

**EMMANUEL ALAYANDE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION,
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4TH Distinguished Staff Lecture

titled

**FUTURE DIRECTIONS
FOR EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

by

DR. MRS. GRACE OLUREMILEKUN AKANBI

Grade II; NCE(HISTORY/YORUBA); BA(Ed.); Med; PhD

Department of Educational Foundations,
Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo

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2 COURTESIES

The Provost,
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 The Registrar,
 The Bursar,
 The Librarian,
 Deans of Schools,
 Directors of Academic Programmes,
 Chief Lecturers,
 Heads of Departments,
 All other Academic Colleagues,
 All Administrative and Technical Staff,
 My Lords Spiritual and Temporal,
 Members of My Family: Nuclear and Extended,
 Esteemed Invited Guests,
 Great EACOED Students,
 Gentlemen of the Print and Electronic Media,
 Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

3 INTRODUCTION

I feel highly honoured and privileged when this great College, named after that educationist of repute, Emmanuel Alayande, invited me to present the 2014 Distinguished Staff Lecture the 4th of its series. I was particularly humbled as I drew inspiration from what the Bible says in I Corinthians 1: 20, 24, 25, 28 & 29:

Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has God not made foolish the wisdom of

the world? . . . but . . . Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things - and the things that are not - to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before Him. (NIV)

It is therefore my pleasure, based on the wisdom of God and not on my wisdom and strength, to present my lecture titled, "Future Directions for Education in Nigeria".

Knowledge is power and it is basically acquired through education of whatever form. Hence, to neglect education is to neglect knowledge and indirectly court destruction (Hosea 4: 6a). To everybody that is not a practising educator but shows interest in the topic of this lecture, what is paramount is the examination of the key words in the title - **future directions and education**. This topic is however, more complex than what the title may bring to mind. Therefore, whatever will be presented may not be sacrosanct. Apparently, it may be difficult to exhaust in this single lecture, all that will be necessary to evolve future directions for education in Nigeria, considering the pervasive instability in governance, educational policies, values and the society itself.

4 WHAT ARE DIRECTIONS?

Directions are instructions, particularly as to how to reach a destination. Direction, according to the *Chambers English Dictionary*, "aim at a certain point: the line or course in which anything moves or on which any point lies: guidance: command: the body of persons who guide or manage a matter . . ." (1990;400)

To talk of future directions presupposes that there were/are past directions and present directions and if the present directions are not taking the people towards the world's supposed destinations, the earlier the better to start preparing the ground for new directions so as not to get lost totally in the world of education. Unfortunately, it seems as if western education since its inception in Nigeria in 1842, has not gotten the desired directions for Nigeria, save for the colonial masters' earlier direction of making Nigerians serve and live as second class citizens in their own country, an idea which the nationalists later opposed vehemently (Amaele, 2009:43). Unfortunately, the positive impact of the opposition was not sustained due to the selfish interest of Nigeria's political leaders and even a sizeable lot of her citizenry. Okonjo-Iweala (2007:6) quoted by Sule-Kano and Edeh (2007) rightly observed that Nigeria has inherited a colonial educational system which has failed to cater adequately for the needs and aspirations of most Nigerians. This according to her is reflected in the general low quality of life in the country, the distribution of indigenous holistic system of education, culture, and civilization.

The educational system which we inherited from the colonial period is inadequate in several respects. The defects include the philosophy of education, the structure, and content of curricula at the various levels of the educational system, the objectives, and goals of education, access to education in terms of space and funding. Be that as it may, we must stop blaming the colonial masters because they have granted us independence since October 1, 1960. Unfortunately, efforts since 1960 to build the so much needed system of education have failed to lead our country to the desired destination. It is indeed worrisome that the business of education is still unstable in Nigeria. Among the factors that frustrate building a standard/stable educational system in Nigeria, according to Sule-Kano & Edeh (2007) are:

- i. lack of genuine commitment by Nigeria's rulers to the development of education;
- ii. pursuit of economic policies wholly unsuitable for sustaining a serious drive towards an advanced system of education;
- iii. dominance of colonially derived ideologies and paradigms of education;
- iv. abuse and misuse of oil wealth in the race for accumulation of wealth; and,
- v. the political disenfranchisement of the people

5 WHAT IS EDUCATION?

Education as a concept does not lend itself to a compact or simple definition that will be generally acceptable to all stakeholders in the field. This, according to Kobiowu (2012: 27), is mainly because education is relative and intimately bound to the culture of the community itself and what education means differ from one community to another. Education covers a wide scope; there are as many definitions of education as we have specialists in the field. While some scholars based their definitions on what the content of education should be, others approached their definitions from the perspective of goal or end of education. In Akinpelu's (1981:184) opinion, for a process or group of processes to qualify as educational, these criteria must be met:

- (1) A conscious effort to bring about a change in the state of mind of the recipient.
- (2) The change that is being brought about in the learner must be intentional, deliberate and directed towards a purpose.
- (3) The learner must have some knowledge and understanding, some 'cognitive perspective' of the activity.
- (4) The knowledge or skill must be transmitted in a manner that is morally and otherwise acceptable.

It is therefore pertinent at this point to examine some definitions of education by some educationists.

Sampson (1972) considered the definition of education in two senses - broad and technical. In its broad sense, education refers to any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character, or physical ability of an individual. Education in this sense does not end as we truly learn from experience throughout our lives. In its technical or formal sense, education is the process by which the society, through schools, colleges, universities and other institutions, deliberately transmits its cultural heritage - its accumulated knowledge, values and skills - from one generation to another.

Rusk and Scotland (1979: 224) declare that 'education is the laboratory in which philosophic distinctions become concrete and are tested'. Castle (1976: 1) submits that "education is what happens to us from the day we are born to the day we die". He believes "we are being educated all the time, even when we refuse to be taught...even if we think we have finished our education, even when we sleep". Looking at education in a contemporary world, Delors (1996: 14) sees it as an ongoing process of improving knowledge and skills. It is also, perhaps primarily, an exceptional means of bringing about personal development and building relationships among individuals, groups, and nations. Fafunwa (1974: 17) believes that "education is the aggregate of all the processes by which a child or young adult develops the abilities, attitudes, and other forms of behaviour which are of positive value to the society in which he lives".

Kumar and Ahmad (2012: 6) examined various definitions of education by different scholars and posited that the true definition of education should be “a purposive, conscious or unconscious, psychological, sociological, scientific and philosophical process which brings about the development of the individual to the fullest extent and also the maximum development of society in such a way that both enjoy maximum happiness and prosperity”. In short, they view education as the development of an individual according to his needs and the demands of the society of which he is an integral part. They also observed that various definitions of different educators highlight the following special features of education:

- Education is both unilateral as well as bi-polar in nature.
- It is a continuous process.
- It is knowledge or experience.
- It is the development of particular aspects of human personality or a harmonious integrated growth.
- It is conducive for the good of the individual or the welfare of the society.
- It is a liberal discipline or a vocational course.
- It is stabilizer of social order, conservator of culture, an instrument of change and social reconstruction.

The above observations are also in line with Dewey's submission quoted by Akinpelu (2005: 117), that "the heart of sociality of man is in education" He further stressed that the freedom of man lies in more education. This is why education, in the words of Akanbi, Jekayinfa and Abiolu (2013), cannot be confined to the processes of giving knowledge to children in schools. Its programme goes on from birth till death. In other words, all that we learn throughout life by various experiences and activities is education.

6 REMINISCENCES (SHOULD BE FAMILIAR BUT MAY NOT BE THE SAME)

Reminiscence of public primary schools in the 60s and early 70s would make one to ponder on what has happened to school activities and the fun enjoyed then (Akanbi, 1998b). Older scholars or the audience present here will remember the common Rediffusion Box in front of the headmaster's office, dishing out current news; the nature's corner in all the classrooms; the wooden chairs and tables with the inkwell holes properly carved out; the inkwell, the ink and the fountain pen or the stick pen that you put in the ink each time you needed to write new words and your soiled khaki uniform. What of the library usually attached to the headmaster's office; game facilities - football fields, netball court etc; the very neat classrooms with maps, charts and diagrams properly hung? The Mathematics corner where extra sums cards were kept for the brilliant students who may finish before the time allocated by the teacher cannot be forgotten. So is the English corner where exercises in grammar and new words taught during comprehension were kept.

The path to each classroom was lined with orderly arranged stones and flowers and no pupil dared to disorganise them. The "good mooorning Sir, good mooorning Ma, good mooorning friends" (good morning sir, good morning ma, good morning friends) immediately the teacher entered the

classroom after the eventful morning assembly, to be followed by certain memory verses from the bible or poems. The arts and crafts lessons were practical - weaving, clay moulding, tie and dye. The agricultural lesson involved everybody and each student had a portion on the school farm which must be cultivated, tended and harvested for sale on the market day or for consumption by all during school hours. All schools had playing grounds and 'PE' (Physical Education) lesson as it was called, involved every student and kept us fit and healthy. Teachers, and in particular the headmasters, were like 'gods' and you dared not meet them on the footpath to your classroom. Break time was heralded by the song:

Teacher jowo mo fe lo wa nkan je o (twice)
Omo oniresi ti de obe re si n ta sansan
Aduke, Asake, omo oniresi ti de
O n soju rodorodo e f'eran s'obe wa
Idowu, Alaba, omo oniresi ti de.

Meaning literally; 'Excuse me teacher, it is time for break, the food vendor is around and I cannot withstand the aroma of the stew, my classmates, the food vendor is around'. The prevailing joy during the end of the year activities was demonstrated through the opening and the closing glee by selected smart students, the farewell songs by the graduating class and the various cultural activities preceding the prize giving. Even the merriment of the period just to mention but a few made schooling worthwhile and full of fun. Although the curriculum content was not all that relevant to the needs and aspirations of the individual and the society, all of these might have made an indelible impression on the memory of many who schooled during these periods. All these have been overtaken by what?

