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**POOR STANDARD OF EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: CAUSES, EFFECTS AND SOLUTIONS**

 What is Education? Education comes from a Latin word “***Educatum***” meaning ‘learning process’. It is the process of acquiring certain skills and ideas, about a particular field or area of life. It can also be defined as the process of imparting knowledge and being equipped with a good amount of information into individuals, through various positive means in order to be able to stand out. Just as the saying goes “Education is a journey from converting the human being into being human”.

 Standards of Education are the learning goals for which students are expected to know and do at each particular grade level. Unfortunately, it has been a mirage as the standard of education in Nigeria has greatly dropped. Over the years, the quality of education which has been given out to pupils and students has been below average. It is a falling sector of the economy which the citizens are not proud of. In regards to this, the country has been unable to meet the proper standards of education as recognized. This poor standard of education may have various causes, as we humans are the ones who generate the problems. These causes later have an adverse effect on the students, parents and country at large. Nevertheless, solutions can be offered to help revive back the standard we all hope for.

 One of the major causes of the poor standard of education is poor funding. Schools which have a weak financial background, may not have all the necessary educational facilities and infrastructure for learning. Teachers need these in order to properly train and equip students with the needed knowledge. Facilities such as: books, libraries, seats, desks, etc. Students have a hard time learning due to lack of these materials. Imagine a child sitting on the window, or on the floor to learn! It would be noted that learning would be very difficult. Intelligent students who are willing to learn, do not have the right educational tools to do so. This has impaired the learning process in students. Another cause is employment of unqualified and undedicated teachers. Teachers and lecturers are the key to educational development. Nowadays, teachers who do not have the necessary requirements are employed into schools and universities. This is due to the nonchalant attitude of school managements in recruiting staffs. In most cases, employment is even done based on god-fatherism and not merit. As such, these unqualified teachers are unable to pass the right knowledge to pupils and students. Undedicated teachers still contribute to the poor standard of education. Teachers show divided loyalty to teaching - as most of them pay lip-service to their jobs. Also, among the causes to be considered, is the drastic increase in examination malpractice. Examination malpractice has penetrated all levels of education on Nigeria. This can be done in many forms among students, parents and teachers. Students have derived various techniques to cheat during examinations. Some schools have become “miracle schools” where students pay to be helped in examinations. This may be due to the money driven motive behind the establishment of some schools. It is also done to boost the image of their schools to the parents and public. This prevailing act reduces the standard of education in the country.

 The effects of the poor standard of education has left a toll in the Nation. Among the effects, is the increase in crime rate and social vices. It has been observed that a falling standard of education promotes high crime rate. This is because some students and youths who do not receive the proper training in schools, have no means of becoming important people in future. They are unable to find good professions and later become a threat to them public. They engage in vices like armed robbery, fraud, kidnapping which makes society unsafe. Poor economic growth and slow national development is also an effect. For any society to develop, there must be education. Students who have not been well educated, would not have enough to give back to the country. They would not be fully able to partake in the economical activities of the Nation. The economy would be struggling to meet up and the Nation’s development would be slow. Slow development in terms of inadequate infrastructures, low technological advancements, etc. An effect not to be left out is the release of half-baked students. Schools having poor learning facilities and unqualified teachers produce incompetent students. This is a major result of having buildings and constructions which are of low quality and durability. If our country continues to neglect schools and universities, the society would have unskilled citizens and workers.

 There are various solutions to help improve the standard of education in Nigeria. Employment of qualified and dedicated teachers is a great solution. Schools and universities should be made to employ professional teachers who are properly trained in their fields of study. These teachers would have enough information to give the students. Also, there should be regular payment of wages salaries. This would help serve as motivation for them to be more effective and dedicated. The teachers employed should be given periodical training to meet the new challenges in the educational aspect, which helps in universities. Another solution to be looked at, is proper funding and provision of effective educational materials. When students have the right materials for education, they bring out their best. Adequate funds should be provided for acquiring training facilities and good infrastructure, in order to ensure a conducive environment for learning. This would help boost education as they would have the opportunity to read and study extensively, after they have been taught. The curbing of examination malpractice and corruption in education ministries would also help. The level of malpractice needs to be curbed by government and regulatory bodies. They are to look out for schools that are money-oriented and use malpractice as a means. Penalties should be laid out for unlawful collection of money from students. This would drive fear in the minds of school owners and help improve standard of education.

In conclusion, the standard of education determines the type of citizens it produces. Our country’s poor standard of education indicates grave danger for the ‘supposed leaders of tomorrow’. There would be notable changes, if the proper solutions are implemented and carried out. As we all know, Education is the key to the future.