AN ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: ISSUES AND MATTERS ARISING.

BY

LIVALA, Sunsuwa Dauda[1]   LAWAL, E. Florence[2]   JOSHUA, Pam Wang[3]

[1] Faculty of Education, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria
[2] Plateau State Universal Primary Education Board Jos, Plateau State.
[3] National Population Commission Jos, Plateau State.

Abstract

The paper attempts to demystify and examine some of the social development issues as they relate to educational programmes in Nigeria. It looked at the relationship and the contribution of education to social dimension of human development and the roles of education in enhancing social development in Nigeria and the goals of social development practice in Nigeria as well as the processes associated with the levels of social development practice in social work. The paper highlighted some of the assumptions of social development practice in Nigeria and some underlying concept and relevance of education to the society. It also established the roles of education in society development.

The panorama of education for the Nigerian populace and nation was discussed. The paper also highlighted the factors and importance of Social development in Education. The matters arising on the current state of education programme as well as issues and problems of social development in Nigeria was discussed.

Keywords: Education, Society, Social Development, Community Development

1. INTRODUCTION

The quality of human life, values, and material progress are direct products of education. Education is believed to be a veritable tool in improving personal endowments, capacity building, enlargement of opportunities and choices for a sustained improvement in well-being. The process of education and attainments thereof has an impact on all aspects of life.

In the views of Adepoju (2007), education is tool for the acquisition of skills, relevant knowledge, and habits for surviving in the changing world.

Education is also viewed as a process of knowledge acquisition which begins at birth and as the child interacts with the people and things around him in an environment such as classroom, the home, peer groups, and other non-classroom situations. UNDP(1990) described education as the process by which society, through schools and other institutions deliberately transmits its cultural heritage, its accumulated knowledge, values, and skills from generation to another. Education is one of the most important

means to improve personal social skills. Education, directly and indirectly, gives learners/young people the opportunity to develop their social skills at school or in after-school clubs, learners interact with other learners/people, building their relationships with friends, teachers, and other students of different ages and cultures, and improving their skills in different environmental settings. Therefore, social development/well-being correlates with education and the learners ability to interact successfully with others in a school environment.

Michael (2018) viewed Education as the most powerful tools for change which also provides individual with capacity to adapt to change building awareness of the self, society, and human welfare. It is a critical invasive instrument for bringing about economic and political social development.

Social development is a process of systematic change purposefully initiated through the enhancement of the level of living and equality of life of the people. Social development is the development of social and emotional skills across the lifespan with

particular attention to childhood, adolescence, and the interaction with school and education.

Social development involves learning the values, knowledge, and skills of social interaction. It provides opportunity for learners to communicate and interact with teachers, other learners, and friends in a school environment. Social and emotional skills are passed on to children directly by those who care for and teach them, as well as indirectly through social relationships within the family or with friends. It is also transmitted through children's participation in the culture around them

Nigeria is overwhelmed by social poverty that continue to deteriorate in spite of the economic growth associated with the oil boom. Efforts to check this deterioration and ensure development are hindered by lack of educational programs and conceptual support in the social development sector. It is quite worrisome that in recent time many stakeholder in Nigeria have decried the poor state of social development quality of life of the people. This neglect is reflected in poor contribution to the planning and implementation of appropriate intervention strategies at different levels. It is disheartening that issues relating to Poverty, Gender, Social Security, Social Policy, Education, Environment, Health, Disasters, and lots more are poorly managed or emphasized. It can therefore be deduced in view of the above the need to foster and strengthen social development in Nigeria and to bring them more in line with global good practices.

2. THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN ENHANCING SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

When people are educated, they can significantly contribute to their families and society in various aspects and fields, thus creating a stable and stimulating community. Nancy (2022) advanced some roles of education as follows:

1. **Improving the economy:** People with good academic and educational backgrounds tend to get well-paid jobs. The higher their education and accomplishments, the better employment options they get. People who grew up poor but educated themselves have high chances to transform their lives, thus contributing to a decrease in society's poverty rates. Education helps countries grow economically since it is about getting knowledge and being able to apply it wisely to our lives and, at the same time, improving other people's lives.