7 CURRENT DIRECTIONS OF EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

As noted earlier, we cannot address all the areas where new directions are required in this lecture. In fact, the education sector in Nigeria today, lacks almost everything required to meet the world's typical standard (Actionaid, 2008 and Akanbi, 2010a). However, our observations and recommendations will be discussed one after the other.

7.1 ACCESS AND EQUITY

Access and equity in education denote availability of opportunity for every child to be in school at the relevant age (not minding gender or class). The National Policy on Education (2004) Section1, paragraph 5c reiterates this and states that: "Nigeria's philosophy of education is based on . . . the provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels, both inside and outside the formal school system" But the National Forum for Policy Development (NFPD) in her observation on access to education in 2007, submitted that;

- (a) At the pre-primary level, there is no government involvement in the supervision and funding of education of children aged between 2-5 years; (though it has started partially)
- (b) At the primary level, children who should be in school are about sixteen (16) million but only 1million, representing 6.25% are in school.

(c) At the secondary school level only 6.5 million (17.1%) out of the 24 million that should be in school are in school, leaving 17.5 million (72.9%) out.

(d) At the tertiary level, of the estimated total of 17.7 million only 1.5 million (8.5%) are currently enrolled as students. (Sule-Kano & Edeh: 2007)

Most non-attendeers are girls mainly in the majority-Muslim north. Of those fortunate enough to enroll, less than two-thirds complete primary school. The situation is worse at the secondary school level where fewer girls complete their Senior Secondary 3 (SS3). The boys' drop-out syndrome in the south-east, according to Aremu (2013), is a function of several factors including preference for a trade, the quest for quick money, parental decision, lack of employment opportunities, hawking/street trading, prohibitive bride price and long process of education. Also, in Eastern Nigeria, acquisition of survival skills and engagement in other activities apart from education during and immediately after the civil war, seem to have accounted for, up till now, low enrolment of boys in schools in some of the states that constitute the former Eastern Region - Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo - where the war took place. Ifedigbo (2009), Ezegwu, Ewemooje and Ayede (2011) Nzewi (2011) and Dawodu (2014) corroborated this in their various studies. The Federal Government of Nigeria also noticed this phenomenon of boys dropping out of school and that was why it introduced the Gender Education Project (GEP) to address the issue in the four states of Abia, Anambra, Imo and Oyo (FGN, 2007:44 - 45).

Ifedigbo (2009) noticed the increased pursuit of quick wealth as a factor responsible for the drop out of boys from schools in the East. In his write up "**the boys are dropping out**" he said, "a few years ago, it would have been very strange to be discussing the issue of boys dropping out of school". In his words;

There is an alarming decline in Boy Child enrollment in schools especially in eastern parts of the country to such extents that I believe it should now be the concern rather than the earlier issue of Girl Child education. Nobody seems to be asking any questions why there is an increase in the number of boys dropping out of school especially in Eastern Nigeria. ... These boys drop out not to go into apprenticeship in any trade or craft, but straight into the scramble for whatever they can grab... Ever wonder who all the army of 'Okada riders' are? Or the bus conductors and motor park touts? What of the boys who harangue you to buy their wares in the traffic? Okay, let's bring it closer home. Who are the guys robbing the buses and the banks? What is the gender of those taking people hostage?

(Source: www.social.nigeriavillagesquare.com/articles/sylva-nze-ifedigbo/the-boys-are-dropping-out.html)

This is not to say that girls are not dropping out of schools, but rather, it is to emphasise that boys dropping out of schools is a strange phenomenon. Elombah (2010) however, emphasised poverty as the most prominent factor for boys dropping out of schools especially in Abia state. He also referred to a research report by Okwo, Okeke and Ore (1999) which found that in Anambra, Enugu, Imo and Abia States, male drop-out rates are 51.5%, 56.2%, 58.0%, female drop-out rates are 46.2%, 46.0%, and 44.8% while total drop-out rates are 49.0% 51.2% and 51.2% for 1994, 1995 and 1996 respectively. UNESCO (2014: 57-59) also submitted that as the 2015 deadline for the EFA goals approaches, too many countries, including Nigeria, are far from the goal, noting that Nigeria has the world's largest number of children out of school. Its out-of-school population

grew by 42% between 1999 and 2010 and it is among the 15 countries that are likely to be off track in 2015.

The issue of access to education is a global one and many factors have been attributed to the lack of access to education by all children (Tahir, 2008). Some of such factors are economic, political, managerial and attitudinal. But the biggest factor inhibiting access to education in Nigeria in my opinion and as observed by Elombah, is poverty. Bessie Head, as quoted by Akanbi (2012a) observed that ***"Poverty has a home in Africa – like a quiet second skin. It may be the only place on earth where it is worn with unconscious dignity."*** The high level of poverty being experienced in many Nigerian homes, as submitted by Tahir, especially since early 1980s, partly compels some parents to keep their wards out of school. Since parents could not bear the cost of school fees, levies, school uniform, learning materials, they rather engage their children in economic activities. This factor also reflected in the report of UNESCO (2014: 94) when it noted that lower middle income countries with large populations also face considerable challenges. In Nigeria, according to UNESCO, rich boys already complete primary school, but it may be another three generations before poor girls do.

In the same vein, Gustafsson-Wright and Smith (2014) observed that, "despite relatively strong economic growth and a plethora of human and natural resources, most notably oil, Nigeria is currently far from reaching the 2015 United Nations deadline of ensuring that all children go to school, let alone that they learn while in school". In their record, about 42 percent, or 10.5 million, of Nigerian primary-school-age children are not in school—one of the world's largest out-of-school populations. They also noted that enrollment rates have worsened in recent years. In 1999, according to them, only 61 percent of Nigerians that should be in primary school were enrolled, and this figure had again fallen to 58 percent by 2010. Huge geographical and wealth disparities also exist. Close to 60 percent of the poorest primary-age children have never been to school, compared with just 3 percent of children from the richest households. Archer (2014) also submitted that Nigeria has the highest number of children out of school. In his words, "of the 57 million youngsters worldwide who are not receiving formal education, more than 10 million live in Nigeria – and in the current climate that number is rising.

The economic section of the United States Embassy in Nigeria (2012) also submitted that an estimated ten million out of 30 million school-aged children are not enrolled in school in Nigeria. It also noted that non-school attendance is highest among states in Northeast and Northwest zones. Seventy-two percent (72%) of primary school age children never attended school in Borno compared with less than 3% in most southern zones and 4% in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Oladunjoye and Omemu (2013) corroborate all of these by quoting a report on Education Data survey which revealed that "the rate of children who have never been to school in the north is alarming". Out of every 120 children, the report revealed that Zamfara has an average of 28 children in school, Borno State has 29, Kebbi 34, Sokoto 42 and Yobe 42.

Ojerinde (2011) and Obasanjo (2012) submitted that the problem of access to education informed the efforts by governments, the private sector and religious organizations to establish new schools and expand existing ones. But from the number of applicants who cannot be offered admission by JAMB every year, it is obvious that access is a perennial problem that afflicts all three levels of education in Nigeria. Obasanjo's administration established the National Open University of

Nigeria and approved the establishment of several private universities to address this. These efforts notwithstanding, he agreed that we have barely scratched the surface of the problem and that more hands must be on deck to improve on greater access to education, particularly at the tertiary level.

What can we derive from all the findings and submissions above? It is apparent that access and equity in education in Nigeria is still very low and we have to provide new directions. Figure 1 below shows broad data on primary school attendance in Nigeria as at 2013 and summarises the discussion here.

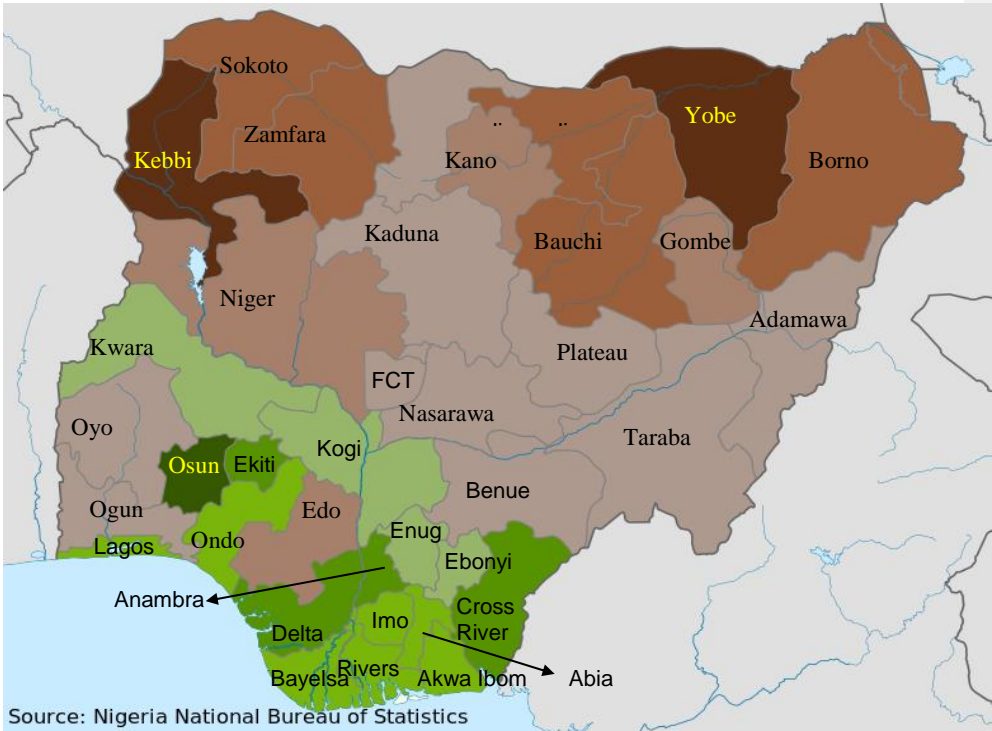


Figure 1: Nigeria Primary School Enrolment by state in 2013.

Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education-in-Nigeria

- 70 % - 80 % - Osun
- 60 % - 70 % - Anambra, Delta, Ekiti, Cross River
- 50 % - 60 % - Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Lagos, Ondo, Rivers
- 40 % - 50 % - Ebonyi, Enugu, Kogi, Kwara
- 30 % - 40 % - Adamawa, Benue, FCT, Kaduna, Katsina, Nassarawa, Ogun, Oyo, Plateau,

	Taraba
20 % - 30 %	- Kano, Niger, Gombe,
10 % - 20 %	- Bauchi, Borno, Jigawa, Sokoto, Zamfara,
< 10%	- Kebbi, Yobe

Some of the states that are considered educationally less developed or disadvantaged include Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Kogi, Niger, Plateau and Yobe (www.nairaland.com/745172/list-elds-nigeria). The percentage attendance as shown above indicates that the majority of these states in Northern Nigeria have attendance below 40%. Unfortunately, however, it is on most of these states that the Boko Haram has focused for school attacks.

In line with the national development objectives, the Transformation Agenda of President Goodluck Jonathan identifies the strategic goals of Nigerian education as access and quality. Wike (2014: 7) submitted that Federal Government programmes in promoting access are aimed at addressing:

- ✓ The high number of out-of-school children which is estimated at over 10 million
- ✓ The challenge of low enrolment of girls in schools
- ✓ Drop-out of boys from school
- ✓ High rate of adult and youth illiteracy
- ✓ Low carrying capacity of tertiary institutions

But the question is, are we really feeling this transformation especially in the rural areas?

In a public presentation by the Honourable Minister of State for Education on July 3, 2014 titled *"Education Sector Transformation under President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's Administration"*, the following enrolment figures were given for some levels of education as summarised in Table 1. But none of the tables presented for each level showed the percentage of the enrolment for the existing population for each level. This made it difficult to determine whether the access met the Education for All (EFA) target or not.

Table 1

Summary of Total Enrolment in some Educational Levels in Nigeria

Level of Education	Years and Enrolment Figure			
	2010	2011	2012	2013
Early Childhood		2,183,918	2,297,547	2,994,734
Primary School		22,125,417	23,476,939	24,278,332
Junior Sec. School		4,359,629	4,470,037	4,782,622
Senior Sec. School	4,046,437	Not Included	Not Included	Not Included
Polytechnics & Monotechnics	338,040	350,439	363,322	376,710
Colleges of Education		318,887	319,768	330,405
Universities	842,219	957,878	1,011,382	1,082,179
Adult Education	622,891	792,146	1,185,101	1,082,179

Source: Education Sector Transformation under President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's Administration

What comes to mind to round off this point is; where are all these children who are not in school and what are they doing? The answer is not far-fetched, we see them on daily basis.

7.2 QUALITY

Quality is what makes something what it is, especially as it pertains to standard and excellence. Tahir (2008), quoting Hawes and Stephenson (1991:224), defined quality to mean three interconnected factors: "efficiency (e.g. better use of available resources); relevance (e.g. to needs and contexts); and something more (e.g. to journey a little further than mere efficiency and relevance)". The quality of education was at the heart of the goals set at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, in 2000 (EFA Goal 6). Until recently, however, according to UNESCO (2014: 85), international attention has tended to focus on universal primary education, which is also the second Millennium Development Goal (MDG). A shift in emphasis is now discernible towards quality and learning, which are likely to be more central to the post-2015 global framework. Such a shift, as observed by UNESCO, is vital to improve education opportunities for the 250 million children who have not had the chance to learn the basics, even though 130 million of them have spent at least four years in school. More importantly, basic education, especially at the primary school level could be likened to this 'ketekete' (donkey) in Figure 2 - a beast of burden on which the education system is built.



Figure 2: Ketekete (just like the primary school) Akanbi (2012)

The quality of education, as we all know, will determine to a very large extent its usefulness to the individual and the society at large. Unfortunately, the quality of education in Nigeria today cannot compare favourably with what obtains globally. This is due to poorly trained teachers, scarcity of teaching materials, inadequate supervision of schools, very poor environment, poor remuneration of teachers leading to poor motivation and low morale, inflexible curricula, inadequacy of schools themselves, teacher/pupil ratio, among others. Discussing the issue of quality of education in Nigeria, Gustafsson-Wright and Smith (2014) observe that children who do manage to get to school are struggling to learn basic literacy and numeracy skills. They further state that around 44

percent of children nationally—and more than two-thirds in the north—who have completed sixth grade cannot read a full sentence. Individualising instruction has become practically impossible in a class of 145 pupils or more to a teacher. In Northern Nigeria, according to Elombah (2010), pupils still study under trees, and I want to add that even in Southern Nigeria as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3: Pupils in a public secondary school in Western Nigeria

Teachers, in his words, are ill-trained and poorly paid. A primary school in Kaduna State (Rafin-Pa) he observed, has 300 pupils who share two classes. A chalk line on the floor serves as demarcation for the different classes. It has two teachers, including the headmaster. Akanbi (2013: 87), sourcing from *The Punch*, compared a public primary school situation in Nigeria and that of United Kingdom as presented below. I should think that the pictures are clear enough for a discernible educationist.



Figure 4: Pupils in a public primary school in Nigeria (Sunday Punch 2/12/12, p. 1).



Figure 5: Pupils in a public primary school in Britain (Sunday Punch 2/12/12 p.1)

The quality situation is not better at the secondary school level. Unfortunately, students are not committed to their studies; it is now common to see students roaming the streets or playing snookers during school hours. Students are seen going to the school with only one exercise book and combs in their pockets, hardly ready to learn anything. What quality or standard do you expect when a graduate of Biology is teaching English language or graduate of Physical and Health

Education teaching Mathematics? Unfortunately, we admit these students into our various colleges of education and polytechnics, patching them up till they struggle to enter the university through part time or sandwich programmes.

A primary purpose of university education, according to Okebukola (2011), is the production of quality high-level manpower to propel national development. But from the mid 1980s, there has been a steady decline in the standard of education and quality of graduates, to the extent that both employers of labour and the international community have increasingly expressed concern and disappointment about the quality of university graduates. This has led to the foreign universities running Nigerian university graduates through remedial courses before pursuing their graduate studies. The employers of labour are also talking about the dismal performance and lack of knowledge and critical skills by the graduates.

Distinguished scholars, I would also want to share my experiences both at undergraduate and post-graduate levels. My first lecture with any group of students always starts with dictation of ten commonly used words in English, in form of a class test, which will eventually end up being used as attendance for that particular lecture. This is just to test the ability of the students. But it may interest you to know that I have never recorded 100% score, the highest has been 90% on two occasions only, since 1997 (I am sure I have witnesses here). It may also be difficult to achieve quality when the teacher/pupil ratio is not adhered to at any level. UNESCO's (2014:208) observation that "poor quality education leaves a legacy of illiteracy" is a food for thought. Therefore, "quality must be made a strategic objective in education plans". It is a common feature to see a lawyer or an engineer being appointed as the Commissioner or Minister for Education in Nigeria. This has never helped in the quality and management of education. Is it because we do not have enough qualified professionals in the field of education? Politics!

7.3 RELEVANCE

No sane person will embark on any irrelevant venture either for himself or for another person. Education, whether formal or in whatever form, should be relevant to the needs and aspirations of the individuals and the society at large. At a lecture delivered at the graduation ceremonies of University of Nigeria, Nsuka, Obasanjo (2012: 3) admitted that for Nigerian education to become more relevant to our development process, it must seek to meet the following objectives:

- a. It must train the individual for a better appreciation of his own cultural traditions whilst at the same time equipping him with the ability to absorb new ideas, new information and new data for resolving the constantly changing problems of his environment;*
- b. it must train the individual to relate to and interact meaningfully with other individuals in the society and to appreciate the importance of effective organization for human progress;*
- c. it must develop the creative ability of individuals especially in the cultural and technological realms;*
- d. it must foster in the individual those values which make for good citizenship, such as honesty, selflessness, tolerance, dedication, hard work and personal integrity, all of which provide the rich soil from which good leadership is spawned; and*

e. it must promote the culture of productivity by enabling every individual to discover the creative genius in him and apply it to the improvement of the existing skill and technique of performing specific tasks thereby increasing the efficiency of his personal societal efforts.

There is the belief that the school is a better place to educate people about how things should be done without infringing on other peoples' rights in the society and to live a life of orderliness. It is also believed that relevant skills are imparted into learners to make them useful members of the society. So, what do you say when you see a mechanical engineer fight a road-side mechanic over the repair of his vehicle or a computer science graduate who cannot mention what the icons on the computer screen stand for? Unfortunately, it seems education has failed the relevance test and we have also failed to make education useful. Several people have passed through the school without allowing the school to pass through them. Can we then ask this question: **Is it our education that has failed us or we have failed our education?** What has Citizenship Education and Civics as college or school subjects achieved? It is sad enough for a Nigerian to have suggested what was published in a national newspaper article titled: **“Make Begging Plate part of Police Uniform”** (Punch February 11, 2007, p.34). Are the Police not educated? Have they not passed through schools? What value has the educational system and policies entrenched in them? These are some of the pertinent questions on the relevance of education in entrenching the societal values. What about teachers of teachers - lecturers in institutions of higher learning?

Victimising students, unnecessary delay of students' results, exploiting students, changing scores to favour some students, colluding with students in the examination hall. Can we say these sets of people do not know that what they are doing is bad? What of highly 'educated' civil servants that will treat a file for a whole year and eventually the file will get 'lost' if the owner is not 'cooperating'? Carrying sacrifices to junctions is a common scene even in institutions of higher learning nowadays. What then is the relevance and value of education? Can we say that our education has achieved any of the objectives identified by Obasanjo? This will lead us to another important issue: value degeneration.

