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## LEADERSHIP AND NIGERIA'S DEVELOPMENTAL CHALLENGES: EDUCATION AS A PANACEA

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### **Abstract**

*Politics is concerned with attracting, searing and maintaining the welfare of a community, state or nation. It involves laying down principles that guide the state in its operation. It is a device intended for finding solutions to the socio-economic and technological problems of a nation. The relationship between politics, leadership and education was discussed. Interaction between politics and education process passion in secularist, civic leaders and educators, parents and the payers. It is a known fact that no one can take politics out of education. This paper examined the concept of politics, education, leadership and developmental challenges in Nigeria.*

Leadership is no doubt, a prominent quality and features of any institution or society. Where human beings exist, accountable leadership is required to give form and direction to interaction among the people as well as achieving yearnings and aspirations of the citizenry in all ramifications. This is why the form of leadership is very important in determining whether an organization or society will achieve its desired goals.

Accountable leadership, therefore, is necessary element in governance at any level of societal interrelationship. Nigeria has been groping for good and accountable leadership for a long time since independence (Wunsch and Olowu, 2015). Common experience and literature on Nigeria polity portray leadership at various levels of government as corrupt, selfish, weak and unfaithful (Wunsch and Olowu, 2015).

Government at all levels has not been adequately path-finding, accountable, innovative, and honest, Okecha (2009). The consequence is that leaders at local, state and federal levels only specialized in vain rhetorical promises which are not usually matched observable performance. It appears telling lies to the people and making the citizenry to believe those lies is an inevitable quality of political leadership in Nigeria, Aghayere and Walter (2015). The problem of accountable leadership has manifested in the inability of the political leaders to ensure good governance, peace and sustainable development in their various offices, Alimi (2009).

All over the world, the cardinal elements of accountable leadership are good governance and human development; but unfortunately these elements have been elusive and difficult to come by in most human societies. The case of Nigeria is in fact worrisome. The whole federal structure from the presidency to the local government level is in want of credibility, a situation that makes it difficult for an objective assessor to so that the Nigeria public Administration exhibits traits of good governance, Aiyede (2013). Political office holders often take political profession for self-enrichment rather than improving the lots of the downtrodden, Okocha (2009). Particularly, issues on the welfare of the legislators are much paramount to the law makers than the public good. At the state level, with reference to Osun State in the past political dispensation, draconian policies that promote poverty, tension, joblessness and insecurity were continually rolled out, Alimi (2015).

It may be stated that Nigerians seem tolerant of the leaders who invariably get asondancy through imposition or stage-managed democratic process. While remaining benevolent to their leaders, Nigerians show their resentment or approval in undisguised and overt characteristics. Expressed sentiments rather than suppressed indignation could serve as sufficient notice to the leadership class to modify its approach to leadership dispensation or indeed to relinquish authority to a more acceptable and perhaps new crop of leaders.

The national goal of a leader is to improve the social welfare of the people in area of education. it is nit possible for a leader to succeed with the cooperation of the followers. Docility of allowing the leaders to fool them without making any noise. In Africa, the leaders are always above the law without being called to order says, Chinedu (2017). Some leaders have succeeded in leading their nation into prosperity while others also left the country worse off. A good leader must be able to identify individuals who are equally concerned by the goals of the society. He must be able to realize that the citizens get fully involved in the process that promote the success of the society if they take part in making decisions relating to goals set for the society. When

members participate in solving the common problems, they learn a great deal about national task from each other as well as from the leader.

### **Concept of National Development**

Gboyega (2013) defines National Development as an idea that embodies all attempts to improve the condition of human existence in all ramifications. It implies improvement in material wellbeing of all citizens, not the most powerful and rich alone, in a sustainable way such that today's consumptions does not imperil the future. It also demands that poverty and inequality of access to the good things of life be remove or drastically reduced. It seeks for improve personal physical security and livelihood and expansion of life chances.

Any nation's development cannot be possible without adequate and clear cut policy on the way to educate its citizens as well as, where to educate them, in order to achieve set national objectives or goals. In Nigeria, this adequate and clear cut policy on education has been put down in black and white and on marble in the national policy on education. The National Policy on Education was initially muted in 1977 and has undergone several adjustment and fine tuning between 1981, 1989, 1998 and 2014. All geared towards ensuring that our national development is achieved through a proper and adequately planned educational system from the nursery, primary, secondary and tertiary education levels.

The whole idea, should be of relevance to the needs of individuals, and those of the society in consonance with the realities of our environment and the modern world; this will ensure our total sovereignty, independence, cohesion, freedom in line with a democratic, just, dynamic great and egalitarian society where there is replete opportunities for all and sundry born and unborn. Here we see education as a vehicle or instrument for national development through the formation of ideas, the interaction of person irrespective of ethnic, tribal, political and religious background towards integrations in national development and progress. This will create and bring about self realization, better human relationship, individual and national efficiency in the utilization of resources and effective citizenship that will enhance proper national consciousness, unity while leading to social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress in all ramification.

