

Islam, Education and Development: The Nigerian Experience

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Abstract

The paper employs analytical method to establish the relationship between Islam and development, with education as a focal point. The paper observes that funding is crucial to achieving positive result in any project. The paper graphically presents declining funding pattern of education in Nigeria for over eighteen years with the attendant decay on infrastructures as well as products of the system. The paper laments the sharp contrast between the policy statement on education and the actual practice. The paper therefore recommends a change of attitude on funding and prioritizing educational funding in order to achieve a sustainable development in the country.

Introduction

A close observation of the above topic reveals that three words stand out, namely; education, development and Islam. The words are hereby defined within the context of this paper.

(A) Education:

In its broad term, education is any process by which an individual gains knowledge or insight, or develops attitudes or skills (Encyclopedia Americana, Vol. 9:642). On the other hand, the Concise Oxford Dictionary defines it as 'bringing up' (of the young); 'systematic instruction'. Hence, education can simply be described as a process of transmitting cultural values and other information from generation to generation. The concept of transmission could be 'social' or 'vocational'. The school system is oriented towards the social type which inculcates in the learners, the societal goals of living and working together for the common good of the society. The vocational aspect of education, on the other hand is aimed at providing the learners with the skills necessary for being self-reliant. It is pertinent to say that by education, I mean not only formally structured basic education and training, but also non-formal and multi-sectoral integrated programmes.

Formal, Informal and Non-formal Education

Society has developed a number of agencies to carry out functions of education. Some are deliberate or formal and others are informal.

Formal Education. This type of education is imparted in a school or college. It is consciously and deliberately planned to bring about specific and special influence in the education. So, it is synonymous with educational institutions. School is thus a formal agency of education.

Informal Education. Informal education takes into its orbit all influences of home and the society. The press, the libraries, the films, and other such agencies are included as agencies of informal education. The influence is subtle and imperceptible, but at the same time very significant.

Non-formal Education. This is an arrangement wherein flexibility is the key word. The system is an open one with regard to various aspects of education i.e. admissions, curricular, place of instruction, mode of instruction and the time / duration of instruction. open university, open learning and the correspondence courses are the various examples of such a system,

Comparative Study of Formal and Non-formal Education

Formal Education	Non-formal Education
1. It is limited to a period of being taught	1. It is lifelong with learning integrated with life and work
2. It has a fixed point of entry and exit.	2. It has flexible points of entry and exit
3. It is geared to impersonal goals of knowledge acquisition.	3. It is a process of enabling the individual understand his own needs.
4. It is employment-oriented.	4. It is motivated by individual growth.
5. It has fixed concepts and content in its curriculum.	5. It has a diversified and fixed curriculum which is responsive to learner
6. It is imposed by the 'giver' on the 'receiver'.	6. It is a process of sharing, exploring, analyzing and judging together.
7. It works on the principle of weeding	7. It works on the principle of universal

out the 'failures'.

success through universal learning.

In summary, education is the total transformation of individuals to the level at which they could take meaningful initiatives, decisions and practices to satisfy needs of self, family and the society (Busari, 2009).

(B) Development

Development simply connotes change or growth. Development proceeds gradually and cumulatively, through a kind of unfolding of the internal or latent potentiality. While this process is in motion, the whole may be geared toward a goal or end, which is presumably contained in the unfolding process from the very beginning (Anyanwu, 1981).

When there is development, a whole range of possible changes occur, depending of the factors contributing to bring such changes about, whether they are social, economic, political, technological, cultural or religion. Rodney (2005:1) perceives development from two levels: these are levels of the individual and social groups. At the individual level, development implies increased skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self discipline, responsibility and material well-being. At the level of social groups, development implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationship. Furthermore, Akinpelu (2000: 80) identifies three (3) stages of meaning which development has undergone. The first is its reference to the quantitative provision of some paraphernalia of development such as utilities and infrastructure; to the tools and materials of development, such as distribution of land and wealth, provision of credit, seeds and tools, and access to knowledge and skills for use. The second stage is its use to characterize solely economic growth in terms of per capital income, while the third stage is where the target of development process is the human person: him or her. Development at this stage is concerned with the process of changing the personality, equipping it with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to conceive design and carry out his or her self development. Meanwhile, sustainable development is central to any understanding of true development. Hence, sustainable development is defined as a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs, while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met, not only in the present but also for generation to come (United Nations, 2004).

