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SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR NIGERIAN DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

This paper has examined specific education policies and their effect on Nigerian development. The evolution of educational policies during the colonial era with its strengths, weakness and flaws were analyzed. The attempt made to correct the anomalies resulted in the 1922 Phelps Stokes Commission and the 1925 memorandum. The authors analyzed the emerging focus on higher education policies by examining the Elliot, Ashby Commission which as a blueprint tagged Investment in Education served Nigeria for thirty years. The strategic role of the commission as pertain to funding patterns and roles of higher education and their supervisory agencies were discussed. The importance of curbing the threat posed to the nation were highlighted by the need of education of the Almajiri envisaged as necessary for national transformation. The adults as learners in a professional learning community was stressed and the Almajiri education that means allowing pupils in the northern Nigeria to acquire western and Islamic education imultaneously has become imperative.

Key Words: Ashby Commission, Longe Report Higher Education, Nomadic Education, Almajiri Education, National Development

SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND THEIR IMPORTANCE ON NIGERIAN DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Educational policies have crucial role to play in national development of a nation. It is through proper implementation of educational policies that the nation will harvest and harness manpower necessary for economic, social and political transformation of the polity. Hence, this paper primarily examine the development and evolution of educational policies in the colonial era. The role of the Phelps Stokes Commission, the 1925 memorandum were examine. Furthermore, the Walter Elliot, Asquith Commission, and Ashby Commission were prelude or to the need to cater for the higher level manpower need of a nation on the verge of independence. The role of the Ashby Commission report known as Investment in Education brought into focus the strategic importance of university education for economic development. It was the blueprint for higher education policies until the emergence of the Longe report of 1990. Hence the Ashby Report of 1960 served Nigeria for thirty years. The Longe commission re-examined the development and role of higher education in Nigeria, funding and suggested strategies for effective coordination among the supervising agencies, the National Universities Commission (NUC), National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) and National Board for Technical Education (NBTE). The Longe Commission however did not recommend that polytechnics in Nigeria should award degree in line with the trends in some countries.

The Phelps Stokes Commission Report of 1922

The education objectives of the schools owned by the Christian missions were geared towards producing teachers, traders, clerks and interpreters. These groups were produced fundamentally to serve the needs of the colonial administration, the various Christian missionaries and European firms like John Holt, United African Company and Elder Dempster Shipping Company. Indeed the primary objective of education was, not to bring in the much desired change in Africa and Nigeria in particular, but to serve the economic needs of the colonial administration.

The Phelps Stokes Commission was financed by an American voluntary philanthropic organisation established in 1911 by Miss Caroline Phelps Stokes, with the goal of enhancing the education of Negroes in both Africa and the United States of America. The commission was under the chairmanship of Jesse Jones and other members included Dr. James Aggrey, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Wilkey, S.A. Hollenbeck and Lee A. Roy.

The Phelps Stokes Commission report had earlier maintained that the education offered had no influence in the society. This was a favourable development for African education for the first time, the Christian Missionaries realized that the culture and religion of the people were essential elements in their educational development. It revealed to the government their lackadaisical attitude towards their subjects in their colonies.

The Phelps Stokes Commission arrived in Nigeria on the 10th of November, 1917 and visited various parts of the country. The report of the commission was a very vital educational

document which created an important impact in Africa. It bitterly attacked the colonial administrations for their laissez faire attitude towards education in Africa and made significant recommendations on how to improve education for Africans. Promptly a report was issued as follows:

- (1) The record of the British colonial government in Africa is a mixture of the good and bad, the effective and the ineffective the wise and the unwise.
- (2) Although the educational facilities in Africa were largely credited to the mission and although a great service has been rendered by them, many of the missions did not realize the full Significance to Africans.
- (3) The adaptation of education to the needs of the people was advocated by the commission.
- (4) Many of the failures of educational systems in the past were due to lack of organisation and supervision. Governments and missions in Africa failed to apply sound principles of administration to their educational work.
- (5) The education of the masses and native leadership has been neglected
- (6) There was an obvious lack of cooperation among the three - groups representing European and American civilization, government officials, missionaries and colonial officials.

The Phelps Stokes Commission report had early showed that the education offered had no impact in the African society. This was a favourable development for African education. For the first time Christian Missionaries started

regard the culture and religion of the people as vital component in their educational development. It brought home to the colonial government their lackadaisical attitude towards education of their subjects in their colonies.

