

EDUCATION AND CITIZENS' EMPOWERMENT FOR CHANGING COMMUNITIES

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Communities - global, national and local are dynamic. Changes occurring in them can be desirable, positive and transforming or negative and degenerative, temporary or enduring. The quality and the dynamism of change in these communities are dependent / controlled, orchestrated by some factors that may be inherent and functional in these communities. These vital factors/variable include education, power and employment. They help to determine the level and extent of citizens' empowerment and the quality of changes in any community.

In a world where the global and the local communities are inter-related, where patterns of governance and decision making are changing so quickly and impacting upon changes in the communities, it becomes imperative to look at these principal key actors /factors of change in communities to explore how they can interact to effect citizens' empowerment for positive and enduring changes that enable citizens live, and work successfully and harmoniously in a globalized and competitive world.

As a follow-up to the above, this presentation will attempt to: II. explain the basic concepts that are used in this paper; III. establish the conceptual and practical links of the variables in this paper, such as power and citizen empowerment; IV. explore the role of social justice and good leadership for effective and enduring citizen; empowerment that can sustain positive changes in communities in a dynamic world; V. examine the nexus between communities in a dynamic world, quality education, citizen empowerment and changing communities and their implications; VI. discuss quality education, citizen empowerment and

changing communities in the Nigerian perspective, and VII. provide a conclusion for the various arguments to be presented in this paper.

Understanding the Basic Concepts

In this section, the basic concepts that will be encountered in this lecture will be briefly explained. These concepts are: a. Education, b. Quality Education, c. Power, d. Citizen Empowerment, and e. Changing Communities.

a. Education

Education is a fundamental human right and the most powerful instrument for development and transformation - for the individual and society. It is the development of desirable qualities in people. It is a social process which is expected to bring positive changes in the knowledge and behavior of the learner. Education endows learners with the requisite affective, cognitive and psychomotor abilities necessary for effective living in an ever changing society (Nwosu, 2015).

The major goal of education is to bring about learning/desirable changes in behavior in these domains of education. Education can be formal, informal, non-formal. Learning is both a process (of acquiring knowledge, skills and attitudes) and the result of that process; a means as well as an end; an individual's practices, as well as collective endeavour (UNESCO, 2013). It is usually a multifaceted reality, defined by the context of knowledge. Knowledge here means the way in which individuals and societies apply meaning to experience. It can be seen broadly as the information, understanding,

skills, values and attitudes acquired through learning. Education can thus be defined as the aggregate of processes through which an individual acquires knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and all other forms of behavior that are of positive value to the individual and society. Because it is necessary for useful living, and is a social good and key that any nation can use for development, an education that can be qualified as 'quality' is very crucial, and makes the difference in its outcome, hence the need for quality education.

b. Quality Education

The concept 'Quality' in education can be elusive and its multiple meanings can reflect different ideological, social and political values (Sayed, 1997). Many definitions of quality in education exist, testifying to the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept. The terms efficiency, effectiveness, equity and quality have often been used synonymously (Adams, 1993).

Considerable consensus exists around the basic dimensions of quality education today, however. Quality education includes:

- Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace;
- Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skillful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities;
- Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society (UNICEF, 2000).
- Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities;
- Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported

in learning by their families and communities.

This definition allows for an understanding of education as a complex system embedded in a political, cultural and economic context. This paper will examine research related to these dimensions. It is important to keep in mind that these dimensions are interdependent, influencing each other in ways that are sometimes unforeseeable. This definition also takes into account the global and international influences that propel the discussion of educational quality (Motala, 2000; Pipho, 2000), while ensuring that national and local educational contexts contribute to definitions of quality in varying countries (Adams, 1993). Establishing a contextualized understanding of quality means including relevant stakeholders. Key stakeholders often hold different views and meanings of educational quality (Motala, 2000; Benoliel, O'Gara & Miske, 1999). Indeed, each of us judges the school system in terms of the final goals we set for our children our community, our country and ourselves (Beeby, 1966). This implies that definitions of quality must be open to change and evolution based on information, changing contexts, and new understandings of the nature of education's challenges. New research - ranging from multinational research to action research at the classroom level - contributes to this redefinition. Education being a social process and entailing life experiences is influenced by, as well as influences, several factors of the society. One of such factors is power and the nature/structure of social organization etc. Another factor is changes in the community which education process is being considered.

c. Power

Power is a core aspect of every discussion about social organization, and an integral dynamic of politics. Martin Luther king

Jr, according to grassroots policy project (2001) defined power as “the ability to achieve a purpose, whether or not it is as good or bad depends on the purpose”.

Power is used in this paper as: (a) the ability to influence others to believe, behave or value, as those in power desire them to, and (b) the degree of control over material, human, intellectual and financial resources exercised by different sections of society (Petress, 2016). This very important concept will be explained in greater details in subsequent sections of this paper. Still connected to the concept of power and education is another term involved in this discourse, namely, empowerment.

d. Empowerment

Empowerment, with its root word from ‘power’, is a process of reducing and/or reversing the imbalance that may have resulted from a negative exercise of power in a society/context (Cordaid, 2016). Every empowerment process aims at challenging predominant assumptions about power and its exercise in a context/society. Empowerment (process) helps people re-gain control of their lives. It fosters power in people for use in their own lives, their communities, and their societies, by enabling them to decide or act, unlike before, on issues they define as important (Page & Czuba, 1999). The cumulative effects of the actions of those who are empowered manifest in the changes that manifest in their communities

e. Community and Changing Communities

A community refers to a group of people who share a common place, experience, or interest. It refers to people that live in the same area, same neighborhood, same city or town, same state or country, and so on, or those who share same interests (as we have research communities) or work in the same place (as we have ‘University Community’).

In this discourse the community will simply refer to a group of people that live in the same place, or share common experiences and interests, or work in the same place. Since

communities are inhabited by people with lives, and life is dynamic, therefore, communities are dynamic, that is, are changing. When can a community be said to be changing, and in what direction? What can be used as indicators of the direction(s) of change(s) for a community? To answer these questions, it is important to consider what is meant by ‘changing communities’ as a variable in this paper.

Indices of Changing Communities

The term, ‘changing communities’ is given an initial consideration in this paper as a positive and life-long situation, and from two perspectives: (i) as a process (better, as an act) of effecting something positive in communities, and (ii) as a description of what is actually happening in a context.

(i) **‘Changing Communities’ as a Process of Acting to Effect Changes:** In this usage of this term, ‘changing communities’ connotes demands for actions from members/agents in the communities in question to make changes happen. This understanding of the term ‘changing communities’ implies demands and expectations that it is the people in a community who act – engage in specific, relevant, positive, activities/actions – with the intention to bring about positive and life-enhancing changes in the community. This perspective to ‘changing communities’ implies demands for action. The logic model (fig.1) provides some explanations regarding the processes and requirements for changing communities.

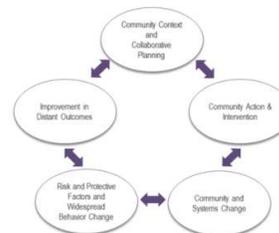


Fig.1. Processes and Requirements for Changing Communities (Fawcett 1998)

Fawcett (1998) has described the logic model for explaining the process of community change and development as shown in fig.1 above.

1. **Community Context and Planning**

The first step entails understanding the context in which people act. These include their experiences, dreams and desires for better life and what propels or drives them to do or want to do what they are doing. Experiences can include problems especially poverty, Jobs and family demands, Drug use, Health problems, housing problems etc.

Within this context, the people may come together to identify these issues that matter to them. With this understanding of context, they can now move forward with planning, preferably collaboratively, to bring about desirable and enduring changes.

2. **Community Action and Intervention**

Here after planning, the community follows by action – going out and doing what they desire to do. This step may meet with many bumps or resistance. However, the ability to surmount this opposition depends on the responses and resilience of the group depending on the situation.

3. **Community and System Change**

The goal in this step is to bring about community and system changes. Community change here means developing a new program or modifying an existing one, bring about a change in policy (such as grant making policy) or adjusting a practice related to the group's mission (Fawcett 1998). System change is similar but operates on a broader level such as a business organization etc.

