

## STATE OF EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: PROGRAMMES AND GOALS FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: CURRICULUM PERSPECTIVES

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### **Abstract**

*Education fulfils the needs of society and propagates such ideas which promote social change in all fields of life. Education is not only wealth but the greatest of all wealth. It involves the development of desirable attitudes, skills and habits, which make individual resources for societal development. In describing education as an instrument of social change, three things are important, the agents of change (teachers), the content of change (instructional programmes) and those who are sought to be changed (learners). In education, the essence of instructional programmes is because a programme has three components known as programme of studies, programme of activities and programme of guidance. A worthwhile curriculum must incorporate these three components. Setting a quality programme will enable every individual in the society to effectively participate in the management of education in Nigeria and to make positive contribution towards its progress. It is against this background that this study attempts to discuss the state of education in Nigeria, programmes and goals for sustainable national development,*

**Keywords:** Education, programmes, programme of studies programme of activities, programme of guidance, goals, sustainable national development.

The global education landscape has been experiencing dramatic changes due to the spate to the globalization and rapid technological advances. These dynamic transformations necessitate the need for re-defining education in terms of the forms; education takes as well as the role of the key players in the educational sector. Education has been conceived as process of teaching and learning, which takes place within the confines of physical classroom at a particular place and time. Then Olugbemi (2019) states that education focuses more on the teachers and their books as information oracles who spread knowledge to learners using the same method year in and year out. Since the advancement in technology, the way education is being planned and executed in different societies of the world is fast changing. Teaching and learning activities, which are important components of any education are taking new dimensions. Many things about teaching and learning process as means of educating people in any society are changing. There are changes in the ways education contents and methods are being handled as well as the time and space education takes place in modern societies.

Hence, there is the need to redefine education in the context of electronic technologies evolving in modern time. This is to demonstrate how we can re define education through electronic technologies (e-technologies) is about showing how e technologies have helped to shape education process in new ways. It is about how e technologies affect the teaching-learning process, the

education environment, and the traditional roles of the key players in education. The teachers, the learners, the regulators and the levels of interaction between and amongst the various key players. (Olagboye, 2004).

### **Concept of Education**

There are many attempts on the definitions of education. Education refers to an instrument for the overall growth and development of a nation. If education is to meet its objectives in this era of globalization, the importance of professional growth and development of teachers is of utmost importance. One fundamental fact about education is that its benefit permeates all spheres of human life. Therefore, education has been described as the process of acquiring new values and skills for the purpose of effectively functioning in the society. It is a tool for acquiring skills, relevant knowledge and habits for surviving in a dynamic world (Obanya 2009). It is the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university. Education is a form of learning, in which the knowledge skills and habits of a group of people are transferred from one generation to the next through teaching, training and research. Thus, education involves pedagogical process, which entails teaching and learning for impartation and acquisition of values, skills and knowledge for maturing the recipients and makes them to function as balanced persons. (Maduewesi 2005)

Education is a tool of transformation or change in any society. The purpose of education in Nigeria is couched in the Nigeria National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013). This is to train the citizens towards the achievement of national development objectives which include; free and demonstrate society, a just and egalitarian society, a united, strong and self-reliant nation, a great and dynamic economy; and a land of opportunities for all citizens.

The objectives for education in Nigeria are contained in chapter 11, section 18 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which include:

- i. The inculcation of national consciousness and unity
- ii. The inculcation of the right type of value and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigeria society;
- iii. The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around;
- iv. The acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of society.

Education is the gateway to development of any society. Thus no nation can attain its full development without competent and trained teachers. Teachers are at the centre of any meaningful development. The teacher is paramount in national development. The issue of development is one that is paramount to man. It connotes changes and progress in all aspects of man's life (Emeh & Ogabeh 2010) According to Ugwu (2015), education should be globally adopted as an agent of change and stability to promote probity, equity and equality of opportunities and a launching pad for sustainable human development.