7.4 DEGENERATION OF SOCIETAL VALUES

As rightly put in the National Policy on Education (2004) Section 1 paragraph 8; *“...the quality of instruction at all levels has to be oriented towards inculcating the following values:*

- a. respect for the worth and dignity of the individual;*
- b. faith in man's ability to make rational decisions;*
- c. moral and spiritual values in inter-personal and human relations;*
- d. shared responsibility for the common good of society;*
- e. promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological development of all children;*
- f. acquisition of competencies necessary for self-reliance.*

And the National educational aims and objectives to which the philosophy is linked are therefore:

- 1. the inculcation of national consciousness and national unity;*
- 2. the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society.*
- 3. the training of the mind in the understanding of the world around; and*

4. *the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competences both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society.*

Also, the National Policy on Education (2013) Section 1 paragraph 6a identifies as one of the goals of education as the "development of the individual into a morally sound, patriotic and effective citizen"

But looking at the situation in Nigeria, one may be tempted to say that education has not entrenched the expected values in the citizenry. The level of corruption and indiscipline is admittedly alarming, given the incidents of examination malpractice, drug abuse and drug trafficking, armed robbery, certificate racketeering, get-rich-quick syndrome and laziness at work. In fact, the few individuals who attempt to do things right are seen as oddity.

To put the Nigerian society in the right perspective of the values, according to Niyi (1998), it is pertinent to highlight some of the qualities, attitudes and virtues which citizens of a country are expected to exhibit if the nation as well as the citizens within it are to survive and progress. Such qualities include honesty, tolerance and cooperation; national consciousness, patriotism, obedience to the laws (including payment of taxes in particular); consciousness of, and respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms; justice and fair play in inter-group activities, among others. But it seems the present directions for education and schooling in Nigeria have not been effective in entrenching these values. How then can these values be spelt out in the educational policy so that it will be entrenched in the educational process and be internalized by the citizens?

Important values that cannot be overemphasized are hard work, dignity of labour, honesty and functionalism. Akanbi (2010a) observes that all these were still part of education in the early 1960s and 1970s. The traditional ‘**gardening**’ as a subject in the olden days comes to mind as the song that usually heralded the beginning of the lesson on school farms then was; ***Ise agbe nise ile wa, eni ko sise a ma jale, iwe kiko lai si oko ati ada, koi pe o koi pe o.*** (Meaning literally that our traditional occupation is farming, if you refused farming, you will soon become a thief; education without hoe and cutlass is incomplete education). The song constantly reminded us of the importance of farming. Each pupil then had his/her portion on the farmland, which he/she tended with passion. Unfortunately, Agriculture which is supposed to be the major subject relevant to our culture and needs, is now an elective subject in the secondary school syllabus (NPE, p.16). Similarly, university graduates with the B.Sc. Agric. are looking for jobs in banks, petroleum companies and other government establishments. For subjects like Arts and Crafts, children nowadays pay ten Naira (₦10) or twenty naira (₦20) to their class teachers or headteachers to represent its teaching in practical terms.

Schools, colleges and universities have appropriate mottos that should make their students internalize some values. For instance, the following institutions of higher learning have as their respective mottos stated thus; Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife “**For Learning and Culture**”, Osun State College of Education, Ila Orangun - “**For Academic and Moral Excellence**”; the Wesley College, Ibadan- “**Bi eni ti n se Iranse**” (like a servant); and Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo – “**Knowledge, Truth and Service**” to mention but a few. But how much of the culture, for instance, is OAU currently instilling in students with unstable academic calendar and incessant strike actions? How many Nigerian youths want to serve like servants? Rather they want to be rich without working hard. Truth and service are no longer valued even after spending several years in institutions of learning. The words of Uhara (2013) “Be the change you want to see” is a food for thought.

7.5 CURRICULUM

Curriculum is vital in achieving the goals of education at any level. Curriculum content must be tailored to meet the needs of the learner and the community in which he or she lives. Inappropriate and irrelevant curriculum will hinder, to a very large extent, goal achievement. Flexibility is the hallmark of any curriculum but in most of our schools, colleges and universities there seems to be no room for flexibility. Whatever is in the curriculum must be taught whether they are relevant or not. This is in line with Elombah's (2010) submission that; the curriculum of the educational institutions in Nigeria is out of sync with the needs of the Business Community of the 21st century. Fortunately, however, the Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (NERDC), on August 11, 2014, in Abuja launched the revised nine-year Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) with new subjects added to the curriculum.

The BEC currently comprises 20 subjects, including new subjects such as Basic Science, Basic Technology and Computer Studies/IT. The implementation of the revised subjects will commence in September, 2014. Speaking at the event, the Executive Secretary, NERDC, Godswill Obioma, said that the school curriculum was revised to improve the quality of education in Nigeria. He stated that on assessment of the previous curriculum, it was noted that there was an overload of subjects offered by pupils and students. Hence, the Federal Government ordered NERDC to revise the nine-year BEC with the aim of reducing the number of subjects. After the assessment, NERDC discovered that the subjects offered were many and the issue was presented at the Presidential Summit on Restoration, Reclamation and Sustenance of the quality of Education in Nigeria. NERDC was therefore directed by the Federal Government to revise the nine-year BEC and reduce its subjects to between six and 13, in line with the global best practices, taking into account local needs.

Obioma noted that for quality education to be achieved, the school curriculum should be regularly reviewed, enriched and updated in order to support development. The revised BEC comprises the following subjects:

1. English Studies
2. Mathematics
3. Cultural and Creative Arts (CCA)
4. One Nigerian Language
5. Basic Science and Technology (BST)
 - i. Basic Science
 - ii. Basic Technology
 - iii. Physical & Health
 - iv. Information Technology
6. Pre- Vocational Studies, PVS – to be introduced from Primary 4
 - i. Home Economics
 - ii. Agriculture
7. Religion and National Values, RNV
 - i. Christian Religious Studies
 - ii. Islamic Studies,
 - iii. Social Studies,
 - iv. Civic Education
 - v. Security Education

8. French – to be introduced from Primary 4
9. Business Studies/Entrepreneurship, BSE – to be introduced in JSS1
10. Arabic (Optional)

Primary 1-3 would offer a minimum of six and a maximum of seven subjects with Arabic, optional but compulsory for those taking Islamic Studies from Primary 1-6 and JSS 1-3. Primary 4-6 will offer a minimum of eight and a maximum of nine subjects while JSS 1-3, a minimum of nine subjects and a maximum of 10 subjects.

(Source: *an edited email sent to me by a desk officer at the Federal Ministry of Education, Abuja*).

At this juncture, I want us to examine the elements of a "twenty-first century responsive curriculum" which is also a "tripartite curriculum" as presented by Obanya (2011a:10), because improving the quality of education is more than mere adding more subjects to the curriculum. Does the new curriculum possess the necessary elements? Will it be implemented to the letter, considering the myriads of issues in the education sector?

Table 2

Elements of a Tripartite Curriculum

HARD SKILLS	SOFT SKILLS	GO-GETTING SKILLS
Cognitive Intelligence	Emotional Intelligence	Imaginative Intelligence
Self expression skills (oral, written, etc)	Character formation skills. (for strengthening the total person)	Creative thinking skills (thinking out of the box)
Logical Reasoning Skills (for analysis and problem solving)	Intra-personal Skills (for the individual to understand his/her personal strengths and weaknesses, as well as possibilities/potentialities)	Ideational fluency skills (proclivity in generating novel ideas)
Design/Manipulative Skills (for purely technical reasoning and action)	Lifelong learning Skills (Knowledge-seeking skills)	Experiential learning skills (making the best use of the lessons of experience; ever working on new ideas)
Computational Skills (for quantitative reasoning)	Inter-personal skills (for understanding and 'teaming' with others)	Opportunity-grabbing skills (perceptivity in making the best of opportunities)
Conceptual Skills (for generating ideas and translating them into 'action maps')	Perseverance Skills (for seeing ideas and projects through to fruition)	Idea-to-product skills (Ease and passion for turning ideas into products and services skills, ability to apply head-hands-heart

In Obanya's words:

The content of the table does not mean an abandonment of school subjects as we know them today. Instead, the table draws attention to the real meaning of

curriculum as 'educational-down-to-earthiness' – practical activities intended to transform learners through Education. Thus, school subjects will not be studied as mere content, but as methodologies for developing the 'three intelligences' (Cognitive, Emotional and Imaginative), in the process inculcating three broad types of skill sets—hard skills, soft skills, go-getting skills.(page 10)

Mr. Provost Sir, distinguished scholars, ladies and gentlemen, how do we, educationists, make the new curriculum work? Definitely we need new directions so that it will not end up like the previous ones.

7.6 PROLIFERATION OF SUB-STANDARD SCHOOLS IN NIGERIA

From the trend of events in the introduction and development of western education, some facts could be established:

- (1) right from the introduction of western education to its present level of development, education has become both public and private enterprise.
- (2) the huge investment involved in education has compelled the government to continue to allow private participation in education.

Inasmuch as this is a welcome development, there is the need for overall quality control, even in giving names to schools (Oku, 2010). Though some owners of private schools are really trying to put a standard in place, there are lots of **'International schools'** that do not even qualify as local schools. The whole scenario looks as if the proprietors are adding "international" to the name of their schools just as a kind of status symbol and not as reflection of what is going on in their various schools. This is because taking a critical look at these 'international schools' there is nothing of international standard or quality to qualify such schools. The researcher is of the opinion that some people might have come across such schools and the question that would have probably crossed their minds is; **"what is international in this school?"** Let us consider the pictures below.

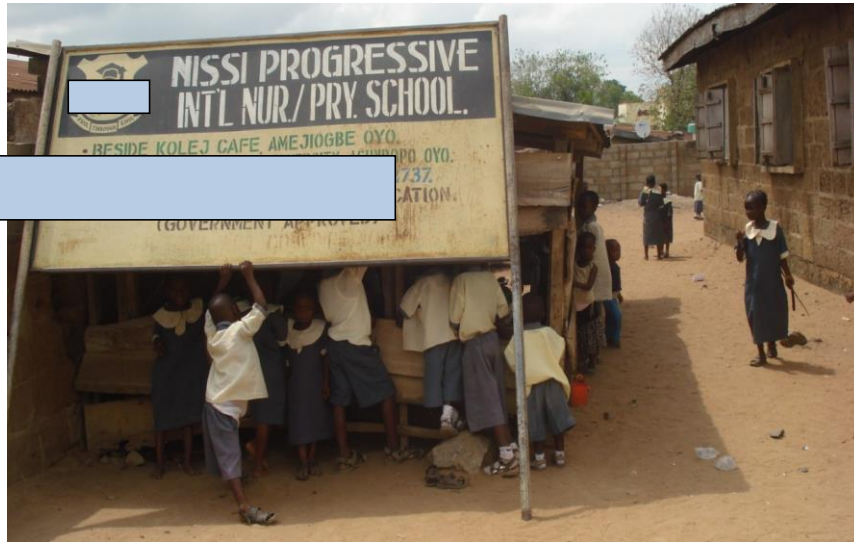


Figure 6: An International Nursery and Primary School as reflected on the sign-post.