In other to realize all the above here, there was the creation and establishment of all sort of policy making bodies in form of commission at different times in our national life time towards seeing a national development growth and progress that is powered by the education of the citizens of the geographical definition called Nigeria. We have had the following (and many others):

1. Phelps-strokes commission in 1992-1925
2. Participation in the memorandum of education of African commission in 1935.
3. Participation in the memorandum on mass education in African society in 1943
4. Elliot commission in 1943

5. Phillipson report of 1948
6. Dike's commission of 1959
7. Ashby's commission of 1959
8. Nigeria constitution of 1960
9. Banjo's commission of 1960
10. Old man's commission of 1961
11. Education laws of 1962
12. Education regulations of 1964
13. Ikoku's committee
14. Somade committee report in 1969
15. We can go on and on till date with all kinds professional individuals from within and outside Nigeria participating in other to formulate policies, road maps, law, etc. for the country, Fafunwa (1974). Prior to this period, the missionaries dominated the educational proprietorship. Then the establishment of the schools was determined by the need of the church, and usually in area where the priest resides.

However, in the post independence era, the establishment of schools and schools policy shifted from religious to political. Here "politics" became the determination factors in educational issues in Nigeria.

During colonial era, the first attempt at having a unified education department for the whole country was when Dr. Eric hussy the former director of education in the North and that of the South as the head of a unified education department for the whole country.

As observed by kosemani and Orubite (2015), despite the unification of the departments, there was no common educational legislation for the entire county until the education ordinance of 1948. The regionalization policy introduced by the Arthur Richards constitution, 1964, was advanced by the Macpherson constitution of 1951. The constitutional development, by assigning more responsibilities to the region was responsible for the formulation of its own educational policies at all levels without reference to the central government. These led to the emergence of four different educational system in the country: the Eastern, the Northern, the Western and the Central government's educational systems (kosemani and Okorosaye-Orubite (2015).

### **Concept of Politics**

The term politics has been well articulated by educators and social scientist on the subject. They have both agreed that politics is not just restricted to political parties but it is also there in the Nigerian banks, markets, educational institutions, churches, sports, business, military establishment, commercials and industrial factors of our economy. According to African political scientist, Harold Lasswell, politics is defined as who gets what, when and how. This definition can easily be remembered because it is in the form of a slogan. Furthermore, it represent reality to a good extent especially in

Africa. Politics involves the allocation of scarce social economic and cultural resources, to individuals, to groups, region and classes.

Politics has also been defined as the governing of men/women. In his book the governing of man, the African political scientist Austine Ramney, discusses the relationship between those who govern and those who are governed, between ruler and the ruled. He argues that the relationship is central to political life (Nnoli, 2013). Among academics, politics is often defined as the authoritative allocation of values. Emphasis is put on how resources are allocated by the system of authorities in society. Pioneered by the African political scientist David Easton, it has abstract and comprehensive scope that makes it attractive and a possible source of laws of social life which some believe to be as unchanging as the laws of physical life. Politics could also be defined as activities that directly or indirectly associated with the emergence, consideration and use of state power. Okeke (2007) saw politics as a civilizing agent and a way of ruling in divided society without violence.

Whether defined in term of man being a political animals; the art of the possible who gets what, where and how the struggle for power or the authoritative allocation of resources and values, politic has the state as its center piece.

### **Concept of Education**

It is usually very tempting to begin a discussion on a topic like this by the formulating their definition. In philosophy, particularly the period between Socrates and G.E. Moore, the procedure was to start with the definition of the concept. However, to proceed this way in the 21<sup>st</sup> century it is to reveal certain insensitivity to one main contention of the recent revolution in philosophy, for these concepts have seldom been consciously erected to perform limited function in a confined system. They have all developed a rich life of their own and the concept of education is of this sort.

Education is one of the concepts that is very difficult to understand fully even among philosophers of education. Hospers (2012) held that, the more we come to know or understand a particular concept, the richer our facts of the concepts become, hence our facts about the concept of education are in no doubt richer now than they possibly were some hundred years ago. Hence we are in better position to discuss the concept much better than we could have done to century back.

It is vital for every society to develop a system of education through which it can inculcate to the young these vital values necessary for the survival of the society and the individual in particular. Hence a discussion of the concept of education cannot be anything meaningful without references to society. Peters in Asemah (2010) opined that education as a process whereby society in calculating the worth while things of the society into its people to be better able to cope with the problems of the society and contributes meaningfully to its well being and effective development. Ajaebgo and Ibesim (2011) defined education as training of the mind and character for effective performance. Ortyoyande (2015) viewed education to include all experiences and

knowledge, acquired through formal (schooling) or informal (folk stories) setting. According to Aliu (2011) education is said to be the methods by which a society transmits from one generation to the next, its knowledge, culture and values.

He further stressed that education, in the eye of an individual is the process by which a person learn facts, acquires skills and develop abilities and attitudes necessary for the work, place and survival.

According to Olayiwola (2011) educational programmer could be said to be functional. If it consistently justifies that purpose for which it was adopted, despite all odd; Emayo Ehigie (2011) held that education is a powerful agent of progress and development. Fafunwa (2004) defined education as the aggregates of all the processes by which a child or young adult develops the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behavior which are of positive value to the society in which he lives. From the foregoing, it can inferred that education is necessary for economic and social development.

### **Conclusion**

Politics is concerned with attracting, searing and maintaining the welfare of a community, state or nation. It involves laying down principles that guide the state in its operations. It is device intended for finding solutions to the socio-economic and technological problems of a nation. The relationship between politics and education has been discussed and have come to the conclusion that there is a thin line relationship between politics and education. politics apparently directs education. We have also seen that politics has been at the forefront of education in Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

1. The governing councils of educational institutions and boards should be given full control over the internal governance of educational institution in Nigeria.
2. There should be no limitations of government both at the Federal and States level on the political influence of educational institution in Nigeria.
3. The political variables such as sectionalism, ethnicity, religion, catchment area, quota system and partisan politics should have undue influence on the educational system above merits.

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