### **Importance of Education to National Development**

Essien (2004) pointed out that education unlocks the door to modernization and sustainable development but that, it is the teacher that holds the key to the door. Thus, the teacher has the responsibility of translating educational policies into practices and programmes into action. It is clear

from the foregoing that the role of the teacher in sustainable development cannot be qualified, especially in training personnel in various areas of the workforce.

Stressing the importance of education to national development, Okpoya (2013) sees education as the development of all human potentials and the most powerful weapon we have for shaping the future, enabling the following generation to learn how to enhance greater productivity and live together. Hence, since education emphasizes human development, it follows logically that employment can be achieved through education, thereby improving the lot of individuals by warding off poverty, and making life comfortable.

In addition, education is the gateway to national development. No educational system can succeed without the teacher. The teacher is paramount in national development. The issue of development is one that is paramount to man. It connotes changes and progress in all aspects of man's life Emeh and Ogbah, (2010).

### **Programme**

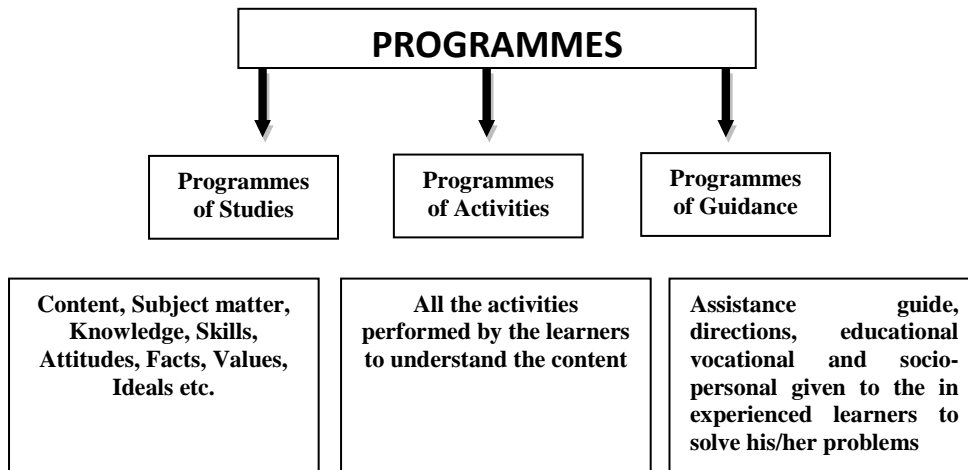
Curriculum is an agglomerate of all the school experience (planned and unplanned) which are provided for the purpose of helping the youth to develop the finest character and lives as disciplined and useful citizens. However, it should be noted that these qualities are relatives to societies. Therefore, in a more sophisticated form, curriculum can be seen as a medley of various school programmes (of instruction, guidance and activities) which help to promote the ideals of the society, the function of which lies in the school as a social unit.

Krug in Akuma (2005) notes that in addition to "organized instruction" a desirable curriculum should also include extra-class activities and counseling services". There is close inter relationship among the three components of curriculum. Obih (2008) refers to component of curriculum as the education programme, which is another named term for "Curriculum". Offorma (2009) noted that the simplest but very comprehensive concept of curriculum is a "Programme or component". She also equates curriculum to a programme or component because a programme has three components; programme of studies, programme of activities and programme of guidance. Obih (2008) is of the view that a worthwhile curriculum must incorporate three distinct but inter-related concepts, namely programme of studies, activities and guidance. The memory as tip for the three programmes of curriculum as noted by Obih (2008) could be referred to as "Gas" meaning:

G = Programme of Guidance

A = Programme of Activities

S = Programme of Studies



1. **Programme of Studies:** This refers to the content or body of knowledge to be presented to the learners. It deals with all the subject discipline or the organized body of knowledge which the learners are taught in schools in order to help them to develop the right competence, abilities and skills so as to battle with personal and societal problems as the need arises. It is the list of school subjects to study.

