.
- the training of the mind in the understanding of the world around him that is training in scientific and critical thinking.
- the acquisition of appropriate skills, and the development of mental, physical and social aptitudes and competence as tools to enable the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society.

Furthermore, because the system of nomadic education is meant to satisfy all categories of nomads by helping them to have a purposeful living, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) states that, it is the plight of the Government to make basic education more accessible. It outlines these major highlights:

- capacity building for the effective sustainability of the nomadic education programme. This will be done through community sensitisation, empowerment and increase in logistics of mobilisation (as a means of integration and assimilation).

- improve infrastructure, by means of developing the existing one, this is to increase access to educational facilities.
- teachers' allowances will be improved and research and curriculum planning will be given high premium to effectively meet the goals of nomadic education.
- there should be means for distance radio instruction for schools and the nomadic adult education scheme.

Challenges facing Nomadic Education in the 21st Century Nigeria

The major problems confronting the issue of providing a workable educational policy that will enhance proper and full integration of nomads into the mainstream of the socio-politico-economic systems in Nigeria are:

- the absence of modern methods of living, which comprises of the 21st century global technological challenges, initiating and introducing global culture through understanding of the nomads' method of social reality.
- disparities in the development of nomadic education and the regular, is that the schools in the mainstream society are fast developing than the nomadic schools.
- because the nomadic education programme is special and is for the less privileged people; the policy needs to be fully boosted, like that of other sectors of the society.
- education of the nomads should equally be integrated into the problems and challenges facing the Nigeria government in terms of providing schools for citizens. In addition, attention should be paid to the provision of adequate equipment and human resources.
- in view of the present nature of technological advancement, the education provided should utilise ICT applications and Satellite tracking network to monitor the activities, migration, problems and safety of the nomads.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In light of the above, nomadic education should not be seen as a programme which is extremely difficult to manage due to envisaged challenges during implementation. Considering the existing facts and knowledge about nomads, social reality and sense of belonging, it is of unique importance for Nigerians to be engaged in the upliftment of nomads and their integration into all aspects of national life (political, educational, social, economic etc) to enable them adequately face current challenges in whatever form they emerge. As a way forward, the following recommendations are advanced:

The government should take the challenges of nomadic education as a national responsibility of the society. Nomadic education should be integrated into the mainstream educational system. This could be done by satisfactory consideration of the culture or identity of the nomads. The integration must therefore, be fine-tuned to fit their cultural values.

The nature of nomads calls for the introduction of modern communication gargets in all respects. This is by equipping them with satellite for tracking nomadic routes and fast communication facilities to enhance contact. This can be achieved by introducing ICT based lessons in our nomadic primary schools across the country.

The status of nomadic education programme is fast dwindling; therefore, the Nigerian government should identify and note any progress and failures. All stakeholders in the education industry should be involved in this effort.

Nomadic education undoubtedly should be incorporated in the conventional Teacher Education programme to enhance teaching and learning among nomads. It should, however, be introduced to teacher-trainees in Nigeria, right from Colleges of Education so as to foster awareness, recognition, respect and also receive the consciousness of all Nigerians about the importance of their nomadic brothers and sisters.

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