The 1925 Memorandum

The Phelps Stokes report on West Africa had their effect in London. In November 1923, the colonial government appointed an advisory committee on native education in tropical areas to advise the secretary of state for the colonies on matter of native education and to help him in ameliorating the progress of education in British tropical Africa. The Committee included veteran missionary leaders as well as representatives of the various voluntary organisations. Under the name of advisory committee on education for the colonies, this committee produced in March 1925, a memorandum which highlight the principles that have helped to guide British educational policy in Africa during the colonial era. The principles were stated succinctly by Adesina (1988:23) as:

1. Government themselves should control educational policy but they will cooperate with other educational agencies. Each territory should have an educational advisory board on which all educational interest should be represented.
2. Education should be adapted to the mentality, aptitudes, occupations and traditions of the various people conserving as far as possible all sound and health elements in the fabric of their social life.
3. The education service must be made to attract the most brilliant individuals from England, whether for permanent or temporary appointment.

4. Grants should be given to assist voluntary schools which satisfy the requirements.
5. African languages as well as English should be used in education; the content and method of teaching in all subjects should be adapted to the conditions of the Africa.
6. African teaching staff must be adequate in number, in qualifications and in character and should include women.
7. Technical industrial training is best given in a system of apprenticeship in government workshops and department.
8. A thorough system of inspection and supervision of school was essential.
9. A complete education system should include primary, secondary education system should include primary; secondary education of different types; technical and vocation schools and some institutions some of which may hereafter reach university rank for such subjects as teacher education, medicine, agriculture and adult education.

According to Taiwo (1980) the goals of the commission were,

- (1) To enquire as to the educational work being done at present in each area to be studied.
- (2) To investigate the educational needs of the people in the light of the religious, social and economic conditions.
- (3) To ascertain to what extent these needs are being met.
- (4) To report fully the result of the investigation.

The Asquith Commission and Higher Education Development:

The Asquith and Elliot Commissions ushered in the era of university education development. It was the beginning of establishing university as vital component of economic development. The Asquith Commission addressed the sensitive issue of university funding, inter-University council, academic programmes, entrance qualifications, local university affiliation with foreign universities and financial assistance for indigent students. The recommendations of the Asquith Commission were diverse. The most significant recommendations according to Taiwo (1980:89) were:

- (i) Universities should be established as soon as possible in areas not served by any existing university, the first step being the creation of university colleges.
- (ii) The training of teachers for secondary school must take place among the vocational subjects.
- (iii) As a minimum, facilities should be provided for some in the faculty of science and for more professional subjects, keeping a balance between the arts and the science subjects and professional subjects.
- (iv) The universities should be entirely residential and open to men and women of all classes.
- (v) The provision of staff should be adequate in number and experience and that the conditions of service should be such as to enable members to maintain contact with intellectual and academic life in the outside world.
- (vi) Research is an essential part of life of a university
- (vii) An inter-university council for education in the colonies should be created.
- (viii) Colonial universities should be autonomous in the same

sense as universities in the United Kingdom

- (ix) For a start the colonial colleges should enter into a special relationship with university of London under which their students may be awarded the degree of that university.
- (x) In order to render advice on the allocation of funds from the United Kingdom government, a colonial University Grants Advisory Committee should be created.

The Elliot commission

The establishment of the Elliot Commission brought in a new epoch in the development of higher education in West Africa. The leader of the Elliot Commission was Sir Walter Elliot and other members included Rev. I. O. Ransome-Kuti of Nigeria, Dr. K.A. Korsah of Gold Coast, Dr. E.H. Taylor Cummings, Creech Jones, J., Huxley, M. Read, G.E. Sinclair, Dr. Channon and Dr. Duff. The commission was concerned with the development of higher education in West Africa. The commission recommended the establishment of a university urgently but the primary conflict was how many universities were to be established and where. This brought about a rift in the decisions to be taken by the commission. It led to the submission of majority and minority reports.

The majority report led by the chairman (Elliot) and three Africans suggested that university colleges be established in Nigeria, Gold Coast and a reorganisation be made in Fourah Bay Colleges in Sierra Leone. This majority mirrored the opinion of the Conservative Party that formed the government in Britain; while the minority report represented the opinion of the Labour party led by Creech Jones.