4. **Risk and protective Factors and Widespread Behaviour Change:** There is need to be aware of and decrease “risk factors” and increase “protective factors” that may face community members as changes occur – These factors are aspects of person's environment, or features for the problems to exist- These are the

likely (risk factors) or less likely (protective factors) for changing a given problem. Example when embarking on eradicating Drug Abuse in a community, easy accessibility is a risk factor. The environmental change should effect the behavior of large number of people in the community positively.

5. **More Distant Outcomes**

Reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors will help enhance improvement in more distant outcomes for the issue being addressed. Thus, the widespread behavior change should effect the “bottom line” – the community -level indicators of improvement in the organisations long-term goals.

In this paper, this aspect of “changing community” which entails community members' active participation is preferred since this relates positively to citizens' empowerment.

(ii) **'Changing Communities' as a Description of States of Affairs:** In the other usage of the term, 'changing communities' connotes an effort to describe the indices of what is happening in communities which qualify those communities as being considered as changing, transforming. This involves merely outlining what indices can be referred to as empirical evidence to support a claim(s) that a society/community is changing for good.

Depending on the aspect of the issues of this paper being considered, these two perspectives of 'changing communities' are equally relevant.

Considering 'changing communities' as a description of states of affairs warrants that there be specific indicators of (positive) changes in any community considered to be changing. The table below presents some of the indicators and aspects of positive changes in any community.

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Aspects of Change	Indicators of Change	Further Indicators
Economic Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less Poverty in Communities • Improvements in level of household income • Improved productivity • Improved employment opportunities • Increase in life expectancy at birth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • income, poverty rate • ability to gain employment • access to affordable housing • access to quality education • access to affordable childcare • access to goods and services • access to micro-credit • access to good roads and affordable transportation • access to portable water • access to electricity
Social Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy level • More Vibrant Communities • More Community Engagement • More Collaboration in Communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to quality education • A vibrant community is one where committed citizens work together to build a community that is caring, prosperous and sustainable. • This entails having bold visions and inspired actions and collaboration in the work and learning of such citizens.
Political Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced level of political participation by the citizenry • Robust engagement with elected representatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More citizens registering for, voting and contesting elections than was previously the case. • Articulating community needs and preferences and pushing same through their representatives to the state and/or national agenda.
Economic Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less Poverty in Communities • Improvements in level of household income • Improved productivity • Improved employment opportunities • Increase in life expectancy at birth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • income, poverty rate • ability to gain employment • access to affordable housing • access to quality education • access to affordable childcare • access to goods and services • access to micro-credit • access to good roads and affordable transportation • access to portable water • access to electricity

(Some of the ideas were adapted from Francisco, Hyra, Paine-Andrews, Schulz, Russos, Fisher, & Evensen, 1998, some others by this author).

The quality and quantity of these indicators reflect the quality and quantity in any community. Where on the other hand these indicators are absent, or inadequately present, then the community can desire for change and engage in the activities that will lead to these changes. This is where the role of leaders come into our consideration as some of the pre-requisites for bringing about desired changes in communities.

Leadership and Social Justice as Factors Important in Changing Communities

Social Justice emerged as a result of discrepancies, man's inhumanity to man, inequalities and inability to meet up with the varied needs and desires of members of the society. To Rawls (2003) therefore, social Justice equates fairness. He conceives social justice as the ability to assure the protection of equal access to liberties, rights and opportunities as well as taking care of the least advantaged members of society. Social Justice is seen as the increasing improvements of the wellbeing of the masses through equitable enjoyment of economic, political and social rights. The pursuit of social Justice for all is at the core of the United Nation's mission to promote human rights, development and human dignity.

Some of the indices of social justice therefore are

- Equal human rights and equal dignity
- Realization of civic, social and economic rights
- A vision of a future more inclusive society in which the basic needs of all people are met
- A more equitable distribution of power and opportunity
- Empowering marginalized groups to advocate and defend their interests
- 'Doing good is different from changing things'... 'and justice needs change'

- Changing power relationships between citizens, government, business and civil society
- Transforming the people who are part of the problem to become part of the solution
- Access to assets and capabilities to reverse poverty and injustice

For some time now, the idea and practice of leadership has figured prominently in efforts to improve communities. Leadership is a widely misunderstood concept. It is at the core of administration. It is a position of responsibility and service to an organization, agency and or state. Thus, leadership is the pillar of any form of social organization. Okoye (2011) sees leadership as a responsibility of governance and a vocation of administration, guidance and direction of a particular group by a selected/elected head. Arising from the above, a leader becomes the measure of all things and development within his jurisdiction/sphere of influence. Thus, the development of the led are placed in the hands of the leader. Furthermore, the success or failure of the state and or an organization etc., lies in the hands of the leader. Quality leadership is meant to protect social justice for changing communities. What then do we mean by ‘Social Justice?’

What must leaders do for social justice to be realized?

- Strengthen our will to lead by articulating our personal response, values and understanding of injustice
- Accept conflict and difference as creative forces for change
- Work to shift institutional arrangements and systems towards participation, inclusion and equity
- Invest in the transformation of hearts and mindsets as much as of material conditions
- Expand access to knowledge and information
- Build community assets of leadership, organization and collaboration

- Strengthen the culture of giving and citizen participation
- Build new constituencies for social justice

Establishing the Conceptual and Practical Links

Power and Empowerment

VaneKlasen and Miller (2002:39) were correct to have noted so sharply that: “Power is an integral dynamic of politics. Defining, analyzing and building power is a vital and continual part of citizen-centered advocacy”. It is exercised in the social, economic and political relations between individuals and groups. However, power can be unequally distributed in these relations when particular individuals or groups gain and exercise greater control over available resources and sources, than others and the extent of control is dependent on how much of these resources are accessible and controlled by the individual or group.

Sources of Power

What are described as sources of power include the different sources that people can draw on to gain personal or group control over things and/or other persons? These sources include: capital (financial, natural, physical, social, human), labour and consumer, culture, location, and geography, information, knowledge, networks, technology, physicality (sex, age, health or physicality ability), and personality (charisma), and so on (Gaventa, 2006; Hunjan & Pettit, 2011). Other identified sources of power are:

- The power of people and citizen mobilization,
- The power of constitutional Guarantees,
- The power of direct grass roots experience and networking
- The power of solidarity and the power of moral conviction (Hunjan & Pettit, 2011)

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The idea of the above as legitimate sources of power challenges the view of power as limited to zero sum game - in other words, a finite resource that needs to be taken away from others (Hunjan & Pettit, 2011).

Modes of Expression of Power

Modes of expressing power are ways in which power operates from an actor in relation to another actor or other actors. These modes are as follows:

- a. Power-over
 - b. Power-with
 - c. Power-within, and
 - d. Power-to.
- a. **Power-over** is the most commonly recognized form of power, and has many negative associations for people such as repression, force, coercion, discrimination, corruption and abuse.

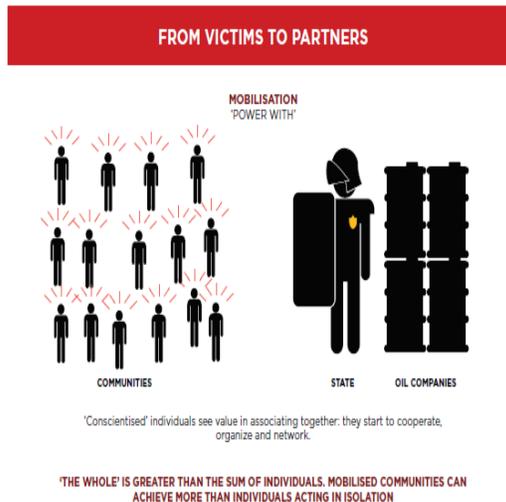
opportunities, lord power over those (the majority) who do not have such control. The effects of this form of expression of power perpetuates inequality, injustice and poverty as people are denied their legitimate rights to such things as health care facilities, employment opportunities, contributions to social-political changes, and so on. However, the other three expressions of power are considered as more collaborative (acceptable alternatives).

- b. **Power-with** has to do with collective action and mutual control for the good of the greater number (or for the good of all). In this form of expression of power, the people involved have the ability to act together.



