

CONSTRAINTS TO THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF NOMADIC EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This paper discussed the contribution made by the Nomadic pastoralists to national nutrition, economy and well being. They contribute greatly to National development therefore the needs to provide the nomads with educational opportunity is (he responsibility of the federal government of Nigeria. The paper also discusses (he constraints to the effective implementation of Nomadic Education Programme, objective of Nomadic Education to national development. The provision, of conducive atmosphere for the effective take of (NEP) Nomadic Education Programme and functional roles of the bodies. The paper also outlines some of the educational needs of nomads, constraints to nomadic education, land use and so on. Finally, it also discusses some conditions and recommendations necessary for effective implementation of Nomadic Education Programme,

Introduction

Nomads are migratory and are not restricted to any single state. One of the poorest and educationally disadvantaged groups in Nigeria today are nomads. There are over 9.3 millions Fulani and other nomadic groups such as Shuwa Arabs, Koyan, Kanuri, Badawi, Dark Buzu, migrant fisherman etc. they have an extremely low level of participation in formal education such that literacy rate among the nomadic pastoralists, for example stand at 0.22 (Tahir, 1996) yet they contribute to national nutrition, economy and well-being.

The inability of nomadic pastoralists to participate effectively in education is mainly the consequence of their migratory way of life, which involves moving their herds and flocks of animals in search of water with the seasons. The provision of fresh milk, butter, beef, hides and skin by their animals contribute greatly to the community and economic development of the nation. There is the need, therefore, to provide the nomads with educational opportunities as their education is the responsibility of the Federal Government. It is in this sense that the Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria (1989) states that "Education is the birth right of every Nigerian child and should be brought close to the environment of the child¹".

Objective of This Study

The focus on this paper will specifically discuss:

- 1) Nigeria's Nomadic population.
- 2) Objectives of Nomadic Education.
- 3) Relevance of Nomadic Education to national development.
- 4) Provision of conducive atmosphere for the effective implementation of Nomadic Education programme.
- 5) Major constraints to Nomadic education.
- 6) Constraints of implementation.
- 7) Recommendations.

Nigeria's Nomadic Population

Educators and social scientists have always looked at nomadic populations with a feeling of fascination and have admired them as 'brave, and fierce' (Awogbado, 1991). Nigeria nomadic comprises pastoralists, migrant fishermen and farmers who can be found in several states of the federation. The migrant fishermen can also be found on the Atlantic coastline of Rivers, Delta, Akwa Ibom and Cross River States, as well as in the riverine and river basin areas of the country. Migrant crops farmers can be found in Benue, Kogi, Edo, Ebonyi and Cross River State.

Nomadic communities are mobile groups, whose pattern of activity is set by the needs imposed on them by the requirement of the animals or the crops they tend and cultivate. Awogbade (1991) deposes in this regard that nomadism or wandering pastoralism is the mode of existence of human communities totally or partially dependent on the husbandry of one or more species of domesticated animals'. Pastoralist generally depend on the management of such animals which are nourished primarily from natural vegetation. This explains why their daily and seasonal movements are usually determined by the needs of their animals for food, water and protection.

Freeman Bultts (1993) argues that these pastoralist societies are ideally 'intimate groups of' people organized either in roving bands or in small settlements, relatively isolated from contact with other groups displaying unspecialized and undifferentiated social institutions based largely upon the-pervasive web of tribal, clan, family and kinship relationships'.

Objectives of Nomadic Education

The aims and objectives of Nomadic Education as derived from the National Policy are as follows:-

- (i) The inculcation of national consciousness and unity,
- (ii) The development of the right type of attitude and values for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society,
- (iii) Training of the mind in understanding the world around the child. Developing scientific and critical thinking in the child,
- (iv) Helping the child to acquire the appropriate skills, abilities and competencies of mental, social and physical as a means of leading the child to contribute to its development.
- (v) Helping the nomadic child to improve in his occupational roles. Nomads who are seen as a special group with significantly different way of life, have the following specific objectives also:
 - (a) To expose the nomadic child to formal education.
 - (b) To inculcate the spirit of humanity and make him realize himself as a member of the Nigerian society.
 - (c) Enable the nomadic child take part in the development of his immediate environment and the country in general.
 - (d) Make the nomadic child able to improve his living conditions, thus eliminating the hardships and constraints in his life.
 - (e) To help modernize his techniques of hardship and animal management.
 - (f) To help the nomadic child to appreciate moral and religious practices.
 - (g) To assist the nomadic child to develop himself rapidly and fully, both physically and intellectually so as to enable him cope with the demands of the contemporary world.