What is amusing about this school is that government actually approved it as stated on the sign-post.



Figure 7: A block of classrooms in another 'International School'

Some proprietors would even add 'Group of schools' where they have only one or two blocks of buildings.

7.7 PROCESS - POLICY IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND OVERLAPPING MANAGEMENT

If you care to peruse the NPE, you will be proud to be a Nigerian, hoping, of course, that the policy will be implemented to the letter. But in Nigeria generally, we are very good at formulating policies but implementation has always been the problem. One can conveniently say that Nigeria is a 'multi-policy state'; as one policy is out, somebody somewhere would be thinking of how to improve or change it. Indeed, we are blessed with brilliant policy formulators. This may not be unconnected with the fact that Education is managed by various boards, commissions and parastatals at the Local Government, State and Federal levels. Ironically, these supervisory bodies are often created to accommodate the interest of the politicians with overlapping mandates in the education sector. Structures are over-bureaucratized, too centralized and duplicated. In effect, they become ineffective and lack decisive action. One would think that the recent committee on rationalization of parastatals will work for the good of the education sector if its report is allowed to see the light of the day. But nobody is sure of what has become of the report of the committee except those who set it up.

DaSylva (2010) reported that, before the introduction of the 6-3-3-4 system, it was believed by scholars then that "our education was parochial, elitist, regurgitating and irresponsible to the needs and aspirations of the Nigerian society". The 6-3-3-4 was, therefore, fashioned to produce graduates who would be able to make use of their hands, heads and hearts (the 3 Hs of education). But the crux of the matter is the implementation. He stressed that the policy was brilliant but that the implementation was woeful. He specifically observed that much of the shortcomings in the implementation of the National Policy on Education (NPE) were hinged on the failure of the Federal Government (FG) to put into effect most of the measures it stated in the NPE for the achievement of the objectives.

Baiyewu (2010) reiterating the failure of FG, said that some machinery are still in crates, years after they had been delivered to the school, while many others were never used and few others misused. The FG ensured that most of its schools put the kits to use but could not exert enough authority on the states that had overwhelming number of institutions. Twenty-eight (28) years after the 6-3-3-4 was introduced, there have been accusations and counter accusations. Addressing a two-day National Summit on Education in Abuja, Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan agreed that the system of education in Nigeria requires major overhaul (DaSylva :2010). He said that, "what the country needed is action and practicable recommendations on how to move education forward, make it more functional and productive to Nigerians." Of particular concern to him is the 6-3-3-4 system, which he said had not made practicable impact. Thus, he implored the initiators of the policy to apologize to Nigerians over its apparent failure.

Reacting to this, Aina (2010) said that, 'the executors, not initiators failed Nigeria in the 6-3-3-4 system of education'. According to him, the President's target should have been those who failed to faithfully and diligently implement the letter and the spirit of the system. One important thing that is clear from these arguments is the admittance of failure of the 6-3-3-4 education system in Nigeria. (Akanbi, 1998a & Akanbi, 2012c) The main point being the lack of marketable skills for

either wage employment or to become self employed. Gustafsson-Wright and Smith (2014) observed further that; "Nigeria's education system is over-centralized and lacks minimum standards, offering limited autonomy and accountability at the state level. Inadequate monitoring of service delivery also results in weak outcomes at the school level" Apart from financial monitoring, in the opinion of Akanbi, Jekayinfa and Lawal (2014), it is imperative to ginger the Inspectorate Department of the ministries of education at all levels of government, to ensure and enforce standard in education at all levels in teaching, mentoring, guiding and monitoring pupils and students.

7.8 TEACHERS' COMMITMENT: PAY MY TEACHERS WHAT NNPC PAYS MY DAD

In the opinion of Ajibade (2005: xi) “in whatever capacity or angle he’s viewed, the teacher seems the most important human character in the life of a child, apart from the mother”. Since no education system can be better than the level of its teachers, very serious attention would need to be accorded to the teacher factor. To Obanya (2011b:60),

Teachers determine what ultimately happens to Educational Policies, to Curriculum Guidelines, the use to which teaching-learning materials are put, etc and in fact the fate of a nation's huge investments in Education. What teachers do, or do not do, are able or not able to do, are willing or not willing to do, what they do properly or do poorly determines, to a great extent, the effective Curriculum (what children actually learn)

Unfortunately, public perception of teaching and the insinuation that anybody can teach without differentiating ‘teachers’ from ‘cheaters’ as was observed by Obanya (1982: 8) and Ajibade (2005: 53) is to a large extent a minus as regards teachers' commitment and quality of education. This public opinion was succinctly put in box 1.

Box 1: Get Out of Teaching and Look for a Job

- **Suitor’s family spokesman:** A-salama-leikum, my people. May I introduce my young man, Ahmadu Tijani. Stand and be seen, Tijani.
- **Tijani** (Standing): A-salama-leikun, my elders.
- **Spokesman:** As you are well aware, we have come to ask for the hands of your daughter, Amina, in marriage.
- **Amina's Father:** La-kuli-lai! Tijani has grown so big! Looks every inch like his grandfather. What does he do for a living?
- **Tijani** (timidly): I teach at Government Secondary School, Azare.
- **Amina’s Father:** Huuum! Well, you are from a good family. I’ll give you my daughter, but....LISTEN CAREFULLY. Promise me that you’ll look for a job!

Source: Obanya (2009: 185) and Obanya (2011: 62)

Some even see teaching as a job to be managed before getting an appointment. It is a regular response from such people to say "I am managing to teach in a school". But "Teaching is a vocation. It is a noble profession like Medicine and Law. It ought and should be engaged in only by those with a special call, who want to impart knowledge to others on the sole ground that they are happy doing so and because they think that they have a special interest or ability to do so". (Babalola, 2013: 1)

Several times, teachers have agitated for better pay and in recent times for Teachers Salary Scale (TSS). Deviance of government about this request has, to a large extent, dampened the morale of teachers and has affected their commitment to the job and quality of education. Many teachers have turned to pseudo business men and women. Pupils were not even left out of the cry for better pay for their teachers. A primary five pupil of a Model School in Lagos has asked that the "government should pay my teachers good money, like my father who works in NNPC". To another pupil in the same school, the needed motivation lies in the prompt payment of teachers' allowances, saying; "Government should pay our teachers' allowances promptly". Another Senior High School pupil said, "I want government to increase our teachers' salary so that teachers will be able to fend for their families and come to school and teach students happily and joyfully without holding any grudges towards the government".

The pupils' views, according to Soyinka (2007), were expressed in a report "Thank You Teacher" that was released by the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF). The report addressed how to improve teachers' condition, and consequently raise the standards of education in Nigeria and ensure that all children in Commonwealth have access to quality education by 2015. A total of 846 comments were evaluated by CEF and with a frequency of 46.2 per cent or 391 responses, the pupils picked increase of teachers' salaries as the most important thing they wanted government to do. Other issues paramount to them were accommodation for teachers, provision of comfortable classrooms, recruitment of more teachers, regular promotion of teachers and awards for exceptional teachers. All these I believe are attainable if there is political will. Elombah (2010) noted that in schools, working conditions are so poor that the few highly trained university lecturers are opting to teach (even in secondary schools) abroad.

7.9 UNDERFUNDING OF EDUCATION AND PERVASIVENESS OF CORRUPTION

On funding of education in Nigeria, UNESCO's 26% of budgetary allocation to education has not been met. Worse still, it has been observed that the federal government has less control over the states. According to UNESCO (2014), "The absence of data on the share of the budget spent on education since 1999 is one sign of poor accountability". UNESCO's attempt to track whether schools in Kaduna and Enugu States received allocated resources revealed that, for most basic inputs, including maintenance, textbooks and in-service training, there were no norms as to what each school should receive. Indeed, this report confirms the level of lack of accountability and monitoring of processes in the education sector. This indeed is a big cog in the wheel of education. These conditions, according to Gustafsson-Wright and Smith (2014), led Nigeria's Minister of Finance to declare in a speech at the Moghalu Foundation in July of 2012 that she would not increase the budget for education until the sector improves on strategy, execution and accountability. In effect, there has to be concerted efforts at financial monitoring by the government so that the little budget being allocated will be properly utilised.

It could be noticed that budgetary allocation to defense/security is always high. But maybe our leaders would need to be tutored that effective education could reduce crime better than uncountable personal security aides. There is a popular saying in Yoruba land that '*Omo ti a ko ko ni yoo gbe ile ti a ko ta*' (literally translated as 'A child we refuse to train will eventually sell-off the house we have built.') Some distinguished Nigerian educationists and I were at the Rutgers University in Newark, in the United States of America for an academic conference, and nobody knew that the Governor was there until he was formally introduced. He had no tension because education had played its role. Under-funding of the education sector is a characteristic feature of political dispensations. The Presidential Task Team on Education noted that "Education budget, as a proportion of total federal spending, is some 7.6% (average from 2008 to 2010). It is roughly 5% of total federal capital budget and 11% of total budget."

Whereas, according to United States of America International Development (USAID), to reach the EFA goals, it is estimated that half of the education budget needs to go to the primary education sub-sector, for now only about 35% of the education budget is currently devoted to primary education. The question to ask here is: is the whole 35% truly being spent on primary education? Corruption is a major problem in this dispensation. Contracts awarded for construction of classrooms are inflated to accommodate 'brown envelopes' for various categories of officers in the ministry and even in the school itself. Money that could have built two blocks of classroom may not even be sufficient for laying the foundation.