The minority report recommended the establishment of one university college at Ibadan, Nigeria, to be known as the West African University College and territorial college for the three colonies. In July 1945, the Labour Party defeated the Conservative Party at the British general election. Clement Attlee the new prime minister from Labour Party formed the new, government which replaced that of Churchill of the Conservative party.

Creech Jones, the leader of the minority report (Labour View) was appointed the secretary of states for the colonies. Fafunwa (1974) pointed out how Creech Jones unceremoniously reversed his predecessor's decision by rejecting the majority report and accepted the minority report. This decision led to agitations in the colonies and later the majority report was accepted to check the protest. It was the implementation of this report that transferred the assets of Yaba Higher College to Ibadan as a University College and the upgrading of Achimota and Fourah Bay Colleges to full-fledged University Colleges.

The Ashby Commission

Nigerian higher education reached the zenith in its history when in April 1959, the Federal government appointed a commission to conduct an investigation into Nigeria's needs in the area of post-secondary school certificate and higher education over the next twenty years. The commission, which was known as the Ashby Commission had Sir Eric Ashby as the chairman and members included Professor K.O. Dike, R.S. Gustavson, Professor H.W. Hannah, Sir Kashim Ibrahim, F. Keppel, J.P. Lockwood, Sanya Onabamiro and G.E. Watts. In

addition the services of Frederick Harbison the manpower specialist from Princeton University was retained to study the high level manpower needs for Nigeria's future.

The commission known as the investment in education recommended educational pyramid for the Eastern and the Western Regions in the ratio of 1,000 intake into the primary schools, with: 70 students admitted into the secondary schools and 16 candidates admitted into the higher education institutions, from the 16 of which the intake into the universities should be five to six. For the Northern Region the educational pyramid was quite different. The ratio recommended by the commission was 1,000 intake into the primary schools, with only 25 students admitted into the secondary schools.

From the 25 students, seven were expected to gain admission into tertiary institutions with only two or three being admitted into the universities.

Teacher Education and university Development

With regard to teacher training the goal was that by 1970, in one staff out of 15 teachers in the primary schools, one among them must be a Grade 1 teacher. Pertaining to teachers in the secondary schools, the target was that half of the teachers should be graduate teachers, while Grade 1 teachers would constitute the other half. For churning out graduate teachers the commission advocated the widening of the usually cumbersome method of acquiring a degree and post-graduate diploma in education. According to Fafunwa (1974) a degree B.A. (Education) was structured to offer content and method in one or two teaching subjects.

Concerning University Education the Ashby Report Recommended

- (i) That the Federal Government should offer support to the development of the University of Nigeria Nsukka envisaged in 1955 and opened for academic activities a few weeks before the commission released its report in 1960.
- (ii) In addition that a university should be established in the North, using the premises of the Nigerian College of Arts and Science, Zaria.
- (iii) Furthermore, the Commission recommended the establishment of University of Lagos with day and evening degree programme in Commerce, Business Administration, Economics and Law.
- (iv) University College Ibadan should become a fully autonomous university and change its literary conservative curriculum.
- (v) All the universities in Nigeria should be national in their orientation. Each was supposed to admit students in academic courses like Medicine, Law, Commerce and Agriculture and Engineering.

Furthermore, all the universities were required to have B.A. (Education) degree programme and a National universities Commission was set up to preside over the affairs of the universities as it pertains to finance, staff development and academic programmes.

Pertaining to the Ashby Report plan for four universities the government accepted a minority report submitted by the Western Region, the Minister. of education, a member of the

commission argued that four universities was insufficient for the economic needs of Nigeria. The Federal Government decided to recognize five universities, Ife, Ibadan, Lagos, Nsukka and Zaria.

It is significant to note that the greatest expansion in higher education development in Nigeria took place during the era of 1960- 1980. In spite of the weaknesses and the lopsidedness of the membership of the commission and flaws in its projection, the Ashby report was a master blue print for higher education for many years in the country.

The Longe Commission Report on Review of Higher Education

Since the Ashby Commission Report of 1960, referred to as investment in education, there had not been a fundamental review of the development of higher education" until 1990. On 5th December 1990 the Head of State General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida appointed a committee, to examine higher education development in Nigeria. The chairman of the commission was Gray Longe and other members of the commission included O. O. Akinkugbe, Abdullharnid Hassan, James Kolo, O. O. Ladipo, R.O. Ohuche, I.A .. Akinjogbin, Mark Odu, Flora Nwapa Nwakuhe, Rex Akpofure, A.R. Augi, Otis' Anyaeji, V. N. Egungwu, C.I.O. Olaniyan, N.E. Obioha, Clara Osinulu, O.O. Umoh, N.O. Nsefik, E. O. Olurin, Yusuf Aboki, and E. J. Akpan, the registrar of the university of Calabar was appointed the secretary. The membership in the commission represented diverse interests and professional groups like the Nigerian Medical Association, Nigerian Bar Association, Academy of Science, Education, Nigerian Society of Engineers

and Nigerian Union of Teachers.