(Cordaid, 2016)

Here, power is seen as a win-lose kind of relationship. Being powerful in this sense connotes taking it from someone (others) and then using it to dominate and prevent them from gaining control of themselves and/or things about and around them. This form is seen mainly in political settings, where the few who have control over available resources and decision-making



(Cordaid, 2016)

In expressing power with others, frameworks for mutual support, synergy of resources and strategies can be built; besides, in the context of *power-with*, bridges can be built across different interests, experiences, and knowledge of individuals and groups.

- c. **Power-within** refers to individual or collective sense of self-worth, -value and -

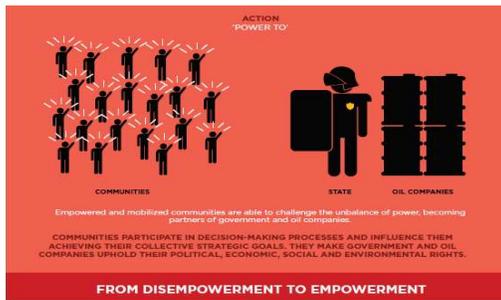
dignity. It includes the ability to recognize individual differences while respecting and appreciating those of others. *Power-within* is the capacity to imagine and to have hope. This affirms the common desire in human beings to search for dignity and fulfillment. It is the grounding basis for any idea of self-motivation towards personal goals and aspirations that is devoid of any fear of unwarranted negative control by an-other.



(Cordaid, 2016)

In fact, *power-within* is the form of power expression that gives meaning for the possibility of *power-to*.

d. **Power-to** depicts individuals' ability to act. This is rooted in the belief that everyone has within himself or herself the power to make a difference in the individual's life and/or community's life. It includes the capacity to shape one's life and the world.



(Cordaid, 2016)

Besides the forms of expressing power, Hunjan and Pettit (2011:12) had identified forms of power as (a) visible power, (b) hidden power, and (c) invisible power:

Visible	Hidden	Invisible
Visible power includes the aspects of political power that we 'see' - formal rules, structures, institutions and procedures informing decision-making. In other words, it is about how those people with power use existing procedures and structures to control the actions of others. Examples include: elections, political parties, budget, laws etc.	Hidden power is exercised when powerful people and institutions maintain their influence by setting and manipulating agendas and marginalising the concerns and voices of less powerful groups. Those with power see and understand these rules of the game; others don't. Examples include: quality of some consultation processes that exclude some voices; and setting the agenda behind the scene.	Invisible power operates in ways in which people will adopt belief systems that are created by those with power. Problems and issues are kept away not only from the decision-making table but also from the minds and hearts of different people including those affected by these decisions. This is when powerlessness is internalised. Examples include: negative stereotypes that limit the roles of certain groups.

As evident in the figure above, visible power manifests in observable decision-making processes and/or contexts where those who have political powers make decisions that affect the lives of others. Hidden power manifests in situations when powerful persons, groups, or institutions, carefully but strongly act in such ways as to make others to be either kept in the dark or kept out of proper knowledge of the details of what is actually involved in what they are doing. Invisible power, on the other hand is the form of power that shapes the meanings people give to their lives and the things around/about them. This form of power, because it shapes meanings, determine individual/group choices and actions. The figure below is an attempt to buttress each form of power.

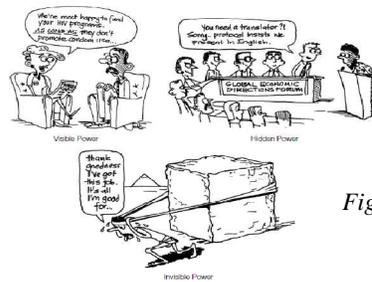


Fig. 2 [Hunjan & Pettit, 2011:12]

The views of Hunjan and Pettit (2011) on faces of power re-echo an idea presented earlier about *power-over*. For this reason, it is necessary to note that there are three interactive dimensions of *power-over* that shape the parameters of political participation and advocacy. They range from the more obvious and visible, to those that operate largely unnoticed behind the scenes (Gaventa, 2006; VaneKlasen & Miller, 2002).

VaneKlasen and Miller went ahead to reiterate that it is easier to discuss strategies used to influence and engage in the observable/visible power than to attempt to do same when hidden and invisible powers are at play. This is because in these latter cases, power tends to be concealed and carefully/cunningly embedded in cultural and social norms and practices.

The above ideas provide the basis for explaining the fact that power can also be exercised by various people, in different ways, in any given context. Thus, a context for the exercise of power can be described as a power-space (Hunjan & Pettit, 2011). Identifying the characteristics of these different areas or spaces in which different people exercise their power is very crucial in determining entry points for changes in a society. Power-spaces, understood in this framework, refer to the places (contexts) where opportunities for formal and informal interaction help people to shape the decisions and rules that affect their lives (Gaventa, 2006; Hunjan & Pettit, 2011). Gaventa (2006) and Hunjan and Pettit (2011) also agree that there are three types of power-spaces. These are: (a) closed spaces, (b) invited spaces, and (c) created/claimed spaces.

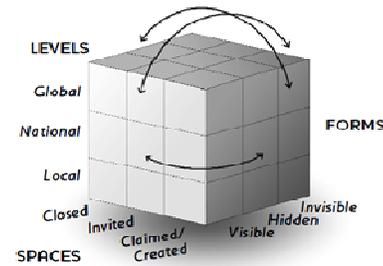


Fig. 3: The 'power cube': the levels, spaces and forms of power (Gaventa, 2006:25)

- ❖ Power-spaces are considered as *closed* when decisions are made behind closed doors – often without providing opportunities for inclusion. This may include formal spaces that are open only to those in official positions or as formal representatives. For instance, cabinet meetings, boards of directors, local government councils, and so on.
- ❖ Power-spaces are said to be *invited* when various kinds of authorities invite people to participate in decision-making processes as citizens, beneficiaries or users. Although this type of spaces could become opportunities for genuine collaboration, agendas are often pre-determined as since in situations of public consultations.
- ❖ Power-spaces are described as *created/claimed* when less powerful people come together to create their own space, and set their own agendas. For instance, grassroots campaigns, neighbourhood meetings, social movements, and so on (Gaventa, 2006; Hunjan & Pettit, 2011). Hence, while closed power-spaces indicate disempowerment of citizens or of those in a community, invited and created/claimed spaces indicate, in varying degrees, empowerment of citizens. These two spaces (invited and created) make empowerment possible.

There are also three realms of power, according to Hunjan and Pettit (2011). These are: (a) the public realm of power (which concerns aspects of one's public life – what is visible such as employment or role in the community); (b) the private realm of power (which includes family, relationships, friends, marriage, and so on); and (c) the intimate realm of power (which refers to the psychological – such as self-esteem and -confidence – aspects of an individual's life where the type of power at work determines one's degree of control of things about/around the person, including one's control of his/her psychological states and emotional reactions). Related to the realms of power and the classification it entails, is the idea that in today's world, power necessarily has to be considered as multilayered, multi-leveled, and multifaceted. This is because power can be exercised at various levels: global, regional, national, local, community, household, individual, and so on.

From the discussion on power, it can be deduced that power can be transferred from people to a group (politicians), and can also be generated within oneself when one realizes his/her potential. When people are bereft their power, they feel powerless. Powerlessness, which can result from *power-over*, is a very dangerous situation in any individual or group's life; it can be catastrophic since it involves disempowering one of his or her right, or even the need and strategies for expressing power by the individual. However, empowerment can help alleviate such situation.

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At the core of the concept of empowerment is the idea of power already defined as the ability to control. Empowerment can be defined as a process of reducing and/or reversing the imbalance that may have resulted from a negative exercise of power in a place (Cordaid, 2016). Empowerment is a process that challenges

predominant assumptions about power and its exercise in a context/society. The end-result of every successful empowerment (process) is that it helps people re-gain control of their lives. It fosters power in people for use in their own lives, their communities, and their societies, by enabling them to decide or act, unlike before, on issues they define as important (Page & Czuba, 1999).