Some of these subjects include; English Language, Mathematics, Economics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Geography, Civic Education, Edu 221, Edu 321, Edu 222 and Edu 323 etc. The Programme of studies for the primary schools have been planned to include; Social Studies, Mathematics, Primary Science, Physical and Health education, moral and religious education, creative arts, music etc. These subjects have been assembled together to facilitate the inculcation of literacy and numeracy, acquisition of scientific and technological attitude, the study of social norms and values of the local community and of the country as a whole, the inculcation of good health, moral and religious habits and values and development of good citizenship qualities. They are also intended to encourage aesthetics, creative and musical development and appreciation for domestic science agriculture. Since the programme of studies need to be developed, standard school buildings with large open spaces should be provided and maintained.

Each discipline be it in pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary is a compilation of past human experience which has been carefully and appropriately selected, organized, sequenced and package into specialized areas that is commonly referred to as “subjects”. Mbakwem (2005) argues that knowledge in these subjects is made up of human’s past experiences which have stood for the test of time and have become facts of life. It is not only important for learners to learn the concept, subject topic or themes but equally important that the learner experiences a method of facing life in the contemporary society.

2. **Programmes of Activities:** This involves all the activities presented to the learners to facilitate understanding. It is the means while the programme of studies is the end. Programme of activities, therefore, refers to all those activities provided by the school which enhance and support the

concepts, skills and abilities contained in the programme of studies. It embraces all learners activities that are capable of enhancing the academic experience of learners.

Programmes of Activities are the means by which theories, principles, concepts, facts, value, skills and ideas are translated and made practically real to the learner. Offorma (2009) noted that programme of activities can be mental or physical, overt or covert, which is always learners centered and goal oriented.

These also summed up as programme which embraces all the activities capable of enhancing the academic experience of learners. These include various forms of physical education e.g games, sports and recreation, daily assemblies, various kinds of group and club activities (religions, cultural, art and agriculture), special interest activities like Boy Scout, Girls Guide, different kinds of projects such as field trip tours, visits, excursion, social services and health activities. (Evans-Obinna and Nwosu 2018)

Programme of activities cut across both organized and unorganized activities like physical Education (PE) for primary and secondary schools and student Union Government (SUG) for tertiary institutions plus various clubs, associations and gathering, meetings and other co-curricular activities which are mutually supportive (Sergiovanmi 2002).

These varieties of activities enrich and enlarge the school curriculum. They help the children to develop healthy social habits, social relationship and fellowship skills, physical and moral strength. Interested teachers should be appointed to supervise the various activities. While learners should be allowed ample freedom to organize, direct and conduct the activities by themselves. (Evans, Obinna & Nwosu (2018)

**Programme of Guidance:** This types of program entails directing, guidance and helping the learner to solve his/her educational, vocational and socio – personal problems, so as to facilitate the total, wholesome and fullest development of the learner, individually and collectively Programme of Guidance and counseling as part of the school curriculum helps the learners to identify goals and potential solution to problems which cause emotional turmoil, seek to improve communication and coping skills, promote behavioural change, strengthen self-esteem and optimal mental health. The needs, problems, aspirations, values and performance of learners differ, that is why the guidance focuses attention on the individual needs of learners, and the whole ideas is to facilitate learning and to resolve any problems that may impede learning, be they social education psychological, economic or political.

Programme of guidance has an integrative function which affects both the learner and the entire education system (Ughammadu, 2006).

It is through this programme of guidance that one can examine the behaviours, thoughts and feelings that are causing difficulties or set back to learning and teaching process. With these services, the learner is helped to learn effectively. This will enable the learner to deal with learning problems or constraints by guiding the person's strengths thereby reducing weakness.