The terms of reference of the commission were extensive and embracing. According to the Longe Report (1992:3) the terms of reference were:

- (i) Re-examine the development and role of higher education in a developing country such as Nigeria.
 - (ii) Re-examine the development and role of higher education in a developing country such as Nigeria
 - (iii) Determine the middle and higher level manpower supply and demand of the country and advise in the area of under or over utilization.
 - (iv) Examine the availability and adequacy of academic staff in higher education and advise on training for teachers in higher education institutions.
 - (v) Investigate the nature, sources and criteria for funding in higher educational institutions with a view to improving the institution and guaranteeing steady source of funds for optimal functioning of these institutions.
 - (vi) Suggest the, mechanism and forum for effective coordination among the supervising agencies:
 - (a) National Universities Commission (NUC)
 - (b) National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE)
 - (c) National Board for Technical. Education (NBTE)
 - (vii) Review the general conditions of staff in post-secondary and higher educational institutions such as salaries, pensions, and retirement benefits, housing loans etc.
- The Committee had nine months of extensive consultations with important educationists, manpower

specialists, whose wealth of experience the commission greatly benefited from. After visiting foreign countries like United States of American, Japan, United. Kingdom and Egypt, submitted the following recommendations:

- (i) The university as the apex of the higher education should endeavour to offer a leadership role in the nation. University education should not be a means of earning a living, but provide individuals with the skills to be innovative, creative and self-reliant.
- (ii) Polytechnics should-endeavour to channel their resources on the training of middle level manpower -(technicians and technologists) for direct employment in industry as a support for high level manpower. The fact that some polytechnics in some countries award degrees is not a sufficient reason for reviewing programmes available in the polytechnics in Nigeria.
- (iii) Universities of Technology with their objectives and goals are important for the rapid technological and industrial development. The commission emphasized the need for the universities of technology to be well-equipped in order to be relevant to industry and the needs of the economy. It also argues for the need for closer cooperation between the universities of technology and polytechnics in the use of available equipments.

According to Decree No.3 of 1989, functions of the National Commission for Colleges of Education, were:

- (1) advise the Federal Military Government through the minister and coordinate all aspects of teacher education falling outside the universities and polytechnics;

- (2) make recommendations on the national policy necessary for the full development of teacher education and the training of teachers;
- (3) lay down minimum standards for all programmes of teacher education and accredit their certificates and other academic awards after obtaining thereof prior approval of the minister;
- (4) approve guidelines, setting out criteria for accreditation of all colleges of education in Nigeria;
- (5) determine after consultation with the National Manpower Board and other bodies considered appropriate the qualified teachers, the needs of the country for the purpose of planning, training facilities and in particular, prepare periodic master plans for the balanced and coordinated development of colleges of education;
- (6) inquire into and advise the Federal Military Government on the financial needs, both recurrent and capital of colleges of education to enable them meet the objectives of producing the trained qualified teachers for the country;
- (7) receive block grants from the Federal Military government and allocate them to colleges of education in accordance with formular laid down, from time to time, by the national council of state.

Nomadic Education Policies

The Fuibe cattle rearers commonly called the Mbororo inhabit African continent in countries Mauritania, Burundi and Nigeria. They are exposed to the vagaries of harsh weather, ice health, natural disasters and exhibit high level of commitment

to the welfare of their cattles (herds). Bulk of the protein consumed in Nigeria are contributed by the nomadic cattle rearers.

Nomadic education is the educational provide provisions made available to the nomads, as the Nigerian constitution and the UBE laws of 2004 emphasize every Nigerian child has the right to free and compulsory education.