Another important thing to note is that spending is different from investment in education. When you invest in quality teachers you will get quality pupils/students, but when you spend money on new cars, the cars will soon disappear with no benefits left behind. In the opinion of Gustafsson-Wright and Smith (2014), there are two key indicators of good practice in education expenditure: governments should spend 6% of gross domestic product, and about 20% of their budget on schooling. Nigeria spends just 1.5% and 6% respectively in those areas. That brings up the question: how is it that a country with oil revenues estimated at over \$50 billion in 2012 is failing so greatly in the provision of secure education for its children? Surely, the activities of Boko Haram present not just an obstacle to implementing education in the country, especially in the North, but also reflect the product of the poor education and lack of opportunity that face those who have now regrettably resorted to such terrorism.

Systemic corruption is another cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabrics of education. It is an irony, ladies and gentlemen, that educational institutions that are supposed to teach pupils/students morals, have become a breeding ground for immorality. It is sad to note that some schools have now become miracle centres where every child that writes examinations has excellent results. Some proprietors will even go as far as 'buying' examination questions for their students with the support of the parents. Some private schools will instruct their teachers to 'help' the students in answering questions in the examination hall and sanction erring teachers with termination of appointment. In 2007, the then Minister of Education, Obi Ezekwesili, ordered that 324 schools should be blacklisted as centres of public examinations because they were centres of mass cheating and assault. Of course, there were overwhelming evidence that the schools were centres for organised impersonation and collusion (Ojiabor, 2007). Edo State topped the list with 63 schools, followed by Benue State with 36 schools and Lagos (Centre of excellence) with 27 schools only. This was what brought about the issue of compulsory integrity training for examiners

as part of the education sector reforms. It was expected that only officials who passed the mandatory integrity training programme will be hired as examiners, supervisors and invigilators by public examination bodies. Unfortunately, the training issue is dead now because of lack of continuity in policies.

In the course of preparing this paper, especially while thinking about general corruption in different political dispensations, I agreed to use dispensation as “special permission to do something that is normally not allowed” – just as a dictionary defined it. I see periods of politics as mad periods when the unexpected and unimaginable can happen, with people still feeling comfortable. Or how would you expect a group of politicians to obtain a bank loan to the tune of 40 billion Naira to increase their personal allowances in a nation where children are using shade of trees as classroom and where common chalk and duster are not available in schools?. I also hope that we are aware that the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has a pending issue with a former Governor (currently in the Senate) and four of his aides for embezzling 5 billion Naira UBE fund in an educationally disadvantaged state. What an irony! Can we point at a sector that is not corrupt in Nigeria? Which is questioning our educational system that Kukah (2014) described this way:

Nigeria educational systems have surprising outcomes. The smartest students pass with First Class and get admissions to Medical and Engineering schools. The 2nd Class students get MBAs and LLBs to manage the First Class students. The 3rd Class students enter Politics and rule both the 1st and 2nd Class students. The Failures enter the Underworld of crime and control the politicians and the businesses. And, best of all, those who did not attend school become Prophets and Imams and everyone follows them...."What a paradox and an irony of life! It can only happen in Nigeria where corruption is the order of the day.....!!

<http://www.nairaland.com/1896963/quote-bishop-kukah-nigeria>

But we all know that the issue of corruption cannot be resolved in a thousand lecture, we must start from the 'inner man'.

7.10 FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT: POOR MAINTENANCE CULTURE

Whatever name we decide to call our policy, there is lack of everything that is required in the school environment, especially in government public schools, to implement the policy structure. Some public universities are like glorified secondary schools. There is no maintenance culture and it seems nobody is bothered. Nossiter (2012) also observed that some students are taught in the open air under trees and government had even failed to provide materials, like chalk for the remaining blackboard in a school attacked by Boko Haram. However, when situations in schools are to be presented to the world, the picture of the best or few newly-renovated schools and well-fed children are presented as if all is well. According to the report of Vision 2020 National Working Group on Education Sector (2009), the learning conditions in schools are alarming: Paucity of teaching materials (few textbooks, in many schools no charts or teaching aids, children in many cases having only their exercise books for taking notes), absence of adequate furniture, over-crowded classrooms, lack of ventilation, and general dilapidated condition of many of the school

buildings. In this same environment where the above situations exist, you will now see a single individual, may be a politician or connected to a politician or a contractor, establishing a private nursery and primary school with the-state-of-the-art infrastructure. This may prompt you to ask; if an individual could do this why not the government? Of course you know the answer! Corruption!

I do not want to consume space by inserting several pictures in this paper, but the clips as have been shown will set all of us thinking about how to make our environment conducive to learning.



Figure 8a: Avery Elementary School, Dedam, Massachusetts, built in 1921



Figure 8b: An extension (new) of Avery Elementary School, Dedam.



Figure 9: Right view of Dedam Middle School, Boston



Figure 10: Jefferson Elementary school, Union, New Jersey, built in 1928



Figure 11: Public school buses (Common feature in public schools in USA)



Figure 12: Computer laboratory in one of the Elementary schools in Houston, Texas



Figure 13: A classroom in a Middle school in USA



Figure 14: A lecture room in a university in Newark.



Figure 15: Pace University, New York, USA

The next two figures below are unimaginable elsewhere, where education is real education.



Figure 16: A government public primary school

You may be surprised that the contract for the rehabilitation of the school above might have been 'awarded and completed'



Figure 17: Three-in-one classroom in a city in Western Nigeria

It is true that we are building new blocks of classrooms but what are the facilities inside and at what price? It is 'papering the crack' and we cannot continue this way, we need new directions for our education in the future.

7.11 LACK OF INTEREST IN PROGRAMMES THAT WILL BENEFIT CHILDREN OF THE POOR IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

In Nigeria, over 90% of morbidity and 80% of mortality in under-5 children arise from four causes: malaria, vaccine preventable diseases, diarrhoea and acute respiratory infections (Federal Ministry of Education: 2007). Malnutrition is an attributable cause in over 50% of such mortality. In the realization of the central role of nutrition to education, the Federal Government of Nigeria in collaboration with New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other International Development Partners (IDPs) developed the Home Grown School Feeding and Health Programme (HGSFHP). The programme was launched on Monday 26 September, 2005. Before formally launching the school feeding programme, the former President of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, declared: "I foresee a day when Nigeria will be a nation with well-nourished and healthy children, happy and eager to attend school and complete their basic education in a friendly, conducive, attractive and stimulating learning environment".

(<http://www.ungei.org/infobycountry/nigeria-174.html>)

And if one may ask, what has become of this desire nine (9) years after launching the programme?

Twelve (12) states were selected by the Federal Government as pilot states for the programme, namely, Osun, Bauchi, Edo, Enugu, FCT, Imo, Kano, Kogi, Nassarawa, Niger, Ogun and Yobe. The programme could have been an avenue for raising the literacy level in the country and giving an opportunity for more children, especially from poor homes, to attain, at least basic education. Various state governments were not committed to the programme, they only promised to resuscitate or even start it. It is, however, worthy of note that Osun State has never halted the programme and this actually reflected in its primary school enrolment. The State is at the top with the highest enrolment of children in primary schools in Nigeria as clearly shown in figure 1.

8 FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR EDUCATION

According to Obasanjo (2012), "an objective assessment of the problems and solutions of Nigerian education in the context of development shows that **proffering solutions has never been a problem. Many solutions abound, but the crux of the matter is LEADERSHIP**". We need visionary leaders who will see solutions through to a logical conclusion without policy somersault. Such people must be consistent in living what they say, that is leadership by example. Today, more than ever before, I agree with Obasanjo that Nigeria very badly needs REAL LEADERSHIP in all spheres of our corporate existence, particularly in the education sector, where skills, attitudes, and performance abilities are acquired. No development is possible without qualitative leadership. This explains why every talk of transformation has remained mere sloganeering. This country cannot continue to wobble along like a stalked and wounded lion walking to its death. We have immense resources to give education in Nigeria directions that will take us to the desired destination. But all stakeholders must be involved and willing. Governments at all levels, ministry of education officials, lecturers, teachers, parents, workers in the education sector, pupils/students must do what they are supposed to do. We really need to talk to ourselves. No policy can change an unwilling citizen, we should encourage and monitor ourselves to willingly do what is right.

8.1 CORRUPTION MUST BE CURBED

If it cannot be eradicated, the big monster that must be curbed is corruption, in whatever form, shape or magnitude it is raising its ugly head. It has eaten deep into the fabrics of the society and unfortunately too, the processes of education that are supposed to teach against corruption are corrupt. People have been taught and have erroneously believed that the resources in Nigeria are a national cake that must be eaten anyhow when you have access to them. The cartoon below adapted from *Nigerian Tribune*, Wednesday, 26 February, 2014, page 18 expresses this erroneous belief and the mindset of an average Nigerian. Integrity is no longer celebrated but monumental corruption.

My people, our son just retired as a **BIG OGA** in public service. He came back with **BAGS OF AWARDS** for **MERITORIOUS** service, instead of **NAIRA**. When I asked for his own share of the **NATIONAL CAKE**, he was staring at me like **MI IMI I**



Figure 18: A cartoon encouraging corruption

Seeing corrupt leaders gallivanting about in Nigeria is enough for people to think that being corrupt is part of Nigerian value. Some members of the society celebrate corrupt leaders and even shield them from being punished. This is contrary to a school of thought in Management which focuses on the Japanese sense of shame as a tool for curbing corruption in governments worldwide (Kwakpovwe, 2010:70). The general belief is that corruption thrives in a country where the people have no sense of shame or a value system. When people have no sense of shame, no amount of explanation about the effect of corruption will be of use. But the Japanese have a strong sense of shame such that if they do anything shameful or wrong they would simply hide to commit suicide! They call it ***hara-kiri!*** Among the Japanese, the fear of being exposed or disgraced forces them to put in their best in whatever they do. Even if they do not commit suicide they would try to display their shame by resignation or accepting severe punishment. Emphasis on paper qualification rather than on-the-job performance has bred so many ‘**Toronto University**’ graduates. Worse still, some private schools have even been accused of buying results for their students. **Can we go the way of the Japanese in Nigeria?** Time will tell!