According to Page and Czuba (1999), empowerment is multidimensional, it is social, and it is a process. It is considered as multidimensional because it occurs at various levels (individual, group, and community) and within various dimensions of an individual or society's life: sociological, psychological, economic, and so on. It is considered a social process because it occurs in relationship with other persons. And, like any process, it is similar to a path or journey: it develops as it is being worked on.

The possibility of empowerment depends on two things. Firstly, empowerment presupposes that predominant mode of exercising or expressing power in any context can change. The logic of this presupposition is that if power cannot change, if it is inherent in positions or people, then empowerment is not possible, and therefore not conceivable in any meaningful way. Secondly, the concept of empowerment depends on the idea that power can expand. The logic of this second reason for the possibility of empowerment is that conceiving power as merely about control and domination of others limits our ability to understand and define empowerment. Empowerment assumes that power should not be understood as zero-sum, as something that one gets at the expense of another, cutting the giver off from power. This implies that power remains in the hands of the powerful only. This negates the way power is experienced in most interactions. Thus, the conception of the exercise of power as a fluid (changeable)

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phenomenon that takes place in relationships, provides a rational and dependable basis for the possibility of empowerment of citizens of any community.

The term "citizen" can be defined as someone who lives in a particular town, community, state, country, and so on, or someone who legally belongs to a particular country and has rights and responsibilities there (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English - New Edition for Advanced Learners*, 2009). Citizens' empowerment means a process whereby the citizens of a society re-gain their control of their lives, their community in their decisions and actions. It also means that citizens are so empowered for the primary purpose of bringing about positive changes in their lives and communities.

Beyond the above framework for understanding empowerment in this paper, it is necessary to emphasize that empowerment as a concept, is located within the discourse of community development and is connected to concepts of self-help, participation, networking and equity. Within the development community, empowerment has been used to refer to the following:

- Popular participation, a concept that has gained increased popularity within the development agenda;
- Promotion of community development through self-help with emphasis on the process, rather than on the outcome of particular development projects;
- Transformation of economies into self-reliant, endogenously developed communities; and
- Good Governance, legitimacy and creativity for a flourishing private sector.

The concept of empowerment has evolved within the development discourse. It has dethroned the term "participation", which lost some of its currency since the 1980s. Empowerment came into vogue in response to the situation where people could "participate" in a

project without having the power to decide on the critical issues related to the project. However, empowerment appears to mean different things to different people.

According to Rappaport [1987], empowerment conveys both a psychological sense of personal control or influence and a concern with actual social influence, political power and legal rights. McArdle [1989] defines empowerment as "the process whereby decisions are made by people who have to bear the consequences of those decisions". This implies that it is not the achievement of goals, as much as the process of deciding that is important. However, people who have achieved collective goals through self-help are empowered, as they have through their own efforts and by pooling their knowledge, skills and other resources achieved their goals without recourse to an external dependency relationship. These are some of the reasons most perspectives on empowerment emphasize the need to build capacity in societies to respond to the changing economic and political environment. For example, following its establishment in September 1998, the Black Economic Empowerment Commission (BEEC) of South Africa has defined Black Economic Empowerment as "an integrated and coherent socio-economic process, located in the context of national transformation that is aimed to redressing the imbalances of the past" [Enterprise, 1999 cited in Gergis, 1999:6].

The fundamental goal of empowerment, therefore, is to help individuals within the society to improve the quality of their own lives and share equitably in Citizen Economic Empowerment in Botswana the benefits of economic growth. Growth that depends on constant infusions of grants or subsidized financing from government or other donors is inherently unsustainable. Empowerment is about helping people unleash their creative and productive energies to

achieve sustainable growth and continuous improvement in their living standards. More generally, empowerment means engaging the relevant stakeholders in a given process by applying the principles of inclusiveness, transparency and accountability. As such, the empowerment concept goes beyond the notions of democracy, human rights and participation, to include enabling people to understand the reality of their environment (social, economic, political, ecological and cultural) and to take the necessary actions to improve their well-being.

To empower means either to strengthen one's belief in his (her) self-efficacy or to weaken one's belief in personal powerlessness. Therefore, any real empowerment must be "self-empowerment". There must be an internal urge to influence and control [Conger and Kanungo, 1988]. People are empowered when they feel an enhancement of their abilities to control, influence or cope with their social or economic roles.

The motivational dimension of empowerment involves various factors:

- First, people will not be empowered if they do not want to be. They have to be motivated intrinsically; they have to believe in the merits and prospects of empowerment.
- Second, empowerment is about creating the conditions conducive to enhancing motivation to perform by developing the person's sense of self-determination and enhancing his (her) belief in self-efficacy.
- Third, empowerment entails providing the individual with the ability to perform – the necessary skills, knowledge, and so on. It also entails giving a fair opportunity to perform.

As indicated above, the concept of empowerment goes one step further than participation because people can participate in a given process without having the power to make critical decisions related to the activity or process they are involved in (Gergis, 1999).

For groups or communities to be empowered, they must adopt a more collective and more political stance towards external change agents, and they must use that empowerment to challenge the conditions under which development takes place [Gounden and Merrifield, 1994]. In that sense, empowerment can be said to involve three kinds of power [Friedman, 1992]:

- Social power, which is concerned with access to productive skills, material goods and information.
- Political power, which concerns the involvement of individuals in the decision making processes which affect their lives. Political power is not limited to formal elections, but through collective actions the interests of those organized may be promoted in the absence of, or in addition to, any formal political process.
- Psychological power, which describes the individual's sense of potency, to what extent the person believes that he (she) is able to influence the situation around him (her).

Psychological empowerment is often the product of social and/or political power, but it cannot be reduced to either. In fact, lack of psychological empowerment will render all other forms of empowerment ineffective. Psychological empowerment is, therefore, a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for economic empowerment.

Economic empowerment of citizens means that disempowered citizens take responsibility for their own material gains on an on-going basis and become managers of their own development. As citizens gain awareness and self-confidence, they realize that they can be self-reliant in pursuing their own economic dreams. Citizen empowerment is a process of validation and encouragement. This means providing incentives and opportunities for making business. It does not mean, however, that citizens should be shielded from

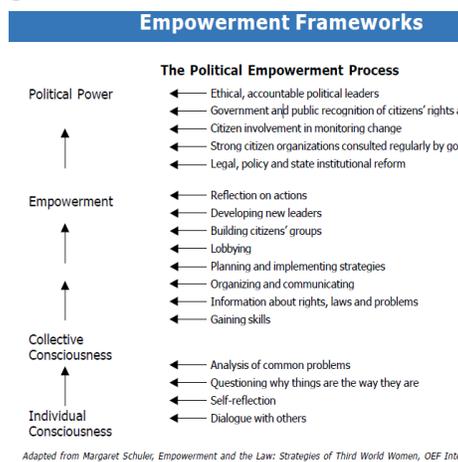
Education and Citizens' Empowerment for Changing Communities

the consequences of making economic decisions. Nor should it create price distortions and increase inefficiency in the economy. The overriding objective of citizen economic empowerment should be the expansion of income (and employment) generating activities for as many citizens as possible, without sacrificing efficiency.

More generally, economic empowerment strategies include six main categories:

- Financial intervention to assist local business activities (increased access to credit);
- Enterprise development for citizens (increased access to skills, business and management training and improved production technologies);
- Marketing strategies for locally produced goods and services (increased access to markets);
- Bargaining strategies (for higher wages, better working conditions, etc.) for citizen employees;
- Job creation (promotion of labour intensive projects); and
- Training and Education that is responsive to skill requirements in the economy.

On a general note, VaneKlasen and Miller (2002:55) thinks that no matter the dimension of empowerment being considered, there are specific 'frameworks' for engaging in empowerment.



The figure above shows that every form of empowerment begins with consciousness at the individual level and aims at sharing of power with by those previously disempowered and removed from power-spaces. The figure above, which did not separate individual empowerment from collective (community/group) empowerment agrees with the views of Cordaid (2016) on the idea of 'complementarity of empowerment', that is, that the empowerment of individuals necessarily precedes, and mingles with that of the community, as shown in the figure below on the figure representing the common stages of every empowerment process.

(Cordaid, 2016:10/11) lists five stages of (individual and) community empowerment. These stages are:

Stage 1: Capacity and Knowledge – involving the acquisition of knowledge and skills by individual members of a community, through education. It also includes employment opportunities resulting from acquired educational certificates and acquired skills.