The Concept: Nomadic Education

Nomadic education is a well articulated education programme fashioned to cater for the social, political and economic development of all groups without permanent abode. It also means education for itinerant individuals who move about with sheep, goats and herds (cows). Many groups in Africa are hence nomads and include Masai (Kenya) the Shuwa Arabs, Tuaregs, the A-Zhenawa in Somalia. In addition to the Fuibe, other groups like migrant fishermen in Riverine areas of Nigeria are classified as nomads. This classification was based on the fact that as itinerant fishermen their ecological and economic disadvantages have made them vulnerable and educationally disadvantaged.

Nigeria is not the first country to contemplate education for its nomads. Many countries in the world have conceptualize nomadic education for its itinerant citizens. Such countries in the world like Britain have special integrated education programme and curriculum for the Gypsies and Tinkers, the Aborigines of Australia, Masai in Kenya, the migrant workers in the U.S.A. and the Karamajoro in Uganda (Aminu, 1986).

The success of the nomadic education should hinge on enhancing their welfare, their health and that of their cows. Its

curriculum should emanate from their needs, culture, ethics and values of their society. Reading and writing is an addendum, necessary realizing the ultimate and the fundamental aims of the nomadic education.

According to Akinpelu (1993) nomadism refers to itinerant groups in a society with no fix or permanent abode. The three types of nomads are hunters/food gatherers, migrant fishermen and cattle rearers (herdsmen) in Nigeria six nomadic groups are:

- (i) the Fulani with population of 5.3 million.
- (ii) the shuwa with population of 1.0 million.
- (iii) the Buduman with population of 35,500
- (iv) the K'Wayam with population of 20,000
- (v) the Badawi
- (vi) the fishermen with population of 2.8 million.

The School System of the Nomads

Implementing the nomadic education involve a combination of open and distance learning. The three types of schools available are:

- (1) Regular schools are fashion out for settled groups with the assistant of conventional teachers. However, the regular curriculum and scheme may appear unfamiliar to the nomadic students.
- (2) On the site schools, this is appropriate for some nomadic individuals. The schools may be located on their movement routes. This method is appropriate for itinerant nomads.

- (3) Mobile schools: This aspect involves portable moveable classroom for the nomads in transit from one place to another for specific groups and disadvantaged groups.

Almajiri System of Educational policies

Almajiri education predominantly flourished in Northern Nigeria among the hausa-Fulani and Shuwa Arabs in the Borno State. The Almajiri education emanated in the 11th century among Borno rulers, and in the Sokoto caliphate after the Jihad.

During the pre-colonial era, Almajiri education which highlight Quranic principles were maintained exclusive by the emirs who also established elaborate network of inspectors to ensure conformity to Qurianic education. during this era the Koranic students lived in their homes with their guardians.

During the colonial era, the enormous powers of the emirs were whittled down and the education offered by the British colonial government were indifferent to the Almajiri education and made no provision of funds for maintaining the religious schools. With the helplessness of the ruling class and lack of involvement of the government, the Mallams and their pupils resort to begging and doing menial jobs to sustain it.

The question is that since 1960 after the end of colonial rule, the Almajiri education remained the same, without changes and modifications. As AbdulQadir (2012) aptly pointed out that we could the (North) blamed the British for deliberately destroying our indigenous education system, but we could hold them responsible for our collective negligence in allowing the system to continue unabated in its present form.

It is necessary to full integrate the Almajiri education with western education with bias towards technical and vocational

education. As AbdulQadir (2012) stressed that almajiri without skills, doing menial jobs only remain untrained armie available to anybody poised to foment or cause trouble.

In a daring attempt to rehabilitate the Almajiri president Goodluck E. Jonathan introduced the concept of Almajiri education as integral aspect of formal school system. In Sokoto State, at Gagi, the establishment of Almajiri modern school system came into existence. The president promised that the Almajiri modern school system will take care of 9.5 million Almajiri children in Northern Nigeria. The essence of Almajiri education is to enhance the teaching and learning of Western education in conjunction with Islamic religions knowledge. Emphasis was laid on integration of Quranic education with western education that have practical, technical and vocational education orientation.

It has become imperative to educate the Almajiri's order to prevent them from becoming a threat to the security and corporate existence of the nation.

Conclusion

The paper has attempted to examine the various educational policies from the colonial era to the contemporary time. The vital roles which education is suppose to play for economic, political and social transformation has not been achieved due to lack of political will to implement various policies. In adequate implementation of life long education, nomadic and almajiri education were one of the factors responsible for breach of security in the nation. The Asian tigers economic prosperity is hinged on their governments commitment to education as the hub of national development and transformation.

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