8.2 GOVERNMENT SHOULD REORIENTATE THE TEACHING FORCE AND PROFESSIONALISE TEACHING

To motivate us, let me start this discourse with this statement by Ana, a teacher from Peru.

I choose to be a teacher because I believe that education has the power to transform the society we live in. What motivates me to be a good teacher is to be an active agent in this change that is so necessary for my country, to fight against discrimination, injustice, racism, corruption and poverty. Our responsibilities as teachers are enormous, and our commitment to provide quality education must be renewed every day. (UNESCO, 2014: 233)

Teachers indeed are change agents. There is the need, therefore, for the reorientation of the teaching force at all levels of education to let them internalise the necessity of making our education work. Teachers have to be trained to develop ability for providing rich and meaningful experience for the pupils by shifting focus from teaching the subject matter to helping students to learn. Akanbi (2014) believes that "the development of the correct attitude to teaching should be emphasised. Such attitude involves the desire to find out, to understand, to adopt and adapt, and to revolutionize if need be". The integrity training should not be for examiners alone but for all the teachers. Training and retraining of teachers should be part of this reorientation programme. Akanbi (2012b) noted that workshops and seminars are in themselves very good and necessary to keep pace with current trends in educational practices all over the world. But it is becoming worrisome to note that the current spate of workshops may not augur well for education, it is becoming too frequent and often a money-making venture. At times, it is the same sets of teachers who are 'connected' with coordinating officers that are selected for workshops thereby leaving the students unattended to. There should be room for implementation of the skills acquired in a workshop before another is held to make the whole exercise meaningful and worthwhile. Also, a nominal roll should be followed to ensure retraining of all the teachers in the basic and high schools.

A **four-part strategy** for providing the best teachers, as suggested by UNESCO (2014: 233), can also be useful for us as we think of improving teaching and teachers in Nigeria.

Strategy 1: Attract the best teachers - the better the teacher quality, the less the incidence of low achievement.

Strategy 2: Improve teacher education so all children can learn - good quality education depends on giving teachers the best possible training, not only before they start teaching but also throughout their career. Mentoring new teachers is also vital.

Strategy 3: Get teachers where they are most needed - unequal distribution of teachers is one reason some children leave school before learning the basics. Urban schools are overstaffed while schools in rural areas lack teachers. This is reflected in the quality of education students receive. Unless governments ensure that teachers are fairly distributed, children who are already disadvantaged will fail to learn because of larger classes

Strategy 4: Provide incentives to retain the best teachers - ensuring that teaching is as attractive as similar professions. When salaries are too low, it weakens teachers' morale and push them to take up additional jobs or seek other careers.

But Obanya (2011a:15) believes that "as important as incentives to teachers in terms of emoluments and improved conditions of service are, they have to be complemented by concerted teacher- support interventions in two main directions – career long personality development of teachers and societal respect for the teaching profession". Just as the shortage of medical doctors in the hospital cannot result in the engagement of surplus administrative staff to perform surgery, teaching should be made more professional. The Teachers' Registration Council should be assisted to achieve the purpose of professionalizing teaching. In situations where pupils are even better than some teachers, no quality and meaningful development is expected. Almost everybody now wants to be a teacher or a proprietor of 'International Nursery/Primary School' where the head teacher cannot speak fluently either in English or even in the local language.

8.3 LANGUAGE ISSUE AND INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

The implementation of language policies in a multilingual society like Nigeria has always been a herculean task. However, if there is political will or strong government action, it becomes easier, because language is also a tool for meaningful redirection. NPE, section 1, paragraph 10a&b talks about the importance of language:

(a) Government appreciates the importance of language as a means of promoting social interaction and national cohesion; and of preserving cultures. Thus, every child shall learn the language of the environment. Furthermore, in the interest of national unity, it is expedient that every child shall be required to learn one of the three Nigerian languages: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba.

(b) For smooth interaction with our neighbours it is desirable for every Nigerian to speak French. Accordingly, French shall be the second official language in Nigeria and it shall be compulsory in primary and junior secondary schools, but Non-Vocational Elective at the Senior Secondary School.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, if we are talking of introducing another foreign language and making it compulsory, why can't we adopt the three major Nigerian languages as language of instruction in our schools. We should not be afraid to use our own language for education, rather, decisive action should be taken to determine which language(s) to adopt. If Nigerians could travel abroad to non-English speaking nations and they will be proficient in such foreign languages within six months, then, we should think of adopting any language(s) as a medium of educating our children in schools. In the same vein, new directions for education without a recourse to indigenous knowledge may not be worthwhile. We need self-reliant education to live a good life and be productive. That is, education that would be seen from the beginning as relevant to peoples' needs.

8.4 REGULAR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring has been a proven tool of getting the best out of any investment. Proper monitoring of our educational system is no doubt a way of adding value to our education system and policies. Inspection of schools, colleges and universities in the real sense of it should be the order of the day. A situation where "brown envelopes" prevail over wrong practices is not good enough, if we really want a new direction for education in Nigeria. Inspectors, supervisors and those who are

involved in accreditation of courses in our institutions of learning, let us talk to ourselves. School Based Management Committee (SBMC) involving both parents and teachers should be introduced like it is being done in Lagos State.

8.5 LET US HAVE EDUCATIVE SCHOOLS

As noted by the Presidential Task Team on Education (2011, pp. 67-68), a school is not just a site, a cluster of sites, or a mere assemblage of learners and teachers. When these remain the only features of a school, that school will not be able to play its educative role. According to the Report, for a school to become an effective agent of education, these surface features would have to be energised by being on a solid foundation of more in-depth features. For Nigerian's schools to really play an educative role, they would need to be infused with these solid in-depth features that can be summarised as follows.

- (1) Physical/environmental features*
 - a. Physical space, attractive and inviting*
 - b. Adequate space for in-class and out-of-class learning activities*
 - c. Classroom with adequate sitting and move around spaces*
 - d. Adequate lighting, ventilation and security of classrooms and other teaching-learning spaces*
 - e. Classroom furniture that does not squeeze students*
- (2) Managerial /organizational features*
 - a. Participatory decision making*
 - b. Teacher professional support*
 - c. Healthy school-community relationship*
 - d. Free information flow*
 - e. Team spirit prevailing*
 - f. Encouragement of creativity in teachers*
- (3) Teaching-learning facilities*
 - a. quantitatively adequate*
 - b. timely/current/up-to-date*
 - c. closely linked to curriculum*
 - d. instigate intellectual activity in learners and teachers*
- (4) Learner psycho-social support*
 - a. Gender responsive practices*
 - b. Special need support services*
 - c. Advisory and guidance support services*
 - d. Special attention to student learning difficulties*
 - e. Practice of empathy (towards learners) by all teachers*
- (5) Pedagogical features*
 - a. General and professional education of teachers*
 - b. Level of experience of teachers*

- c. *Level of teacher knowledge of curriculum*
- d. *Efforts at continuing professional development by teachers*
- e. *Level of creativity in teachers*
- f. *Teacher classroom interaction practices*
- g. *Teacher's knowledge and application of assessment.*

Looking at the above submission, I have no doubt in my mind that in the near future, we can achieve this in our school environment if there is the political will.

8.6 INNOVATIVE CURRICULUM

A "twenty-first century responsive curriculum" which is also a "tripartite curriculum" as presented by Obanya (2011a:10) will suffice here (Table 2). This is in line with Rao's (2003) emphasis on the need for man-making and character-making education as essential for the purpose of achieving material progress for the benefit of the citizens. He stressed further that the need for continuing and reinforcing value-oriented curriculum at all educational levels may be considered even more important. Our curriculum needs more enrichment. One can observe that curricular and pedagogy related deficiencies have constituted a serious imbalance in the pursuit of national and social goals of education in Nigeria. While one is not condemning the school subjects, functionalism, as emphasized by the traditional education in Nigeria should be our focus. Fortunately, NPE, **section 1, paragraph 4d** supports this stating that; "there is need for **functional education** for the promotion of a progressive, united Nigeria; to this end, school programmes need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive; while interest and ability should determine the individual's direction in education". Therefore, emphasis should not be on paper qualification but on on-the-job performance. Reward system that is transparent, at least to a large extent, should be entrenched in the educational system to encourage honesty, hard-work and loyalty.

8.6.1 Change from Examination to Continuous Assessment (CA)

Continuous Assessment as the name connotes, is supposed to be a continuous testing of the student as content teaching progresses, not one assessment for the whole semester/term. This is in consonance with **section 1, paragraph 9g** of NPE that: "educational assessment and evaluation shall be liberalized by their being based in whole or in part on continuous assessment of the progress of the individual". This is why teacher -pupil ratio must be adhered to at all levels of education. Defective implementation of CA and unreliability of scores usually brought in from the schools, according to Adeyegbe (2011), have compelled the West African Examination Council (WAEC) to moderate the scores before incorporating them into the terminal assessment scores. Basing students' performances on single examination, as some lecturers and teachers do, cannot give us the desired directions for education in Nigeria. Government and other stakeholders in education must see to the proper implementation of this policy (Osokoya,1987 118.)

8.6.2 Implement 9-3-4 system to reduce unemployment

You will all agree with me that any education that cannot fetch daily bread for the person that has acquired it is no education. Section 1, paragraph 9j of the NPE states that: "at any stage of the educational process after junior secondary education, an individual shall be able to choose between continuing full-time studies, combining work with study, or embarking on full-time employment without excluding the prospect of resuming studies later on." The government promised to establish technical colleges and trade centres for those who do not want to progress to the senior secondary schools. But how many of such institutions do we have? This is a policy that is capable of reducing youth unemployment if properly implemented. We should therefore move from papers to practical.