This stage leads to what VaneKlaren and Miller (2011) termed individual consciousness of their situation of being disempowered.

Stage 2: Confidence and Attitude – having gained knowledge and acquired skills, individuals will gain confidence in themselves and what they can meaningfully do for themselves and their communities. They will increase and widen their aspirations, as well as change their attitudes towards whatever can be

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done to realize their aspirations and/or destroy whatever threatens to stop them from realizing same.

2. CONFIDENCE AND ATTITUDE

Impart life skills to community members, build their awareness of socio-economic and political rights and obligations of government, support their aspirations, show them how they can have their needs fulfilled and build their confidence that their lives can be improved through non-violence.



INDIVIDUALS WILL BECOME SELF-RELIANT, INDEPENDENT AND WILL CONFIDENTLY WORK TO REALISE THEIR DREAMS AND IMPROVE THEIR COMMUNITIES THROUGH NON-VIOLENT ACTION.

Stage 3: Community Inclusiveness and Cohesion

3. COMMUNITY INCLUSIVENESS AND COHESION

Support peacebuilding activities, inclusive leadership and decision-making processes.



ONLY PEACEFUL AND COHESIVE COMMUNITIES ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO BE ABLE TO CHALLENGE THE UNBALANCE OF POWER AND REALISE THEIR VISION OF PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT.

In this stage, the awareness of the individuals of what they can do as individuals, what they need to do as a group, and what they cannot do unless they team up as a group leads to what VaneKlaren and Miller (2011) termed ‘collective consciousness’ in their framework for empowerment. This, in this stage, people in a community come to the realization of the fact that only peaceful and cohesive communities can team up to locate their common interests, to synergize and strengthen themselves, and to be strong enough to realize whatever may be their visions.

Stage 4: Community Cooperation and Organization – This is the result of the collective consciousness that defines the third stage.

4. COMMUNITY COOPERATION AND ORGANISATION

Promote solidarity, self-help initiatives, collaboration of different community groups and inter-community networking.



MUTUAL TRUST AND SOLIDARITY IN RESOLVING COLLECTIVE PROBLEMS CREATES STRONG BONDS THAT PROVIDE INVALUABLE SUPPORT IN DIFFICULT TIMES AND ARE NECESSARY FOR UNDERTAKING COLLECTIVE ACTIONS.

The ability to convince themselves that their interests are the same, that each of them has something to contribute to make their interests and visions realizable – on the single condition of solidarity – leads to mutual trust and solidarity. The arrival of the members of any community to this stage of mutual trust, collaboration, organized efforts in solidarity, creates strong bonds that provide invaluable support required to realize any form of vision or goal. This is the stage where the framework for empowerment is consolidated.

Stage 5: Community Participation and Influence

5. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND INFLUENCE

Mobilise community leaders, including women and marginalised groups, to develop a common vision and action plan and support them to engage the government and influence its decisions.



GRASSROOTS MOBILISATION OF EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKING AND CAN HELP ACHIEVE THEIR COLLECTIVE LONG TERM GOALS OF COMMUNITIES AND HAS THE POTENTIAL TO SHIFT THE DYNAMICS OF POWER.

Communities that are knowledgeable, confident, cohesive, inclusive and organized can become agents of change and are able to participate in decision making to uphold their basic social, political, economic and environmental rights.

Mutual trust and solidarity and the two faces of a single factor that makes a community capable of realizing just any goal – no matter the odds. Thus, at the stage, a community is considered to be already empowered since, by being knowledgeable (Stage 1), confident (Stage 2), cohesive (Stage 3), and organized in mutual trust (Stage 4), they make themselves very powerful and strong agents for whatever form of change they may desire at whatever point in their history. Thus, these are the stages that make empowerment possible. And, once a community is so empowered, such a community will continue to record positive changes in the individuals and community’s life.

The last section of this paper already provided the conceptual and practical link among power, empowerment and changing communities. This is because, as evident in that

section, the causal relationship among these three concepts are already established, and will be further explored on a wider scale below.

Quality Education and Citizens' Empowerment for Changing Communities

Education is the most powerful instrument for development and transformation - for the individual and society. It is a social process which is expected to bring positive changes in the knowledge and behaviour of the learner. Education can be summarily defined as an aggregate of processes through which an individual acquires knowledge, values, attitudes and all other forms of desirable behaviours that are not only for individual successful living but also for positive value to the society to which he/she belongs. Although education is necessary for useful live and, is a social good and key that any nation can use for development, the quality is also crucial and makes the difference in its outcome, hence the need for quality education.

Quality education can be summarized as one that satisfies basic learning needs and enriches the lives of learners and their overall experience of living. Such education must effectively and positively impact on the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of the learners. On a wider scale, quality education can rightly be said to have a deeply causal effect on any possibility of bringing changes in communities. Hence, Audrey Hepburn in Barret, Chawla-Duggan, Lowe, Nickel and Ukpo (2006) noted that "A quality education has the power to transform societies in a single generation, provide children with the protection they need from the hazards of poverty, labor exploitation and disease, and giving them the knowledge, skills, and confidence to reach their full potential." To reach one's full potentials implies being empowered. Hence, education empowers the citizens or members of the society to be able to work towards (sustainable) development in the society. What then are the trends in quality

education needed for citizens' empowerment for changing communities?

(a) Quality Education for Sustainable Development for Communities in the 21st Century

Sustainable development has been defined as "development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their own needs" (Eboh, Okoye, Ayichi, 1995:5). This implies that humanity's ability to survive may also require the rational use of renewable resources by refraining from disrupting the ecosystems, or over exploiting natural resources and by refraining from activities that destroy cultures, or societies but instead allow them to reach their potential (Nwosu 2015).

Sustainable development deals with issues of equity, stability, food security, co-evolutionary growth, and participation, and has economic, human, environmental, technological and institutional dimensions. UNESCO (2015) reported that the Millennium Development eight anti-poverty targets expected to be achieved by 2015 are not adequately achieved though some significant progress has been made. Same also obtains for Education for All (EFA) goals supposed to be achieved by 2015. To this effect, a post-2015 Substantial Development Agenda was proposed. This post-2015 SDGs, adopted during the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit (September 25, 2015), are seventeen in number. The new SDGs addressing the issues of poverty, hunger and food security, health/wellbeing, gender equality including in education, lifelong learning, sustainable management of environmental resources such as water, land, biodiversity, etc; energy (reliable, sustainable, clean, and affordable by all). Tackling of demographic issues such as migration; aging population; employment and decent work for all; promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and

fostering innovation; sustainable urbanization and consumption; combating Climate change; attainment of Justice for all, as well as peaceful and inclusive societies; strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the global partnership of sustainable development. It was agreed that quality education, which is one of the SDGs, should be significantly used in helping to achieve the other SDGs (Nwosu 2015). Quality education can here be used as instrument for citizens' empowerment to make them powerful and strong enough to tackle these problems and bring about desirable changes which may take some time.

Sustainable Quality Education would, therefore, provide both the young and the old, male and females, with the knowledge of these issues as well as the competencies needed to adapt and solve related problems. To this end, Quality Education should reflect these needs. Other related sustainable development trends include: humanistic and inclusive education, quality education for skill acquisition and lifelong learning.

(b) Humanistic and Inclusive Education for Citizens' Empowerment

We are living in a dynamic world where development in science and technology (especially digitalization) as well as globalization, are bringing about and consolidating changes internationally, nationally, and in communities. It becomes important that communities are not only abreast with these changes but must be prepared to tackle and if necessary act as strong agents for redress/necessary changes, or taking desirable humanistic positions (Nwosu 2015).

The Humanistic approach to education is one that stresses the need for an integrated approach to Science Education based on renewed moral and ethical foundation. Science Education alone cannot solve all the challenges of development and globalization. Yet, a humanistic

and holistic approach to Science Education can help in achieving a new developmental model whose economic growth must be guided by environmental stewardship and concern for peace, inclusion and social justice (UNESCO, 2015). Thus, unsustainable patterns of economic production and consumption that contribute to global warming, environmental degradation and upsurge of natural disasters, must be checked. Also, the ethical and moral principles of humanistic approach to development stand against violence, intolerance, and discrimination (against women, girls, the disabled, the elderly, indigenous people, and the poor) which entails exclusion (Nwosu 2015).