To implement the nomadic education programme Decree 41 of 12th December, 1989 which established the National Commission for Nomadic Education is responsible for the provision of basic education to nomadic groups in Nigeria. The objectives of the commission are to:

- (a) Formulate policy and issue guidelines in all matters relating to nomadic education in Nigeria;
- (b) Provide funds for:
 - i) Research and personnel development for the improvement of nomadic education in Nigeria;
 - ii) The development of programmes in nomadic education;
 - iii) Equipment, other instructional materials (Including teaching aids and amenities), construction of classrooms and other facilities relating to nomadic education.
- (c) Arrange effective monitoring and evaluation of the activities of agencies concerned with nomadic education;
- (d) Establish, manage and maintain primary schools for nomadic children;
- (e) Determine standards of skills to be attained in nomadic education;'
 - (f) Collate, analyse and publish information relating to nomadic education in Nigeria;
 - (g) Prepare reliable statistics of nomads and their children of school age; and
 - (h) Act as the agency for channeling all external aid to nomadic schools in Nigeria.

Relevance of Nomadic Education to National Development

(i) Education for Animal Health Improvement

Nomads need to be educated with effectively way because of their insurance against death, diseases, drought and starvation. According to Ezeomah (1987) "Nomadic Education Scheme whether formal or non formal should help them to improve both human and animal health, the names of disease common to them and their animals should be included in their curriculum. The effect of the disease and germs on the livestock should be narrated in their reading materials. The methods of preventing and controlling the disease should be stated; and form focal points of discussion.

(ii) Education for Livestock Breeding Improvement

The Nomad should be educated on the importance of improving the breed of their livestock. The joy and pride of any nomadic Fulani family is seeing their animals healthy, well fed and producing abundant milk. The problem the nomads face is how to produce sufficient feed for the year round. Nomadic education programme should deal with how the feed and water may be provided. It should provide opportunities for nomads to read and discuss feeds and feed supplements, and also be trained on how to provide various types of animal feed. Such training should comprise of improved methods of animal feed, animal production management, health and breeding techniques, and marketing methods.

(iii) Education for Land Acquisition and Improvement

The nomads should be informed on the processes of acquiring land by obtaining certificates of occupancy once payment have been made and agreement over land purchase have been reached. This is particularly necessary because "undocumented land acquired without legal backing from a family head of a land owner is repudiated by his inheritors once the family head dies" (Ezeomah, 1987).

(iv) Education for Commercialization of Animal Products

Nomads should be encouraged and trained for effective commercialization of animal production. Greater attention should be paid to the animal species cattle, goats and sheep. The nomads should be trained and encouraged to discuss such economic issues as: which animals are readily sold all year round? Which animals are sold at specific periods? Which of the three species -cattle, goat and sheep are more susceptible to disease attacks and at what periods of the year? These will help the nomads not only to breed certain species of their animals for specific periods of the year but also to determine the amount of resources to devote to the species. However nomads do not sell their animals anyhow but at a specified period of the year with the aim of making profit from such sales. The idea of commercializing animals is to meet market requirements in the function of education.

5. Education for Effective Participation in Development

Nomads should be encouraged to participate in education and training. Their participation will help in developing animal husbandry needed for modernization, while life-oriented literacy programmes should be developed to focus on health, nutrition and daily living.

Provision of Conducive Atmosphere for the Effective Take Off of Nomadic Education Programmes

The implementation of the plan and objective of Nomadic Education programmes in the Nigerian situation (formal education), especially at -the level envisaged for the nomads is the prerogative of the Ministries of Education. However, the provision of social services for the people of the country cuts across many ministries, government agencies and parastatals. Thus the effective executive of the nomadic education programme necessarily bring together all those agencies and ministries whose functions including others are desirable welfare services that impinge on the well-being of the nomads.

Thus the functional roles of the bodies listed below are believed to have far reaching implications for the welfare of the nomads in the Nigerian society:

- 1) Ministries of Education;
- 2) Ministries of Agriculture, Forestry and Animal Resources;

- 3) Ministries of Health, Social Welfare, Youth and Sports;
- 4) Ministries of Works, Lands, Survey and Housing;
- 5) Ministries of Information and Culture;
- 6) Ministries for Local Government;
- 7) Ministries of Trade, Mines and Power;
- 8) NOA;
- 9) Directorate of Food, Roads, and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI);
- 10) The police;
- 11) The armed forces;
- 12) The Adult Education Commission;
- 13) The private Sector of Nigeria's economy; and
- 14) UNLESCO / UNDP / The World Bank / UNICEF.

While it is known that each of the bodies listed above has a role to play in the effective implementation of the nomadic education programme, the need is therefore the efforts of the bodies to be channelled through an agency in order to:-

- 1 Maximize the efficient utilization of the available scarce resources;
- 2 Eliminate wasteful duplication of efforts which might result from lack of information about what the others are doing or plan to do;
- 3 Avoid unnecessary bureaucratic conflicts that emanate from either the ministries or the agencies trying to out-do one another in the provision of welfare services to the nomads; and most importantly;
- 4 Create an open forum for the development of master plans, and innovative strategies for tackling the global issues pertaining to the education the nomads and the provision of welfare services necessary for their well-being.