However, in Nigeria, as pointed out by Ekpo (2000: 111) national development applies to different stages of national aspiration. According to him, during the pre-independence period, national development was simply thought of as the efforts made by the nationalists to free the nation from economic and political domination. At the immediate post-independence period, emphasis was laid on consolidation of national values. After the civil war, emphasis was mainly on construction (roads, houses, building industries, etc) and rehabilitation. Hence, national development is the ability of a country or countries to improve the social welfare of the people by providing social amenities like good education, pipe born water and other things (Last, 2010). The goals towards ensuring a national development in Nigeria are encapsulated in the National Policy on Education which state as follows:

- to contribute to national development through higher level relevant manpower training;
- to develop and inculcate proper value for the survival of society;
- to develop the intellectual capacity of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments;
- to acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self – reliant and useful members of the society;
- to promote and encourage scholarship and community services;
- to forge and cement national unity; and
- to promote national understanding and institutions (NPE, 2004:36-37).

Islam:

Islam can be defined as total submission to the will of Allah. What is total in this context embraces cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. The cognitive is equally referred to as the intellect which is connected with the soul. The soul is also connected with the spirit, which represents the divine in man. The psychomotor is the physical aspect of man, referred to as the body structure of man. It is made up of the dust which is the origin of man (Q.15:26). The affective is the attitudinal aspect of man and it is the product of both cognitive and psychomotor domains. Consequently, the role of religion (Islam) in human life points to the fact that education of man devoid of religion is a promotion of ignorance; it is like feeding man with poison (Bidmos, 2010:6).

Analysis of the Conceptual Issues

Throughout history, education has always been one of man's most important activities. In fact, man could not effectively carry on governmental activities, family life, and religion or earn a living, without one form of education or another. Confirming the instrumentality of education, God was reported to have said "know Me before you worship Me, if you do not know Me how would you worship Me". In other words, knowledge and Islam are inseparable. Little wonder then that the first revelation sent to Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) centered on education (Quran 96: 1 – 5). This is an indication that Islam believes that education should cater for the growth of man in all aspects: spiritual, intellectual, physical, etc individually and collectively. When you educate, you are practically preparing the learner for a task which is first, his personal development and second, the development of his environment (Bidmos, 2010: 1). Education is seen as process by which individuals are perceived to assume their respective responsibilities within a social setting, thus, making it a tool for social reconstruction and development (Sofalahan, 2000). Meanwhile, the type of education received by an individual has tremendous benefits to the family, community/society and the entire nation/world. This is because the level of development of a community or nation depends largely upon the quality and the kind of education all the citizens receive. In other words, if citizens of a particular community are properly educated, economic and other notable development will follow as bi-products. A community of well-educated people makes a good place to live in. Education and training, both formal and informal are among the most important determinants of participation in development. Realizing the importance of education, the Federal Republic of Nigeria regards it as an instrument "per excellence" for effecting national development. As observed by Adesola (2002), "the objectives of the National Policy of Education could well be summarized in this way; 'to nurture useful, productive, self-reliant and morally sound citizens". This implies that the productivity of a person is enhanced by his/her level of education. Development through education therefore encompasses growth obtained and retained in terms of increase in quantities as well as improved earned quality of life and learning experiences (Odumosu, 2005). Development is the advancement from a low level to a higher level of political, social, economic, scientific and technological maturity in an organized society (Kazi, 2000). However, religion creates conducive atmosphere and serves as veritable tools to achieving a meaningful development. This is because the set of rules provided by Islam are tailored towards making an individual recognize his/her roles as vicegerent of God and spur him/her to discharge his/her responsibilities in the development of the nation. In addition, there are prescribed acts of worship which an individual must perform on daily, weekly or yearly basis. These include five daily prayers, obligatory charity e.t.c, which are all geared towards building personal relationship and community development. Religion therefore advocates national development through sound education and moral probity.

Panoramic View of Education and Development in Nigeria

Based on the aims of education as stated by the Universal Basic Education (UBE) and Education for all (EFA), education must equip the individual with skills, attitudes and values which make him function properly in the society. It should make individuals able to bring about useful changes in the society, serve as an essential means to build up people's potentials as well as enable them lead and create balance in the economic, political and cultural development process of the country (Ottaway and Lester-Smith, 2003). Hence, the National Policy of Education as mentioned earlier regards education as *sine qua non* for achieving a meaningful national development. However, the statement of making education a vehicle for achieving national development seems to be just a lip service, going by the situation on ground. The budgetary allocation to education has continued to decline from one administration to the other. Gidado (2008) asserted that the education sector has suffered tremendously in Nigeria ranging from poor finance, inappropriate allocation and a host of others. A former Minister of Education in Nigeria, Prof. Babalola Borishade, once observed in 2002 thus: "An uncomfortable fact is that traditional government funding and formal institutions are not enough to provide all the ingredients that are required for the delivery of good quality education that are necessary for the development of social capital". In a report carried out by Compass Newspaper of Wednesday, June 4, 2008 under the caption "Rot in Public Schools" it was revealed that public primary and secondary school education is on the verge of collapse. Acute underfunding, inadequate facilities, filthy environment, insufficient teachers, especially in core subjects, low morale on the part of pupils and teachers due to age long neglect by the government best describes the state of Nigeria's primary and secondary school. Apart from the decayed facilities, leaking roof and caving wall / ceiling, filthy environment and lack of toilet facilities, the school facilities is a heaven of hoodlums who take over the compound shortly after school hours.

