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COURSE TITLE: SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

**QUESTION:**

The development and structure of educational institutions in Nigeria.

**An Overview:**

Nigeria is the seventh most populous country in the world. In the mid-2016, she overtook South Africa as the largest economy on the African continent, and was, until recently, viewed as having the potential to emerge as a major global economy. Currently, the most populous country in the world is china and Nigeria is the seventh most populous country in the world.

Western or formal education was started in Nigeria in 1842, only at primary level, by the Christian missionaries who managed the educational system according to their respective philosophies. The missionary organization available then were Chord missionary society, the Wesleyan Methodist and the Catholic. Secondary education was established in 1859 and the first secondary school was CMS grammar school, Lagos. The reason behind the delay of secondary schools was not well known though there were insinuations that it was because the missionaries thought that a secondary education will cause critical thinking in people which may not be helpful for their policies.

During this period the British colonial government couldn’t interfere in the education system due to some political and financial factors, but in 1872 they started to intervene in the education systems by giving donations to the missionary societies to support education. In 1882 the colonial government brought a document- educational ordinance with the aim of having total control of education. This was their first formal pronouncement on education in Nigeria. Schools were classified then into government and private schools. The government schools were financed entirely through public funds but the private school only receive little aid from public funds.

The 1882 education ordinance was cumbersome to implement in Nigeria because the curriculum, the method, and the medium of communication was too foreign for a Nigerian child. All these led to the failure of the ordinance was seen as the first effective effort made by the colonial government to aid education. Though, only some metropolises in Lagos were covered then.

More foreign teachers were employed, more schools were established and financial encouragements were given to the missions, voluntary agencies and private individuals to establish more schools. After amalgamation, Lord Fredrick Lugard - then the government general of Nigeria, set up some new ideas. These ideas form major part of 1916 ordinance. The ordinance came into existence exactly on the 21st of December. 1916. Since the ordinance took place after amalgamation it was able to take care of the country as a whole.

The northerners had for long, been resisting the intrusion of western education either from the colonial government or the missionaries. Lugard met with leaders from the north to convince them that education will not affect the Islamic tradition which is more paramount to the northerners. 73 years after the date of establishment of the first secondary school, the first higher education institution was established in 1932. The first institution was the Yaba Higher College established in 1932 with studies commencing in 1934.

In 1948, the University College, Ibadan was created, starting with just 104 students. The number of universities rose from one to five in 1962 and in the 1970s and 1980s, an appreciable number of higher institutions was established. Statistics show that in 1980 the number of students that gained admission into primary school was about 12 million, 1.2 million for secondary school and 240,000 at the university level.

Today, the standard of western education that the schools were known for is no more. Nigerian university graduates lack proper knowledge and skills to acquire employment. Measures must be put in place for Nigerian education to maintain its past glory (nigerianfinder.com).

**First generation universities**

Five of these universities were established between 1948 and 1965, following the recommendation of the Ashby Commission set up by the British Colonial Government to study the necessity of university education for Nigeria. [Livsey, timothy 2016] These universities are fully funded by the federal government. They were established primarily to meet a need for qualified personnel in Nigeria and to set basic standards for university education. These universities have continued to play their roles for the production of qualified personnel and the provision of standards, which have helped to guide the subsequent establishments of other generations of universities in Nigeria. Universities in this tier are the following:

1. University of Nigeria, Nsukka

2. University of Lagos

3. Obafemi Awolowo University

4. Ahmadu Bello University Zaria

5. University of Ibadan

**Second generation universities**

With the increasing population of qualified students for university education in Nigeria and the growing needs for scientific and technological developments, setting up more universities became imperative. Between 1970 and 1985, 12 additional universities were established in various parts of the country.

**Third generation universities**

The need to establish Universities to address special areas of Technological and Agricultural demand prompted the establishment of 10 additional Universities between 1985 and 1999.[UBEC, 2012]

The system of education in use today in Nigeria is the Universal Basic Education (UBE) also known as the 9-3-4 system which was introduced to replace the 6-3-3-4 system of education.

This newly adopted system took off in 2006 and it is expected to be reshaped to meet the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) target.

The system mandates that a child will have a compulsory 9 years of basic education up to JSS 3. He/she then moves on to spend 3 years in senior secondary school. The next stage is the tertiary stage where degrees are handed out after 4 years.

**The structure of educational institutions in Nigeria**

In Nigeria, the education sector is under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. The responsibility for the implementation of state-controlled policy that governs public education and state schools’ rests on the shoulders of local authorities. Education policies in Nigeria are not balanced due to political and ethnic disunity.

Education in Nigeria is based on a 6-3-3-4 system, which involves three levels of institutional learning processes:

1. at the primary school level
2. at the secondary school level
3. and at the tertiary level

Though not factored in, perhaps because not everyone has the financial access to this level, nursery education forms the first stage of the learning process, especially in the urban and semi-urban areas in Nigeria. Not many families can afford to send their toddlers to nursery schools. Since the 6-3-3-4 system of education does not include education at this stage, this write-up will concentrate on the three levels mentioned above.

The 6-3-3-4 system of education in Nigeria was introduced in 1998 to replace the 6-5-4-system. It was designed to bring about functionality in the system by producing graduates that can make use of their head, heart and hands (the 3H of education). According to the model, a child shall spend 6 years in primary school, three years in junior secondary school and if he is sound academically, he moves to senior secondary where he/she will spend another 3years before proceeding to the university to spend four years. (Abdulwali Y, 2019)

**PRIMARY EDUCATION.**

Primary education begins at around age 5 for the majority of Nigerians. Students spend six years in primary school and graduate with a school-leaving certificate. Before 1976, education policy was still largely shaped by the colonial policy of the British Colonial Period. In 1976, the Universal Primary Education program was established. This program faced many difficulties and was subsequently revised in 1981 and 1990. [UBE, 2017]

The Universal Basic Education, UBE, came as a replacement of the Universal Primary Education and intended to enhance the success of the first nine years of schooling The UBE involves 6 years of Primary School education and 3 years of Junior Secondary School education, culminating in 9 years of uninterrupted schooling, and transition from one class to another is automatic but determined through continuous assessment. This scheme is monitored by the Universal Basic Education Commission, UBEC, and has made it "free", "compulsory" and a right of every child. [UBEC, 2012]

Therefore, the UBEC law section 15 defines UBE as early childhood care and education. The law stipulates a 9-year formal schooling, adult literacy and non-formal education, skill acquisition programs, and the education of special groups such as nomads and migrants, girl child and women, Al-majiri, street children and disabled people (Aderinoye, 2007). [UBEC, 2012]

**SECODARY EDUCATION**

Students spend six years in Secondary School, which is 3 years of JSS (Junior Secondary School), and 3 years of SSS (Senior Secondary School). Secondary School Education is free and compulsory.

After the BECE, students can also join a technical college. The curriculum for these also lasts 3 years and leads to a trade/craftsmanship certificate. [UNESCO, 2012]

**TERTIARY EDUCATION**

The government has majority control of university education. Tertiary education in Nigeria consists of Universities (Public and Private), Polytechnics, Monotechnics, and Colleges of education. The country has a total number of 129 universities registered by NUC among which federal and state government own 40 and 39 respectively while 50 universities are privately owned.

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Vocational education in Nigeria