The right to education is to be seen as an enabling right of all for the realization of other economic, social and cultural rights, as well as for citizens' empowerment which serve as a catalyst for positive societal change, social justice and peace. This approach calls for a re-contextualization of education - a shift from the dominant utilitarian, economic tone prevalent in earlier times (schooling for mainly economic value) to the vision of quality education as public good with a fundamental role to play in personal and social development, thus providing a guide for a holistic education aimed at human and individual recognition and progress as opposed to that education aimed at building the human capital. This trend also has implications for and inclusive education that promotes learning for life. This makes for sustainable positive changes in communities as well as empowers citizens to continuously participate in activities that promote changes in their societies (Nwosu 2015).

(c) Quality Education and Skill Acquisition for Changing Communities in the 21st Century Global Competitive World

Quality education needs to be used more than ever before to ensure that individuals are better

equipped to be more resilient and able to acquire as well as apply career adaptive skills and competencies most effectively (UNESCO, 2012). These skills enhance employability which is an aspect of empowerment. Stuart and Dahm (1999) classified some of the skills as follows:

1. **Basic Skills:** Reading, writing, computational skills, science process skills, etc. These are essential as most employees work with information processing.
2. **Technical Skills:** Since workers use a growing array of advanced information, telecommunication and manufacturing technologies, there is the need for relevant skills as baseline requirements for many jobs.
3. **Organizational Skills:** In addition to academic and technical skills, a portfolio of skills is required for new systems of management as well as employee-customer interactions. These include communication skills, analytical problem-solving skills, creative thinking skills, interpersonal skills, negotiation skills, and management (including self-management) skills.
4. **Company-Specific Skills:** These are new forms of knowledge and skills relevant to specific company's needs, and driven by new technologies, market changes and competition.

The acquisition and application of the above and other skill demands need to be addressed by quality education.

A number of major global trends impact skill demands. These trends include: automation, globalization, workplace change and policies that are increasing personal responsibility, and so on. Jerald (2009) in explaining these trends pointed out that computer technology in the workplace has led to the automation of many job tasks previously carried out by human beings, thereby increasing unemployment. These are primarily

“routine” tasks which require following instructions – tasks that computer can do “better, faster and more cheaply than human beings”. However, there are some jobs that computers cannot (for now) easily handle. Human beings are increasingly called upon to handle such jobs. These are ‘non-routine’ tasks that require: (i) “expert thinking” – which is the ability to solve unexpected problems for which there are no predictable and programmable rule-based solution; and (ii) “complex communications” which involves interacting with others, to acquire information, to explain it, and if possible persuade or convince others about its importance (Jerald, 2009). Education should enhance the acquisition of such expert thinking skills not only for employment but to make the community able to sustain all positive changes that she may experience.

Globalization, which has made the world a global village, has led to a globalization of the economy. This has brought competition in the global labour markets among people in different geographical areas. There is also collaboration among workers in various countries. Thus, globalization has, like automation, reduced demand for less skilled labour. Staying competitive requires high level of creativity and innovation, in addition to the strong traditional skills. Automation and globalization have, therefore, led to radical restructuring in workplaces. Many companies, according to Jerald (2009:22), are now ‘flatter organizations “with less hierarchy and higher supervision, where workers experience greater autonomy and personal responsibility for the work they do. Work has also become much more collaborative, with self-managing work team increasingly responsive for tackling major projects. Increasingly, such work teams are global in nature, with much of the interaction taking place electronically”. Hence, jobs have become less predictable and stable, more vulnerable, and increasingly demanding more

adaptation from workers to new challenges and demands. Workers, therefore, need strong foundation skills as well as the ability to think independently, identify and solve problems on their own, work collaboratively, and learn new knowledge and skills as necessary. The situation of things in the highly competitive global job market requires individuals to increasingly shoulder burden of risks and responsibility for their personal and general community well-being, job security, health, etc. The ability to make rational and sound decisions have then become equally important (Nwosu 2015). Quality education should seriously consider these trends.

Experts have reported that deep content knowledge is very necessary for acquisition of competencies like critical thinking and problem solving. Effective teaching of relevant subjects will lead not only to knowledge but acquisition of skills and development of attitudes/values. Hence, all school subjects can be daily factored toward achievement of these skills for citizens' empowerment. It is not just the acquisition of skills but their proper application with the knowledge and attitudes for problem-solving that create the foundational knowledge for success in jobs and personal and community lives. Such application relates to practical literacies.

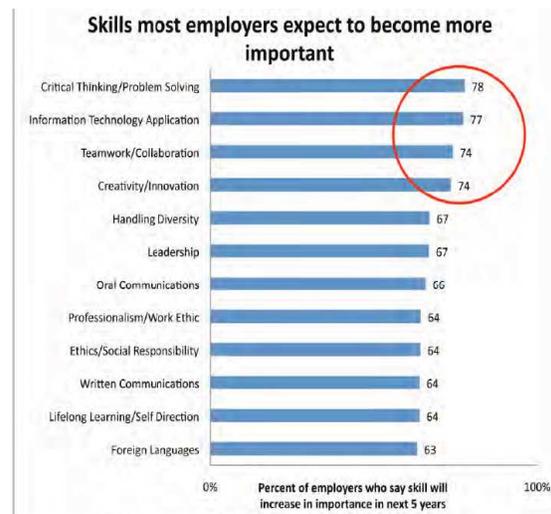
Skills and Knowledge Work Together



Hence, scientific literacy, according to Jerald (2009), relates to application of knowledge, skills and attitudes for rational decisional taking, and for participating successfully in civic responsibilities and real world challenges.

Other literacies needed in the 21st century include civic literacy, reading literacy, mathematical literacy, technological or ICT literacy. Such literacies have become very necessary for survival in a world that is increasingly complex, demanding at the same time, the individuals to take greater responsibility for their well-being (Nwosu 2015). Any community that is dynamic in orientation must also aim at its citizens acquiring these literacies which will help to empower them and bring changes not only to their lives but also to the way they appreciate and act in their communities.

The ability to apply these literacies and other capabilities across many facets of life is referred to as competencies. Broad competencies or skills most employers predict to become more important even in the future are shown in **Fig. 8**



Janold 2009 as cited in Nwosu 2015

(d) Quality Education for Adaptation to Employability Challenges and Facilitating Transition from School to Work/School/Industry Link

This trend is related to Skill acquisition based on anticipating employers' skill demand and changes in the society. Quality education should develop among students the required skills that will enhance employability. This demands closer collaboration between stakeholders active in schools and industries. International co-operations can help by providing avenues for knowledge sharing as well as enhancing capacities in anticipating change (UNESCO, 2015), (Nwosu 2015).

(e) Quality Education and a Shift from 'Lifelong Education' to 'Lifelong Learning' in Communities

Societies are dynamic. The wide range of development issues, ranging from globalization to the knowledge society, social cohesion, inclusion, exclusion, gender equality and democratic participation – issues explored against the backdrop of a number of tensions generated by technological, social and economic changes - call for a renewed vision of education that is inclusive, and reaffirms and broadens the concept of learning throughout life. This is necessary to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world where everyone is affected – old and young, male and female, and where everyone needs to adapt. Such learning is necessary because of its advantages of flexibility, diversity and availability at different times and in different places. It goes beyond the traditional distinction between initial schooling and continuing education. According to Tawil and Cougoureux (2013), lifelong learning is based on four pillars underlying education and life – learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together.

- **Learning to Know:** This is important because of the rapid changes brought about by scientific

progress and new forms of economic and social activity. This allows for combination of a broad general education with the possibility of working in depth on a selected number of subjects (Tawil and Cougoureux, 2013).