2. **Enhancing empowerment:** Education is the key to turn a weakness into a strength. It offers different tools and ways to understand problems that lay ahead of us and helps resolve them. More importantly, education provides us with considerable mental agility to make the right decisions and spring into action when needed. Many types of research show that educated women can more easily stand up against gender bias and marital violence as they have improved their decision-making capabilities.

3. **Creating modern society:** Education moulds people into leaders not only with knowledge about (college) subjects,

but it also shows them how to lead with emotions and true values. Educated people can easily differentiate between right and wrong, thus education helps reduce the crime rate

4. **Creating employment opportunities**: Finding a job is not easy, especially in times of economic turmoil. You often need to compete with hundreds of other candidates for a vacant position. In addition, the lower the education level, the greater the number of people applying for the same low-paying entry-level post. However, with the right qualifications and educational background, you will increase your chances of landing a fulfilling job. Would you like to find a way to stand out from a pool of applicants? Learn, educate yourself, graduate, and get as many qualifications, skills, knowledge, and experience as possible.

5. **Learning from the past mistakes**: Education is important because it helps members in a society learn from the mistakes of the past. Having an education is significant because good education allows members of a society to learn from past mistakes and prevent the same mistakes from happening in the future.

6. **Developing problem-solving skills**: One of the benefits of education is that the educational system teaches us how to obtain and develop critical and logical thinking and make independent decisions. It enables people to make sound decisions on various predicaments of life. Not only are they able to form their own opinions, but they are also good at finding solid and reliable arguments and evidence to back up and confirm their decisions. Educated people are open-minded and are able to listen and accept other people's views regardless of the fact of how different they are. Education offers a possibility to live independently and thus be free.

7. **Bridging the borders**: Digital education helps connect with people and organizations around the world. Borders are no longer there. Being able to communicate and share opinions with people from other countries and cultures, widens horizons and helps us understand and appreciate each other.

8. **Giving back to the community**: How does education benefits society? Educated people understand how valuable it is to live in a stable and secure community. They are more prone to taking part in projects that help improve not only their neighbourhood but society, as well. In addition, when people are able to afford their own home, they are more likely to take part not only in improving their homes but in solving local problems, as well. After all, it is quite important to get involved and give a hand to the less fortunate ones in order to build a better place for all of us to live in.

9. **Creating equal opportunities:** The importance of education in society has always been great as it is

irrespective of caste, race, gender, religion. Educated people are treated as equals on the basis of their knowledge and competence. In addition to this, it is our shelter against financial storms and wrong decisions.

10. **Education is important in the creation of any democratic society**. As Franklin D. Roosevelt says, "Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is education." People need a good education if they want a good democracy.

3. THE GOALS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

According to Estes, 2015 the goals of social development practice are as follows:

1. The realization of more balanced approaches to social and economic development
2. The assignment of the highest priority to the fullest possible human development
3. The fullest possible participation of people everywhere in determining both the means and outcomes of development
4. The elimination of absolute poverty everywhere in the world
5. The elimination of barriers to development which, in every society, have been used to oppress historically disadvantaged population groups, but especially women, the aged, the poor, children and youth, disabled persons, political and economic refugees, the mentally ill as well as persons who have been disadvantaged on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, social class, caste, and sexual orientation
6. The realization of new social arrangements that accelerate the pace of development and assure the satisfaction of basic needs of people everywhere.
7. The transformation of societies toward more humanistic values based on social justice, the promotion of peace, and the attainment of the fullest possible human development.