In a similar vein, Nigerian universities are bereft of good lecture theatre, libraries equipped with latest books and current journals, modern laboratories equipment, adequate classrooms and sufficient hostels for teeming students' population. No more excellent facilities for teaching, research, learning and development as a result of deliberate gross underfunding {Awodiya, 2009: 51}. This view was succinctly put by Prof. Faborode, the Vice-Chancellor of Obafemi Awolowo University in 2010 that funding has remained the major challenge of the university. According to him, of the ₦26 billion required by the ivory tower to fix its decayed facilities and meet other major operational costs, such as capital projects, the institution only got ₦6 billion from the government. Meanwhile, high level human capital development, which higher education stimulates, contributes directly to growth, through embodied technological change. Human capital affects growth through multiple channels: by increasing allocative efficiency and the efficiency with which assets are managed, utilized and maintained, through entrepreneurship; and through innovation which enhances export competitiveness (Okebukola, 2010: 43).

Federal Government Annual Budget Allocation to Education

The greatest investment a country can make, especially for national development, is the commitment to the training of its citizens in form of education. Education remains the bedrock of growth and development of any nation and major tool for bringing about desirable changes (Omolewa, 2001). Kose and Guven (2007) in a cross – country analysis of factors determining public expenditure found out that countries with higher per-capital income levels and higher economic growth rates allocated greater resources to their education expenditure. According to Awodiya (2010) "there is no doubt that Nigerian leaders are averse to proper funding of education as they are afraid of its intrinsic qualities of civilization, development, utilitarian relevance in nation building and human capital

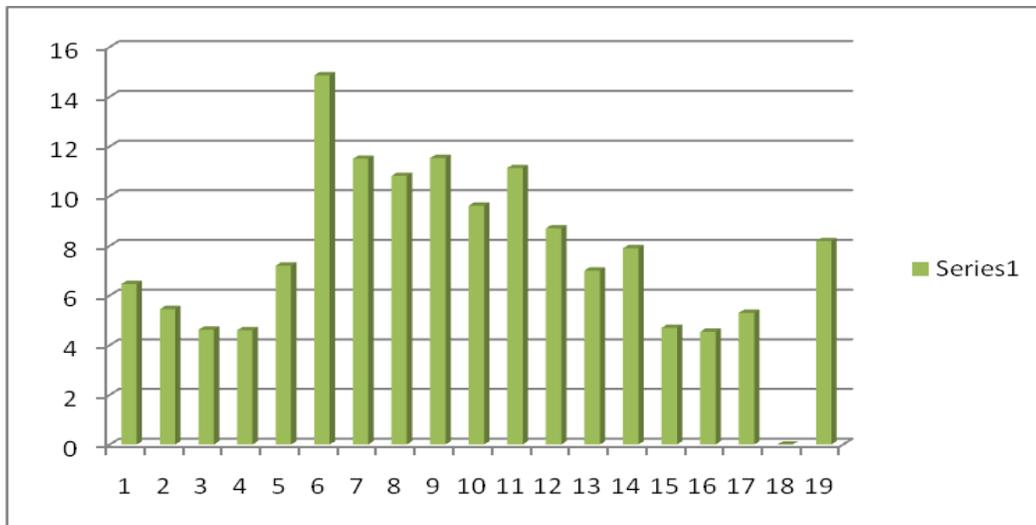
development'. UNESCO, for example, recommends 26% of budgetary allocation to education for any developing nation, like Nigeria. The budgetary allocation to education in Nigeria has continued to nose dive from military rule to democratic rule. How can a country that believes so much in education as a vehicle to achieve national development vote so much money to defense over and above education? It is an irony, no doubt that what has been expended on education so far has not meaningfully impacted on overall human capital development. Below is the percentage of budgetary allocation over Eighteen (18) years;

YEAR	PERCENTAGE ALLOCATED
1989	6.46%
1990	5.45%
1991	4.62%
1992	4.60%
1993	7.20%
1994	14.86%
1995	11.50%
1996	10.81%
1997	11.53%
1998	9.61%
1999	11.13%
2000	8.70%
2001	7.00%
2002	7.90%
2003	4.70%
2004	4.54%
2005	5.30%
2006	8.7%
2007	8.19%

Source: Education Sector Status Report .