The commission has focused its activities on the 6.5 million nomadic pastoralists and 2.8 million migrant fishermen. Out of the 9.3 million nomads in Nigeria, 3.1 million are children of school age. The level of participation of the nomads in formal and non-formal education is very low.

Major Constraints to Nomadic Education

- i) Their constant migration/movements in search of water and pasture in the case of the pastoralists, and fish in the case of the migrant fishermen;
- ii) The control system of child labour in their production system, thus making it extremely difficult to allow their children to participate in formal schooling;
- iii) The irrelevance of the school curriculum which is tailored to meet the needs of sedentary groups and thus ignore the educational needs of nomadic peoples;
- iv) Their physical isolation, since they operate in largely inaccessible physical environments;
- v) A land-tenure system that makes it difficult for the nomads to acquire land and settle in one place.

The Federal Government realized that unless a special educational provision is made for the nomads, they will have no access to formal and non-formal education. Thus in consonance with the provisions of the 1979 Constitution and the National Policy of Education, which strongly urge government to provide equal educational opportunities to all Nigerians; and in order to ensure that nomads have an unfettered access to basic education, the Federal Government established the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE). Since its inception in 1989, the NCNE has evolved five distinct programmes that are aimed at meeting the basic educational needs of the nomads. The following are the programmes:

- 1 The provision of primary education to nomadic pastoralist children in collaboration with states and local governments;
- 2 The provision of adult extension education;

- 3 The provision of primary education to the children of migrant fishermen;
- 4 Academic support services through the nomadic education centres located in the Universities of Jos, Maidugiri and Sokoto, Port Harcourt etc.;
- 5 The establishment of linkage with national and international NGOs and donor agencies for collaboration and partnership, in programmes implementation.

Constraints of Implementation

In spite of the modest gains recorded by the commission, Nomadic Education is confronted with myriads of problems ranging from limited institutional capacity to inadequate funding.

1) Teachers

Before the payment of teachers' salaries nomadic education was taken over effectively by NPEC in January 1995, NCNE provided guidelines for the recruitment of nomadic education teachers to states and local governments and provided matching grant to them, which they most often utilize in paying teachers' salaries and allowances. NCNE also provided some training and incentives i.e. special hardship allowance and bicycles to the teachers, in order to attract and retain them in nomadic schools; considering the hardship that they encounter in discharging their duties.

The new arrangement is that nomadic education teachers are to be paid by the Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs), which received such money from National Primary Education Commission (NPEC) via State Primary Education Boards (SPEBs). This arrangement has created some difficulties for nomadic education as some SPEBs and LGEAs failed to pay the salaries of nomadic teachers and their allowances. A case in point is Anambra and Cross River States where nomadic teachers have abandoned their jobs as such schools are deserted and the programme is adversely affected.

Additionally, the habit of transferring teachers to conventional primary schools with no replacements. Where replacements are made the teachers have difficulties in adjusting to the new system, since they have no training to orient them to teach in nomadic primary schools. Worst still is how they abandon teaching due to hardship they encounter in pastoral nomadic environments. These situations place greater burden on the very few nomadic education teachers on the ground with far-reaching consequence on the smooth operation of the programme.

2) Supervision

Another problem of implementation, which is related to the delivery of the programme is, the general lack of supervision and monitoring by both local and state supervisors and inspectors. This situation has to do in part with lack of means of mobility to supervise and monitor school performance. It has been discovered that several state inspectors and even local government supervisors cannot say anything about nomadic education because they lack first-hand information on them. Many schools have never been supervised or inspected since their establishment. On its part, it is apparent that the commission's monitoring strategies are faulty. Attempts are being made to streamline this operation. A nationwide monitoring exercise was conducted in 1995 / 96. A report was compiled, and is being used as a basis for meaningful monitoring practices in future.

3) Funding

The main problem is funding which ranges from inadequate funding to late release of funds even when such funds are approved. There is a discernible trend of inconsistency in the pattern of funding nomadic education, which is always at variance with the commission's plans and budget. Because the commission receives less than 30% of its budget request, it has been compelled to fund its field operations from its scanty resources in an attempt not to bring the field operations to a halt. Thus the commission is compelled to spread its lean resources thinly such that its impact is not properly felt and its objectives tangentially realized.

4) Responsibility

Basic education is principally a local government affair, such that were expected to provide classrooms, e.g. pay teachers' salaries, provide welfare facility, e.g. clinics for humans and animals, water points, and grazing reserves; whereas the Federal Government was expected to provide matching grants to states for the execution of approved projects. The basic problem here is that this guideline have been adhered to and the stakeholders looked up to the federal government for total funding of nomadic education in the states and local governments. Because of the political pressures engendered in part by initial "unpopularity" of nomadic education, the commission was compelled to "bite more than it can chew", even in the face of dwindling federal funds. Consequently many states that were not "genuinely" committed to the programme, established schools in order to attract federal funds. This was inspite of the fact that the commission, before now, lacked the monitoring capacity to ensure compliance with the guideline on a precondition for attracting federal grants. This explains the reason for the apparent confusion in the programme today.