4. THE LEVELS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL WORK

Cnaan (1998) in Estes, (2015) revealed the eight levels of social development practice, developmental social work practice includes:

1. The provision of personal social services to people in distress, e.g., war victims, refugees, orphaned children
2. Provision of organizational efforts directed at helping poor and other powerless people remove the sources of their oppression, e.g., corrupt landlords, unjust employers, colonial administrators, racism, etc.
3. The establishment of new social institutions, e.g., for credit unions, mutual aid societies, community welfare centers, seed banks, social security schemes, etc.

4. The reform of existing institutions so as to make them more responsive to the needs of those for whom the institutions were designed.
5. Provision of efforts that seek to accelerate the pace of social development in local communities, states and provinces, nations, regions, and, ultimately, the world itself.
6. Promotion of internationally guaranteed human rights.
7. Promotion of community and global Peace initiative. It worked toward the establishment of a new system of international relationships guided by the quest for world peace, increased social justice, the universal satisfaction of basic human needs.
8. Protection of the planet's fragile eco-systems

5. THE ASSUMPTIONS OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

Mimar,(2012), postulates the following as the assumption of social development practice globally.

1. That social, political, and economic events occurring in other regions of the world have direct, often immediate, sometimes lasting consequences on the quality of life in all other regions of the world;
2. That the underlying dynamics of human degradation and social injustice found in local communities often emanate from social, political, and economic forces.
3. That international social forces both contribute to and sustain social inequalities in particular locales (e.g., the international dimensions of global poverty and discrimination on the basis of race, class, and caste);
4. That international social forces often contribute to and sustain patterns of inter-personal violence between people (e.g., racial, ethnic, and cultural intolerance);
5. That many of the social problems confronting social workers are rooted in national and international dynamics that transcend local boundaries;
6. That only under conditions of peaceful co-existence can local, national, and international social development and, in turn, human development be accelerated;
7. That human survival to the year 2000 and beyond requires a fundamental restructuring of the relationships between peoples, communities, and nations;
8. That a restructuring of the national and international social orders is particularly urgent in reducing the profound, largely unnecessary, levels of human misery, degradation, and interpersonal violence that persist in many countries.
9. That social development specialists possesses a unique body of knowledge and skills that can positively impact upon the national and international social situation, especially in helping to find sustainable solutions to recurrent local, state, national, and international social problems; and,
10. That acting individually and collectively, substantial numbers of social development specialists, including

social workers, are continuing the national and international social movements begun by their forbearers toward the establishment of a more peaceful and socially just world order. These assumptions are far-reaching and provide a framework for integrating the diverse social change activities of the various disciplines and professions that contribute to social development.

6. PANORAMA OF EDUCATION FOR THE NIGERIAN POPULACE AND NATION

Amadioha, & Akor, (2018) gave an overview of how education influence the life of Nigerian as follows:

1. **Preservation and transmission of our social, moral, and cultural values**: Through education, pupils/students are acquainted with social, moral, and cultural values and teachers make them familiar with values and ideals through different activities, games, story-telling, etc. education makes them familiar with constitutional issues, rules and regulations of citizens and so on even if they may not be aware of the source of the information they are being taught. Education helps in preserving and improving and transmitting our cultural heritage from one generation to the next.

2. **Awakening of Social feelings:** By education, individuals gradually become aware about the importance of unity, love, fraternity, and other values. Education makes all people get awakened of being a part of the society and how they can contribute to the world as society in their own little way. People know different values and life skills and thus they develop concern for society including social mindedness, values life skills, learning to be, learning to do, learning to know, learning to live together via different activities, storytelling, dramatization, etc.

3. **Political development of society**: Education makes all aware about rights and duties of all, which are their responsibilities and duties so that they can develop their civic sense. Through different lesson of political leaders and stories of education leaders, they develop ideal leadership quality so that in the future citizens can lead the state as a society. All these begin by their being given opportunities to serve as class monitor or class captain as they are called and at other times during group learning opportunities are given for the selection of group leaders.

4. **Economic development of society:** Through basic education, everyone learn show to earn money using and crafts and the qualification, he gets a job or labour and on the whole with the help of more education more or less everyone gets professional work and earns money so due to increasing literacy per capita income will increase. Because of education, people migrate to parts of a country or to other countries and their earning helps to develop the society in a larger sense.