Programme of guidance and supervision offers a variety of guidance services to the learner's to develop healthy and well adapted individuals. Cases of maladaptive behaviours like violation of school rules and regulation, bullying, truancy, alcohol addition, drug abuse, sexual abuse, rape are on the increase among our school adolescent. Ofordile (2002) noted that managing and modifying adolescents' maladaptive behaviours is still a big challenge facing teachers-students caregivers and the society at large. (Evans, Obinna and Nwosu 2018).

**Goals** are statement of intention, it states intended learning outcomes of any educational endeavour. The process, sequence, methodology as well as scope will be ascertained from the goals. So it is very important that curriculum goals be well stated or makes its intention known to the society. (Ekwuru 2010)

### **Sustainable National Development**

National development according to Orji (2013) is a society that has succeeded in providing a source of living for the majority of its inhabitants and that in such society, premium is attached to elimination of poverty, provision of food, shelter and clothing to its members. Tadaro and Smith (2006) regard national development as a multi-dimensional process which involves the sustained elevation of the entire society and social systems towards a better or human life. There are three basic components for understanding developments. These components are sustenance, self-esteem and freedom. Sustenance is concerned with ability to meet basic needs, self-esteem is concerned with a sense of worth and self-respect, of not being used by others as tools for their own needs, and freedom is concerned with freedom from servitude-service to nature, ignorance, other people, misery, institutions, and dogmatic beliefs, especially, that poverty is a predestination.

According to Omoyibo and Agborizeke (2010), the former secretary of United Nations Organization, Boutrous Ghali, in May 1994, issued a document which categories development into five dimensions which are peace, economy, environment, social studies and democracy. In the Nigeria context, these components are absent and the government in power abuses the rule. National development starts with the ability of a nation to satisfactorily provide the food and fibre that are needed by its people and its industry.

National development according to Onyakanwu (2006) is the establishment of a viable and buoyant national economy, the establishment of a just and social justice and the building of a unified and integrated society where the different ethnic, religious and geo-political identities develop a collective sense of imagination that they are one. Ibritan (2016) regarded national development as the growth of a nation in terms of unity, education, economic well being and mass participation in government. The author adds that it is a total experience in advancement and establishment of a maintenance culture in all areas of social, economic, cultural and the political life of the citizens of that society, National development includes reduction of poverty, wealth creation and equitable distribution of wealth, ensuring nutrition and health, housing and ancillary services, social security and welfare. It entails building capacities to advance material and human capital for effective production of goods and service (Emeh and Ogbah, 2010).

### **Conclusion**

Education has played a significant role in the upliftment of the standards of living of nations across the world. It has also contributed to all facets of development of this nation. Consequently, nations of the world have recognized education as a tool for effecting national development. Education is therefore viewed as an effective tool that can be used to respond and rapidly to the changing needs and aspirations of any nation.

Program as established in the schools is to provide conditions and services which will enable children to learn. Schools make certain basic provisions that would help achieve the national and individual objectives and goals of education and these basic provisions consist of curriculum materials which

are considered during programme planning the period to be most relevant in accomplishing aim of the instructional programme.

This paper emphasized that there is no limit on the number and variety of activities an instructional programme introduces, as they are found to enrich and enlarge the school and curriculum, especially guidance and supervision programmes whose ultimate purpose is to help learners acquire the capacities for self-direction and emotional balance and to ensure that facilities of teaching and learning are in order and effectively utilized.

### **Recommendations**

In view of the Condition of education and program of instruction in Nigeria, the following recommendations are made for greater achievement:

1. That whatever programmes the school offers must have the expressed capacity to achieve the societal learners' aims of education for such programmes to be relevant.
2. Since the programmes of studies need to be developed, standard school buildings with suitable materials to help develop the learners' curiosity and to sensitize their imagination, should be provided and maintained.
3. Teachers should develop good human and public relationship strategies in their dealings with the board personnel, teachers and community members to secure their assistance and support in the efficient and effective development of programmes.
4. The programme can hardly be effectively implemented if staff is poorly motivated. This entails staff motivation, to increase their moral for efficiency on the job

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