5) Land Use

The final critical issue that has affected the smooth operation of the programme in many states of the federation is the dangerous rivalry over the use of land. This may not sound "educational", albeit it is the origin of conflict between farmers and grazers. When there is increased intensity in violence and irrational behaviour education is one of the major casualties. Schools are destroyed and pillaged and teachers and children are either killed or traumatized and people flee to other locations and learning is seriously disrupted. The question of rights over grazing areas, cattle paths, and cattle routes shall continue to be a major source of conflict and crises unless the authorities step in to proffer a comprehensive and an enduring solution to this perennial problem, without which a sizeable number of nomadic populations in the country shall continue to be excluded -from educational participation.

6) Lack of Facilities

Instructional materials, like the chalkboards, desks, tables, exercise books, text book, chart, maps, radio cassette recorders, etc. needed are not supplied as expected.

7) Language

The unregulated and haphazard implementation of the national educational language policies in the nation's primary and secondary schools has not helped the state of the language boards, they need to be revived, and, urgently too. The NCNE could see it as its responsibility to lead the federal government in this regard for proper implementation of this problem.

8) Library Facilities

At all levels, the transmission of knowledge plays an important role not only via the examples given by other persons, but also through the individuals own reading. But, unfortunately, the commission failed to address the issues of library provision in nomadic education. The significance of reading in the overall educational process has long been recognized. Many institutions at the national and international levels have set themselves the goal of fighting illiteracy and promoting reading.

9) Un preparedness of the Nomads

The nomads have certain attitudes towards their education. It is not that the people do not appreciate government's efforts towards the education of their children; but they reject any programme or system that is inimical to their way of life.

Recommendations

- 1) Nomadic schools are by definition intended for a special group of children with a peculiar life style. Both the teachers and the instructional materials, in such schools should be specifically designed to reflect the life style of the nomads.
- 2) In order to motivate the special category of teachers in nomadic schools, it is hereby recommended that inducement allowances and other attractive conditions of service should be made available in order to ensure commitment and willingness to accept and adjust to

- rural and mobile circumstances by the teachers of nomadic children.
- 3) In order to produce realistic instructional materials at pupil's grade level, it is essential to undertake a needs assessment before the specification of a teaching syllabus.
 - 4) The federal, state and local governments should increase funding for the nomadic education programme.
 - 5) The National Commission for Nomadic Education is to procure and distribute to states instructional materials of a general nature while the commission should provide funds to states to procure instructional materials to meet their specific needs.
 - 6) In the interest of equity, justice and fair play for the nomads / migrant populations, the Federal Government should continue to play a leading role in ensuring the survival and sustainability of the nomadic education programme.
 - 7) The commission should strengthen its mobilization campaign in order to sensitize the pastoralists in this area to establish and manage their schools.
 - 8) Government should provide welfare facilities for the nomads so as to motivate them to partially settle, embrace modern education and participate meaningfully in the socio-economic and political life of our country.
 - 9) Ambulatory services of the commission should be extended to them in order to take good care of their cattle so as to improve the quality of meat and dairy products they provide for the public.
 - 10) The nomads need to be enlightened so as to persuade them to set up schools to complement the efforts of governments. That would facilitate greater access to education for the nomads.
 - 11) To promote harmony between nomads and farmers, sufficient number of grazing reserves and cattle routes should be created by the government. School can then be set up on the grazing reserves in order to meet their educational-needs.
 - 12) The existence textbooks and instructional aids in the local languages of the nomadic people.
 - 13) The evolution of a well-articulated programme of nomadic education, determined by the results of intensive investigation, research and surveys conducted to ascertain the problems inherent in the implementation of the programme as well as the size of the nomadic population. In short a master plan for the Nomadic Education Programme (NEP) must be developed.
 - 14) The existence of institutionalized staff development and training programmes through seminars, workshops and in services courses as channels of updating the knowledge of the teachers and keeping them informed.
 - 15) The direct involvement of the nomads and their communities, their traditional rulers, eiders and such associations as the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MA'CBAN) in the planning and execution of the programme.

Conclusion

The commission was able to record appreciable achievements during the past years despite its limited financial resources. The unwillingness of many state governments to contribute financially to the programme in their respective states had further compounded the problem. Hence problems in nomadic education should be tackled with all vigour. The merits are immense. In the words of Tahir (1998) "a new and imaginative approach" is necessary so as to move the programme forward and make it more beneficial to its recipients.

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