5. **Social changes and reforms:** Education makes individuals near perfects and aware about their rights, in order that they can kick against superstitions and beliefs that are harmful for them. Through education, everyone learns to grow, to live, and how to be saved from difficulty. It also inculcates values and ideals in their lives and in others. Education makes all aware about how to live peacefully and how to face difficulties in their lives.

6. **Socialization of a child:** Education trains the mind of a child and it teaches him how to inculcate values in his life. It makes the child understand what society is, how he is a part of society, what are his roles in the society, how he should behave, how he should interact with others etc. Education helps him to understand who he is? And it develops a sense of a social being in him. In short, education socializes a child.

7. FACTORS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Bolan, (1991) state the following as factors of social development

1. **Family and home environment:** The status of family has great impact upon child. you will see great variation in children. one of the causes of that will be of the family background. in order to have a balance personality of a child, there must be great cooperation between parent and their children. as according to frank: home and family is the only institution for child's socialization and transmission of child's personality.

2. **School and teacher role:** next place where most of social development takes place is school and the influencing role of teacher. the better and cordial atmosphere is in the school and good relationship with teacher the more good social development will take place.

3. **Parental style:** the parental style must be very democratic and involved on the sack of children. those children show greater social development and emotional maturity whose parental style is democratic and involve one.

4. **Peer group:** in peer group a child gets social independence and make some decision to define his\her role. Here, a child shares his or her feelings and emotions independently and get self-confidence, and from time to time and new habits are developed which shape a child personality.

5. **Information explosion**: Nowadays, we have great information explosion where every person has very easy access to all kinds of information. the most commonly available information is machines, internet, cable tv, and mobile phone system. These means of information can be used in positive and negative ways. now it is the responsibility of children's to in charge to guide them on the right path.

8. IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION

Social Development enhances academic competence and helps individuals to is be effective and resourceful. According to Alger, (2002), it helps in fulfilling Social competence which includes the following:

1. Self-awareness: the ability to reflect on one's own feelings and thoughts in academic pursuit.
2. Self-control: the ability to control one's thoughts and behavior.
3. Social awareness: the ability to empathize, recognize social cues, and be adaptable.
4. Relationship skills: the ability to communicate, make friends, manage disagreements, recognize peer pressure and cooperate.
5. Responsible decision making: The ability to make healthy choices about one's own behavior while weighing consequences for others.

All these skills are extremely important in one's life because socially competent student are better adjusted and adaptable and willing to accept diversity and changes in life and learning.

9. MATTERS ARISING ON THE CONTEMPORARY CONDITION OF EDUCATION PROGRAMME

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) aim of attaining education for all did not come close to addressing the Universal Basic Education Programme (UBEP) position, which was attributed to various teething problems related with basic education acquisition in Nigeria. According to Hendrik(2019), these issues include:

1. Poor budget to the education sector.
2. Poverty.
3. Ignorance among the people.
4. Poor learning environment and culture.
5. Lack of competent teachers.
6. Poor motivation of the teaching personnel.
7. Poor infrastructural facilities.
8. None or Inadequate supply of learning materials.
10. Poor mobilization of partners.
11. Corruption.
13. Poor policy planning and implementation strategies.
15. Inadequate statistical data for planning.
16. Poor logistic supply from the closest government support.
17. Total neglect of the teaching profession.