- Learning to do emphasizes the acquisition of vocational and practical skills necessary for a trade or profession, especially in a dynamic world witnessing large scale unemployment and vulnerable jobs. People, therefore, need to develop the ability to adapt to a variety of often unforeseen situations and to work in teams.
- Learning to be emphasizes the development of the potentials of human beings to the fullest. It is often driven by intrinsic motivation for self-actualization and sufficiency. These are all aspects of individual empowerment. This is needed for the 21st century where people need more than ever to exercise greater independence and judgement, combined with a stronger sense of personal responsibility for life and the environment, and for the attainment of common goals (Tawil and Cougoureux, 2013).
- Learning to live together gives the individual the sense of needing to develop an understanding of others: of their history, their traditions and spirituality. UNESCO (2013) explained further that such understanding would provide a basis for the creation of a new spirit, which, guided by the realization of the growing interdependence especially in addressing the present and future challenges of the dynamic world, would engender people to live together harmoniously and work to achieve common goals, as well as manage inevitable conflicts in an intelligent and peaceful way. This will help to address

the issue of terrorism and violence in communities, and this change is vital.

Lifelong learning can be promoted not only by schooling but also by creating “Public Awareness of Quality (PAS)”. This will help the public to get more knowledgeable and more involved with ethical decisions surrounding scientific research and technological development (Nwosu 2015).

(f) Quality Education for Good Leadership and Social Justice

Social justice and quality leadership are the most important issues of contemporary and changing societies. They are the needed panacea for citizens’ empowerment and participation for sustainable development. For these reasons, quality education is needed both for mastering them and for entrenching them in our communities.

Quality Education and Citizens’ Empowerment for Changing Communities: Implications

Quality Education represents a key component of adaptive capacity and change since it endows the individual with the knowledge, skills and attitudes for employment and empowerment necessary for positive change in the society. Quality Education must be thus transmitted to the present and next generations of any community for these changes to be enduring and sustainable. These requires framework of properly articulated educational policies and curriculum in different subject specializations.

a. Educational Policies

A dynamic community that requires positive and enduring/sustainable changes must address all the issues/requirement involved. These include: issues of Quality Education, Quality Leadership, Citizen Empowerment, Sustainable Development (Food, Security, Health, Security, Climate Change), and

Humanistic Inclusive Education (eg for Social Justice, Cohesion), Life Long Learning, Acquisition of Skills and Competencies, etc.

Very fundamental to policy-making is the role of governance as a process. This is because governance in every society includes the processes by which policies are formulated about a particular issue, priorities identified, resources allocated, and reform implemented and monitored. In the case of Science Education for life in a dynamic world, sound policies need to be formulated with greater focus on teachers and educators, as well as enhancing innovations based on research. These and more need to be well articulated in educational policies, since the policies define and drive educational objectives and curricular practices (Nwosu 2015).

b. Curriculum

The term curriculum means the set of courses offered in an educational institution, and constituting an area of specialization. Every curriculum should therefore be designed to enable students to acquire relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes, as well as apply them in real world situations to solve the problems they will be encountering in their life experiences. The curricular aspirations are translated into curricular objectives and practices.

c. Curriculum Objectives for Changing Societies

The curriculum objectives for quality educational Programmes at all levels of schooling in the 21st century should address among other things the challenges of disempowerment, development and globalization to be able to prove their relevance. Objectives in the curricula programmes at all levels should include or relate to:

- I. Increasing Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) literacies (Nwosu 2015).
- II. Quality education for acquisition of foundational knowledge skills and competencies (these include the science process skills, entrepreneurial skills, creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving and collaboration and ICT skills, as well as inter personal competencies called life and career skills).
- III. Quality education for the development of lifelong learning principles: Considering the global challenges and the role played by humans as well as the need to address humanistic and inclusive education, quality education for citizenship education becomes increasingly important and must include lifelong learning principles (the four pillars underlying quality education). These principles are: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together.

d. Curriculum Content for Citizens' empowerment and Changing Communities

More attention should be paid to the need for acquisition of the capability to transfer knowledge, skills and values to new situation (competencies). There is also the need for creativity and adaptability, as well as the need to strive for self-development, self-actualization, and self-efficacy. These should, therefore, define curriculum contents in the 21st century for continuous citizens' empowerment for changing communities. Thus, the subject-oriented subdivisions of education may not be expected to be very meaningful. This calls for interdisciplinary and even merging of, subjects at the school level so that conceptual knowledge in all the subject specializations, should include, where necessary, topics related to citizenship education, ICT-awareness, and skill acquisitions.

e. Pedagogy/Teaching Method

Quality education for citizens' empowerment should enhance the acquisition of the sustainability related competencies required for the 21st century such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and collaborative skills.

Problem-solving, creative and critical thinking skills as well as other competencies can be developed through inquiry/problem solving activities that can allow students time to use their imagination, and originality, so as to develop divergent, convergent associative and analytical thinking skills and attitudes needed to solve real life problems. To help achieve this, questioning should be extravagantly used in classroom discourse – open ended question. Emphasis should be made on teaching methods that can help “put the stars in the eyes of pupils” to enable problem-solving (Nwosu 2015).

Teaching methods like role play model, Argument Based Inquiry, and Model Based Inquiry, to enable the students learn how to handle specific disempowering experiences or to argue reasonably in defence of why they deserve to be empowered and/or bring changes in their communities.

f. Evaluation Method

Evaluation should be more comprehensive, authentic, and, where appropriate and possible, ICT-based, to ensure multiple learning, application and transfer. Part of what needs to be evaluated is appropriateness of teaching environment (Nwosu 2015).

g. Class Environment

The trend should be towards increasing democracy where students can question and interact with materials and with one another for their maximum development for sustainable living. Such classrooms should be well

equipped with material resources like instructional materials, ICT tools/gadgets, documentaries of people who succeeded in contributing in empowering their citizens and bringing about changes in their communities (Nwosu 2015).

h. Teacher Preparation

The task of the teacher in implementing the curriculum is enormous. Teachers are the most important agents for realizing quality citizenship education, and therefore constitute the primary variable in the educational system. The quality of education depends partly on the quality of teachers and can only be provided by quality teachers. Effective teaching in today's knowledge-intensive and information/ technology driven world with environmental and socio-political changes requires teachers who are competent in such matters. For teachers to be competent in citizenship education, they have to be aware of the requirements for citizens' empowerment, quality leadership, social justice, and so on; they should also be well trained in humanistic and inclusive education (where every child is respected, considered, and given equal opportunity. Teachers should realize that to encourage inequality, especially with gender, entails serious losses for society and is thus unsustainable), life-long learning, and skill development and acquisition needed for citizens' empowerment and changing communities. Such teachers must also be well groomed in the required learner-centred, activity- and problem-based pedagogies, and authentic evaluation practices (Nwosu 2015).

Quality Education, Citizens' Empowerment and Changing Communities: The Nigerian Perspective

The Nigerian government has always reacted to global challenges. Relevant policies relating to these global challenges have always been put in place. Nigeria has also always had

several development strategies and visions for sustainable economic and social development in the global context.

One of her pertinent policies is the national policy for information technology (IT). In this policy, the Nigerian government identified IT as the bedrock for national survival and development in a rapidly changing global environment, and challenges us to devise bold and courageous initiatives to address a host of vital socio-economic issues such as reliable infrastructure, skilled human resources, open government, and other essential issues of capacity building. To this effect, the Federal Government stated that the vision of the policy is to make Nigeria an IT capable country in Africa and a key player in the information society by the year 2050, using IT as the engine for sustainable development. The mission statement of the policy is to use IT for education, creation of wealth, poverty alleviation, job creation and global competitiveness.

An example of a development strategy launched in Nigeria is the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS). According to Nwosu 2015, the NEEDS goals include empowering people (health, education, environment, integrated rural development, employment and youth development), promoting private enterprises, security and rule of law, finance, regional integration, and globalization, and changing the way government does its work (public sector reforms, privatization and liberalization, governance, transparency, anti-corruption, service delivery, budget and expenditure reforms).

The Nigerian government sees education in general and Science Education in particular as instruments for achieving national aspirations. The most important policy addressing the issues of education in relation to the development of Nigeria is the National

Policy on Education. In this policy, the Nigerian government stated that education is the instrument par excellence for adaptation, change and for individual and national development (Federal Ministry of Education, 2004). The NPE contains some specifications which include: citizenship education, skill acquisitions for employment and empowerment, and so on.