BUDGET ALLOCATION TO EDUCATION

Key: 1=1989, 2=1990, 3=1991, 4=1992, 5=1993, 6=1994, 7=1995, 8=1996, 9=1997, 10=1998, 11=1999, 12=2000, 13=2001, 14=2002, 15=2003, 16=2004, 17=2005, 18=2006, 19=2007



The decreased sector allocation to education in the national budget, opined Obanya (2006), implied decreased funding for education in general. The result of this decreased funding is that facilities and infrastructure decline in quality and quantity, thereby, contributing to the system's inefficiency. With inadequate and fluctuating budgetary allocations to education annually, there is bound to be deterioration of the system with its attending implications on human capital development (Aigbokhan, Imahe and Ailemen, 2009). The consequent effect of poor funding of education made Prof. Babalola Borishade, one time Minister of Education declare thus: At the moment, over 50% of our citizens have never seen the inside of a school. An uncomfortable number of our children who enrolled in school do not stay in school long enough to gain useful skills. The problem is particularly serious in rural areas amongst women. For Nigeria education to function at the level of quality which is the aspiration of everyone in the society, the citizens who are products of the school system must be able to reach some acceptable measure of common understanding of complexity of education (Mkpa, 2007). This is because; human resources have been identified as important and valuable economic resources. As pointed out by Anyanwu (1997), the basic problem of most of the underdeveloped countries is not poverty of national resources but underdevelopment of their human resources profile. However, illiteracy breeds ignorance, ignorance breeds poverty and poverty constitutes recipe for fanaticism, lawlessness, crime, etc. The 'Boko Haram' and the Niger Delta crises are good examples. Successive leaders have tried to solve the country's myriad of problems without success. Crimes, unemployment, darkness (power sector), road maintenance/construction, technological breakthrough, industrialization, strikes, health care delivery, poor economy, political instability, immorality, corruption, embezzlement, battered image, etc, are the numerous problems that pervade our country, Nigeria. These problems have defied all solutions because the education system that produced our leaders is not functional. This prompted Adegoke (1998) to lament lack of functional education in Nigeria. He, therefore advocates functional education, which he describes as 'honest selection, inculcation, acquisition and application of the right, useful and usable solid and pragmatic type of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes for completely enhancing self empowerment and efficiency.

However, according to UNDP, human development index refers to widening options of persons, giving them greater opportunities for education, health care, income, employment, etc. (Wikipedia, 2007). In other words, human development index has three dimensions, life expectancy, literacy and standard of living. It is a known fact that the quality of life of individual Nigerians keeps deteriorating from one administration to the other. This is as a result of failed education industry in Nigeria. In recent years, there has been widespread concern among stakeholders over the quality of graduates from

Nigerian Universities which calls to question the currency and the relevance of the curricula of academic programmes being taught in the Nigerian University system to present day and future demands of the Nigerian society (Okebukola, 2005). Meanwhile, entrepreneurial thinking was discovered to be low among the university students and their lecturers. The challenge to create job was rated low as a result of general belief that only those trained in pure sciences could create jobs. However, it has become clear that lack of entrepreneurial education in the curriculum has, in large measure hindered the entrepreneurial spirit (Okebukola, Adedipe & Uvah, 2005). It is unfortunate that there is no Nigerian University among the best 6000 universities in the world. In the latest Webometrics World Ranking released in July 2009, other African Universities (Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Rwanda and Sudan) are far ahead of Nigeria (Awodiya, 2009).

Conclusion

The paper examined the relationship between Islam as a religion and development as a concept. The paper revealed that Islam provides an enabling environment for meaningful development to thrive in any community. This is achieved through sound education. The paper further reviewed the budgetary allocation to education over the years and lamented the gap between what is expected to make education play the pivotal role in development and what is available. If education is believed to be the singular key that can unlock the door of development, there must be a change of attitude by the government functionaries in Nigeria as to keep up with the global trend. As opined by Fafunwa (1974) educational development is imperative and urgent. It must be treated like as a national emergency second to war. It must move with the momentum of revolution. The idea of committing a lot of wealth into political adventures rather than investing in education should be jettisoned. This because, the social foundation for the political, socio-economic, scientific and technological process of any country is normally advanced through education (Bozimo and Sanda, 2007: 275).

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