10 ISSUES AND PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

Hanson (2010) revealed the problems associated with social development in Nigeria as follows:

1. **Poor Infrastructures:** Most rural areas in Nigeria grossly lacked basic infrastructures that give life a meaning and make it worthwhile. Such infrastructures include electricity, education, pipe-borne water, good road network, health facilities, and recreational centres etc.
2. **Poverty** Poverty is one of the contemporary social problems affecting Nigeria as a third-world country. It is a state of complete lack of minimal means of livelihood. Judging by the American standard, about eighty-five percent (85%) of Nigerians are poor. This gives birth to incidence of high involvement of her citizens in criminal activities such as corruption, bribery, and all types of immoral conducts. Poor people are not only deprived of most material comfort of life but also cannot attain their maximum emotional and social development (Thompson, 2008).
3. **Harmful Traditional Practices:** Most rural dwellers still engage in primitive and ancient traditional practices such as female circumcision, gender discrimination, child's labour, and certain superstitious beliefs which are anti-developmental. Such practices affect the development of their socioeconomic and sociocultural lifestyle. Rural development programmes need to refine and reshape such practices that are hindrances to development
4. **Corruption**: Corruption can be said to be a cankerworm that had eaten deep and has affected the cradle of all activities in Nigeria. Most of the fund voted for Education programmes, facilities, and instructional material are being siphoned or diverted by administrators and other officials for personal benefit. We also situation where schools are established merely based on favouritism, ethnicity, or religious affiliation which violates the rules of school mapping. And by these, many under-privileged children are usually denied to quality education
5. **Insecurity and Terrorism**: Terrorist attacks, robbery, and banditry has ravage many parts of the country as lot of lives and properties are destroyed. Many people have been displaced from their homes because of this.
6. **High Unemployment Rate**: The number of unemployed persons is continually on the rise. The hope of getting a job after graduation for the average Nigerian graduate becomes dimmer by the day. Similarly, many rural dwellers migrate from rural areas to urban centres in search of jobs and also to enjoy the facilities available.
7. **Poor Funding:** The most prominent problem facing the educational sector is that of funding. At all levels of government in Nigeria, education is not funded adequately. There is quite a neglect for the educational sector in Nigeria, and this reflects heavily in the low amount budgeted for education yearly. At the local, state, and federal levels, more attention is given to other sectors which are not as important as the educational sector whose activities affect the society more.
8. **Large Family Size** About half of all the families with six or more children are generally poor as they do not earn adequate money to cater for their needs. This is why children from large families are greatly malnourished because of poverty. Unfortunately, in Nigeria, the people who have large family size are mostly affected. According to Ukpong (2003), the Federal Government National Population Policy (1998) states that "it is possible for us as a nation to control our fertility and reduce our excessive

rate of population growth in order to minimize or reduce their adverse effects on our lives.

9. **Cost of Education**: The FRN(2013, pp.48), states that "Education shall be free" to children, but the reality on ground is that Private enterprise are allowed to run schools where exorbitant fees are charged. Similarly, Parents who sends their children to public primary schools thinking that education is free only discovered that they must pay some levies, for purchase of books, writing material, uniform, etc. This misconception has become a burden to most parents. On the other, the labour of these children is usually needed at home as most of them offer tradition income to the family.

10. **Inequality and Inadequate access**: Nigeria still struggle with having a national identity due to her differences and there has been conflict between the different ethnic groups over superiority. Some ethnic groups are not treated with equity and this has generated conflict and enmity which can lead to the destruction of lives and properties in many parts of the country. On the other hand, the emphasis on equal educational opportunity has been truncated by 'quota system in terms of admission and placement. It is very unfortunate that many Nigerian children who are qualified are not given free access to education due to their region or state of origin.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the discussions above, the following suggestions are proposed:

1. **Provision of infrastructure**: The government and individuals should basic infrastructures that give life a meaning. The provision of social amenities such as pipe borne water, electricity, good road network, health facilities, etc will help improve the social lives of Nigerians.

2. **Job Creation**: The government and individuals should be preoccupied with creating jobs and skill acquisition programs for the teeming population of job seekers. The availability of jobs would reduce the rate of poverty in the country.

3. **Security:** Strategies should be made by the security forces to combat and eradicate the threat to lives and property such as terrorism.

4. Justice and fairness: The legal system should be made to punish corruption and domestic violence accordingly to serve as a deterrent to other. Defaulters and law breakers should be punished severely without favouritism to serve as a deterrent to others.