In terms of quality education and EFA Goals, although much progress was recorded and the number of qualified teachers multiplied more than six times from 2010 to 2011, and planned gradual projections for 2012/2013 implied reduction in teacher-pupil ratio from 1:42 to 1:25 (approved by NPE), the 2013 State of Education Report described teacher quantities as problematic with teacher gaps for attaining EFA goals placed at several thousands. Hence, a lot more has to be done. A look at the Report on world development indicator by World Bank (2013) showed that Nigeria is still far way behind in fully implementing these goals (Nwosu 2015).

From the discussions so far, it can be seen that laudable policies and development strategies have been formulated in Nigeria, and relevant curricula have been developed. However, the major problem has been implementation. Nwosu (2011) noted that part of the problems related to implementation of laudable policies in Nigeria include: (a) poor funding partly due to corruption, (b) inadequate learning materials/resources leading to use of poor teaching methods, poor evaluation methods, and uncondusive learning environment, and (c) poor quality teacher education (Nwosu 2015).

In Nigerian schools, studies have shown that teaching is more of pumping in of ideas into learners. Methods used for course delivery are basically the traditional ones – mainly lecture and sometimes demonstration (Nwosu, 1991; Nwosu and Ibe, 2004; Adikwu, 2008). Compounding the issue of poor teaching and learning practices in our schools are the problems of large class sizes and lack of the required instructional resources

needed for inquiry, interactive and learner-based learning. These problems are mainly the result of poor funding.

Funding

Famurewa (2014) identified inadequate funding as the bane of tertiary education in Nigeria, leading to incessant strikes by workers and students. This is also true of all other levels of education. Although Nigeria is rich and should provide adequately for education, realizing its central position in development, this is not the case. There is a great divide between her funding (the reality) and the policy aspirations. Kpolovie and Ezezi (2013) found a significant difference between the total budgetary allocation to education in Nigeria, from 1960 to 2013 (5.74% mean) and the minimum 26% recommended by UNESCO.

Nigeria is supposedly rich in fossil energy and other natural resources. With these resource, Nigeria, when compared to other such nations that are rich in natural resources (Saudi Arabia, Dubai, etc), should have better quality education, infrastructure, and other development indicators. Unfortunately, this is not the case, mainly due to corruption.

Corruption

Corruption, broadly defined as the use of public office for private gain, exists in many forms. Bribery, fraud, extortion, influence peddling, kickbacks, cronyism, nepotism, patronage, embezzlement, vote buying and election rigging, all fit under the umbrella term of corruption (World Development Report, 2015). It is generally held that to use public office to benefit one's self, family and friends is widespread, expected and acceptable; in other words, it is a social norm throughout much of history.

Poverty and human rights violations have become rampant in Nigeria due to pervasive corruption and impunity among those

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who exercise public powers. Corruption pervades all through the webs of the Nigerian society – in governments, schools, including universities, market places, offices, classrooms, etc. Ordinary Nigerians consequently suffer severe deprivations of both economic and civil rights. Corruption being accepted as a norm in Nigeria is perpetuated by social pressure, expectations and mental models that holders of public positions who do not use their influence to assist friends and relatives risk derision and disrespect (World Bank, 2015). The high level of corruption and indiscipline are parts of the barriers to development and citizen's empowerment.



Viewed through a social lens, changing a negative social norm (like corruption) and its disheartening social implications, constitutes a collective action rather than simply the repression of deviant behaviour. It is hoped that Nigeria is marching towards the eradication of corruption as expressed by the current President, Muhammadu Buhari. It is a relief to know, in this regard, that the incumbent President of Nigeria has reiterated this desire to eradicate corruption during the United Nations Sustainable Development summit at New York which took place from 25th - 27th September 2015. Achieving these SDGs by 2030

implies that the Nigerian government must address the issue of funding and poor quality education at all levels in Nigeria. This means, particularly fighting corruption to ensure adequate funding of education to enable the creation of a conducive environment for education for sustainability. One of the ways forward for Nigeria in using Science Education for sustainability in a changing world would include eradicating the framework that sustains corruption so that education in general and Science Education in particular, will be effectively funded and taught in relation to the development of the 3 Hs (Head, Hand and Heart). This will result in education that is not only sustainable but also humanistic and inclusive. There is a dire need for production of responsible and accountable citizens who, using their acquired competences, can transform the infrastructural (bad roads, poor educational facilities, lack of basic amenities, etc) and economic, political and social ills in the country. The creation of a conducive environment for sustainability for life in a dynamic world can only be the result of the contributions of committed group and individual stakeholders involved in the educational sector (Nwosu 2015).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Let us examine the story of late Lee Kuan Yew (16 September 1923 – 23 March 2015). Born as Harry Lee Kuan Yew, informally known by his initials LKY, LKY read Law in England (Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge University, England). After his studies, he returned to Singapore and was elected the first Prime Minister of Singapore, governing for three decades. Lee is recognized as the nation's founding father, with the country described as transitioning from the "third world to first world in a single generation" under his leadership (Graham, 2015; Weatherbee, 2008). He is also the youngest to be elected in the

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office, at the age of 35. He is the longest-serving Prime Minister of Singapore. He presided over the expansion of Singapore's economy from a British Crown Colony into a first world country. During the three decades in which Lee held office, Singapore grew from a developing country to one of the most developed nations in Asia (<https://en.wikipedia.org>).

- ❖ As Singapore's Prime Minister from 1959 to 1990, Lee presided over many of Singapore's advancements.
- ❖ Singapore's Gross National Product per capita rose from \$1,240 in 1959 to \$18,437 in 1990.
- ❖ The unemployment rate in Singapore dropped from 13.5% in 1959 to 1.7% in 1990.
- ❖ External trade increased from \$7.3 billion in 1959 to \$205 billion in 1990.
- ❖ In other areas, the life expectancy at birth for Singaporeans rose from 65 years at 1960 to 74 years in 1990.
- ❖ The population of Singapore increased from 1.6 million in 1959 to 3 million in 1990.
- ❖ The number of public flats in Singapore rose from 22,975 in 1959 (then under the Singapore Improvement Trust) to 667,575 in 1990.
- ❖ The Singaporean literacy rate increased from 52% in 1957 to 90% in 1990. Telephone lines per 100 Singaporeans increased from 3 in 1960 to 38 in 1990.
- ❖ Visitor arrivals to Singapore rose from 0.1 million in 1960 to 5.3 million in 1990 (*Chan, Fiona; Ching, Choon Hiong, 2015*)

Singapore achieved a per capita income next only to Japan's in East Asia, and emerged as a chief financial hub in the region. He is responsible for grooming the people of Singapore as the most disciplined and hard dedicated and hardworking people in the world. Lee said that Singapore's only natural resources are its people and their strong work ethic (*Suryadinata, 2012*).

"I have spent my life, so much of it, building up this country. There's nothing more that I need to do. At the end of the day, what have I got? A successful Singapore. What have I given up? My life".

The above quotes on the marble are credited to Lee Kuan Yew of blessed memory. Can we find such leaders among the present Nigerian political elites? Your guess is as good as mine.

Association for Encouraging Qualitative Education in Nigeria (ASSEQEN) should continue to be in the forefront of building a better society and should have ambitious plans to develop further its provision of educational quality and access for children, and the leadership potential of young women across rural Nigeria. Partnership is critical to realizing these ambitions. The goal of poverty eradication and the fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for education and empowerment generally require the concerted effort of many partnerships, and depend upon the quality of those partnerships. ASSEQEN need vital supporters in government, media, international development, social entrepreneurship, research institutions, the corporate sector and private philanthropy.

The above ideas provide the background for the primary argument of this paper, namely, that quality education is a prerequisite for all forms of empowerment, and that once the citizens of any community are adequately empowered, including through properly mobilizing employment opportunities, such a community can be considered to have met the primary conditions for sustainable positive changes in the community. However, the second and very important argument of this speech is that communities do change when, and only when the citizens decide to involve themselves very actively in the processes of thinking, working, and bringing about the

desired changes in the society. Can we decide today to be active agents of positive changes in our communities? A 'Yes' answer should be the best result for this conference. That is the result I desire as I conclude this reflection with you.

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