8.7 GENDER EQUALITY SHOULD BE MAINTAINED IN EDUCATION

Education, especially for girls, has social and economic benefits for the society as a whole;

- Educated women have more economic opportunities and engage more fully in public life.
- Women who are educated tend to have fewer and healthier children all of whom are likely to attend school.
- Education also increases the ability of women and girls to protect themselves against HIV/AIDS
- Girls' education adds value to other development sectors, eases the strain on the health care system, reduces poverty and strengthens national economies. (Gender Equality Fact sheet at http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2005/presskit/factsheet/facts_gender.htm)

Educated girls, therefore, are a uniquely positive force for development. Denying girls access to basic education implies that they may not have means by which to pull themselves out of the circle of poverty and give their own children better life (Akanbi, 1998c). More efforts should be put into female education in the North and boys' education in the South.

8.8 CREATION OF EDUCATION STATISTICS DATABASE

Government should look into the issue of creating database for education to avoid having multiple and different data for the same period. This should be updated regularly and put in a cloud for easy access for identified stakeholders. Facts and figures about Nigeria in the twentieth century should not be an issue for discussion by now given the availability of computer gurus in the nation. (It is shameful for Nigeria to be classified as a no-data nation when it comes to the issue of facts and figures on nations of the world in the education sector).

8.9 INVEST THE FUND ON EDUCATION, DO NOT SPEND IT

Genuinely investing in Education in the opinion of Obanya (2014: 14), is in contradistinction with the habit of merely spending on education. Nigeria has in recent times overemphasised the 'billionisation' of educational financing, making the loudest noise possible on the quantum of money voted, partially released, and often not fully spent on Education.

Since the early 1980s, corporate organisations, communities, philanthropists, international development partners, multinational corporations have provided resources for education delivery

in the country. This is because of the increasing demand for education on public finances coupled with the fact that government alone cannot carry the burden of education (FME, 2007:249). But I think this is the time for our government to be sincere in investing in education and monitor how the fund is being dispensed and even depend less on these organisations. Despite recently overtaking South Africa as the continent's biggest economy, Nigeria invests less in education than almost any other country in Africa.

Gustafsson-Wright and Smith (2014) observe that in another oil-rich country, Brazil, amid protests against injustice and inequality, President Dilma Rousseff announced a law last year stipulating that **75 percent of oil royalties will go to education and health while the remaining 25 percent will be set aside for a social wealth fund**. This has prompted some to ask if a law of this kind could be an answer for Nigeria's children. Based on UNESCO calculations, according to Wright and Smith, there is a need for the government of Nigeria to more than triple its education spending. More funds for education could also be raised if the country expanded its tax base, axed unnecessary tax holidays for foreign investors and challenged aggressive tax avoidance. Additional spending on schools would be transformative for Nigeria, where a third of the 140 million-strong population is aged between 10 and 24.

8.10 ENFORCE HOME-GROWN SCHOOL FEEDING AND HEALTH PROGRAMME IN NIGERIAN SCHOOLS

The overall goal of the programme in Nigeria is to reduce hunger and malnutrition among school children and enhance the achievement of the Universal Basic Education.

The primary objectives of the programme are to:

- Reduce hunger among Nigerian school children;
- Improve the nutritional health status of school children;
- Increase school enrolment, attendance, retention and completion particularly of children in rural communities and poor urban neighbourhoods;
- Enhance comprehension and learning achievements of pupils.

All the objectives above are a drive towards achieving the MDGs and it is expected that the programme will have positive impacts as shown in the table below. If all these could be achieved, then we would have vibrant youths in the future.

Table 3
Expected Impact of HGSFHP

MDG	EXPECTED IMPACT OF HGSFHP	
Eradication of Extreme Hunger & Poverty	Reduction of child hunger	Poverty reduction in communities
Achieve Universal Pry. Education	Increase in School Enrolment, Attendance, Retention, Completion and Achievement	
Gender Equality & Empowerment	Correct gender imbalance through increased girl-child enrolment in schools	
Reduce Child Mortality	Improved nutritional and health status of learners	

Improve Maternal Health	Improved income generation, nutrition and health education
Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria & TB	Improved nutritional and health status of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) & Improved access to schools
Ensure Environmental Sustainability	Improved Water Supply, Hygiene and Sanitation & Greening of Schools
Promote Global Partnerships	Improved networking, team work and collaboration between the school and public/private sector

Source: National Guidelines for School Meal Planning and Implementation. (FME)

Mr. Provost Sir, ladies and gentlemen, before I conclude, I wish to present a quick summary of my discourse with this graphic that should keep every stakeholder on their toes.

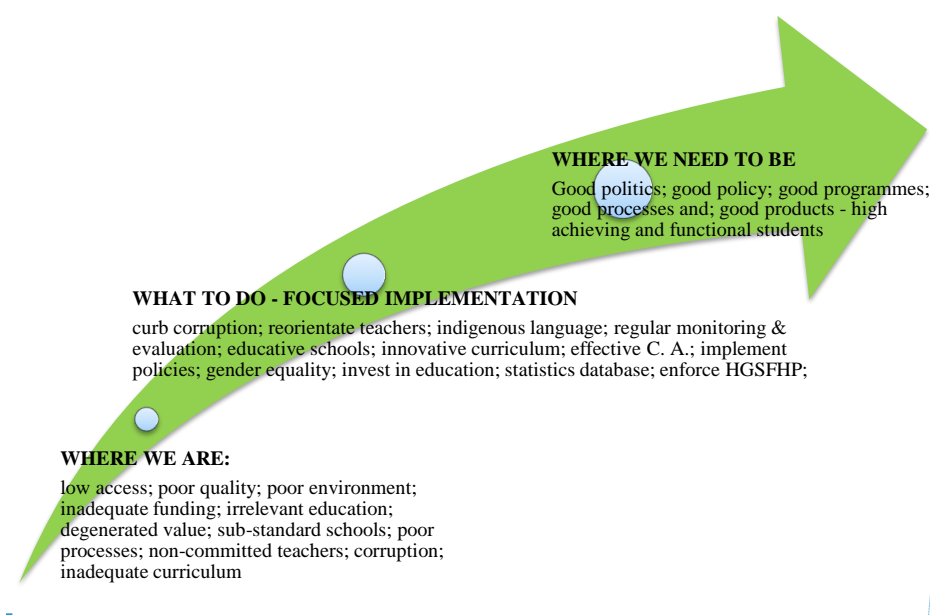


Figure 19: Summary of Education Outlook in Nigeria

9 CONCLUSIONS

As I have noted earlier, an objective assessment of the problems and solutions of Nigerian education in the context of future directions and development shows that proffering solutions has never been a problem. Many solutions abound but the crux of the matter for future directions for education in Nigeria that I would like to conclude this lecture with, is politics. Since it is almost sure that Nigeria will continue with the democratic process and politicians will continue to rule us, we cannot separate politics from education. Then, I agree with Obanya (2011) that we should have



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good politics for good education. The 5-P Chain in Figure 20 will help in giving us sure future directions for education and can be explained in practical education development terms as follows:

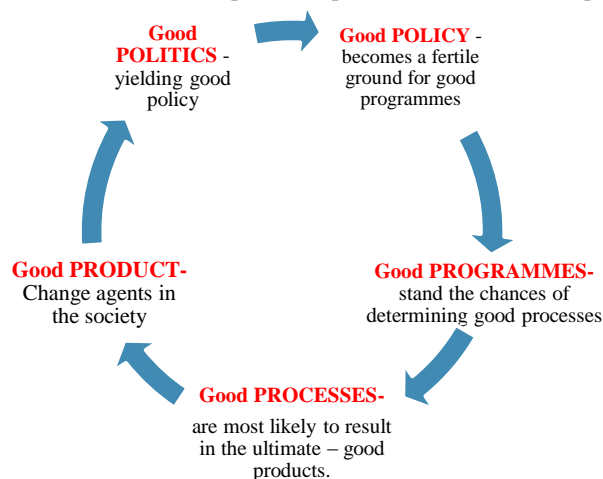


Figure 20: The 5-P Education Chain (Adapted from Obanya 2011, p. 22)

In other words, political directions are at the root of education policy, which in turn inform the direction of an education programme. The programme is subsequently ‘processed’ at school and classroom levels, to turn out the required products of education. In ideal situations, the 5-p would be a cyclic process, with the nature of the product leading to constant reviews of all the other P’s in the chain.

With specific reference to Education, the pivots can be explained in the following manner.

1. *The politics governing education must be one that encourages consensus building anchored on popular participation, with Education ideologically placed as the foundation for personal and societal sustainable development.*
2. *Policies must not be a disconnect from national development goals; they should be developed in a participatory manner and must be a dynamic instrument of satisfying the ever changing needs of society*
3. *Programmes must in their turn be responsive to societal aspirations; be inclusive in meeting a variety of individual and group needs, in addition to being developed in a participatory manner*
4. *Processes concern institutional management and pedagogy. They also include quality inputs into the tasks of teaching and learning (teachers, funding, materials, teaching-learning environment) – all of which must meet learner-friendly benchmarks.*

5. *Products would be a critical mass of transformed citizens with appropriate levels of hard and soft skills, who are capable of continuous self improvement and thus in a position to contribute to the continuous regeneration of Society.*

We should stop bemoaning the poor quality of the products of the education system, rather, giving future directions for education in Nigeria should be our primary concern. This could only be possible if all of us are willing to talk to ourselves to do things right, starting from politics. Nigeria needs a backward soul searching approach that seeks to unearth the weak points in the 5-P chain and strengthen such weak points to build a strong chain that would guarantee 'good' education sector products.

I love this College, Emmanuel Alayande College of Education with passion.

Thank you for listening.

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First of all, I am thanking God Almighty, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the I am that I am, the Ancient of days, the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the valley, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of the tribe of Jesse and the Hope that does not make ashamed, for His faithfulness, kindness and mercies to me and my family, which by His covenant will endure forever. All adoration, glory, honour, and praises to Him who created me in His Own image, saved me, and has not allowed any loss. Amen.

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