5. Education should be free in the real sense of it and admission into schools should be on merit.

6. National unity and Integration: National orientation and sensitization on national cohesion, unity should be encouraged. Citizens should also be education on the need for ethnic and religious tolerance.

7. **Funding of educational sector:** The government and relevant stakeholders should invest massively in educational sector of Nigeria by funding it adequately. This can be achieved by increasing the annual budget for education yearly.

8. Ancient harmful traditional practices should be discouraged and all traditional, beliefs, practices, and activities that causes hindrances to social development should be abolished or refined.

9. There should be population growth awareness and provision family planning facilities to reduce our excessive rate of population growth in the country.

12. CONCLUSION

The most important contribution of education is not only to upgrade the living standards of citizens but also to enable them to become better citizens. It is a prerequisite for development and also an effective means for both taking knowledge-based decisions and improving democracy. Social Development occurs when the people are capable of harnessing the environment using the available human and material resources to their own benefits and that of the society at large. Nigeria is naturally endowed with human and material resources that can enable her to develop with minimal external assistance. There is need for Nigeria to look inward and discover all the hidden educational opportunities and utilize them to the fullest. The time has come for all Nigerians irrespective of their tribes of origin, religion, or ideology, to come together to see what they can do for the social development of the country.

REFERENCES

1. Adepoju, A.& Fabiyi, A. (2007) Universal Basic Education in Nigeria: Challenges and Prospects. http://uaps20submissionid (Retrieved 08-04-11)

2. Alger, C. F. (2002). Grass-roots perspectives on global policies for development. Journal of Peace Research, 27(2), 155-168.

3. Amadioha, S.W. & Akor, V.O. (2018). Globalisation and functional education in Nigeria. In Tabotndip, J.E., Umo, U. & Nwiyi, G.U. (eds), Globalisation and functional education in Nigeria. Onitsha: West and Solomon Publishing Company Limited.

4. Bargal, D. (1981). Social values in social work: A developmental model. Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare, 8(1), 45-61.

5. Billups, J. O. (1990). Toward social development as an organizing concept for social work and related social professions and movements. Social Development Issues, 12(3), 14-26.

6. Bolan, R. (1991). The state and social development in Poland: Responding to new realities. Social Development Issues, 14(1), 37-55. Brandt Commission. (1980). North-South: A programme for survival. London: Pan Books.

7. Cnaan, R. (1991). Neighbourhood organization and social development in Israel. Social Development 82 Issues, 13(2), 44-53

8. Elliott, D., Mayadas, N. S., & Watts, T. D. (Eds.). (1990). The world of social welfare: Social welfare and social services in international context. Springfield IL:

9. Estes, R. J. (2015). Education for social development: curricular issues and models1: *A guide to resources for a new century*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work.

10. Estes, R. J. (1993b). Toward sustainable development: From theory to praxis. Social Development Issues, 15(3), 1-29. Estes, R. J. (in press-a). Community welfare centres in international perspective: Past accomplishments and future promises. Social Welfare: Journal of the Korea National Council on Social Welfare.

11. Hanson, B. T. (2010). Leadership and social development of people. Journal of Elementary School, 1(2). Holy Bible – Revised Standard Version. Ibia, E. I. (1999). Sociological foundation of Nigerian education. Calabar: Cats Publishers

12. Hendrik, K. (2019). The role of education in social development. Cambridge International School

13. Michael, I. (2018) The Effects of Education on Society" "The Borgen Project Addressing Poverty And Hunger And Working Towards Ending Them."

14. Mimar, T.(2012), role of education in the societal development, antalya, turkey. Social Development Issues Alternative Approach to Global Human Needs SDI: ISSN 0147-1473, ELSSN 2372-014X

15. Nancy, R.(2022)Habitat for Humanity of Broward, *Community Outreach, Government Policy, and Advocacy Department*, Deerfield Beach, FL33442 United State.