

FOUNDATIONS of EDUCATION

Edited by
S.A. JIMOH

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A Publication of
the Department of Educational Foundations,
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

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PREFACE

A book on the foundations of education, with particular reference to Nigeria, is long overdue and lecturers in the various fields of education in the Department of Educational Foundations have fulfilled this need with the publication of *Foundations of Education*,

This book contains a lot that will provide intellectual stimulation to students. If this happens (and it is likely to happen), then the department would have achieved its objective. The authors are experienced lecturers who have good claim and authority to disseminate knowledge through this medium.

This publication is both educative and challenging. It raises many issues, which will no doubt stimulate discussions and debates in and outside the classroom.

This publication is another manifestation of our Department's policy of book publishing. It is the fourth in the series of texts published in the last three years. Our journal, NIJEF, has also been recently resuscitated.

I recommend *Foundations of Education* to our students and education students elsewhere in the country.

C.O. Daramola,
Ag. Head, Department of
Educational Foundations.

EDITORIAL FOREWORD

It is a singular privilege and honour for me to present a foreword to this first edition of *Foundations of Education*, a publication of the Department of Educational Foundations, University of Ilorin. The volume was put together by the lecturers in the Department to assist our students with materials that could enhance their understanding of basic issues in educational foundations.

The Department of Educational Foundations, has, in the last five years, evolved a deliberate policy of book publishing. This is in consonance with the University policy forbidding the sale of handouts. We believe that published books, like the present one, would stimulate students and develop in them the love of learning.

This edition readily recommends itself. It covers the major areas that make up the foundations of education history, philosophy, sociology and psychology. The chapters serve as concise introductions for the initiate and refreshing summaries for the experts. But perhaps the greater appeal of this book is the deliberate attempt by the authors to assure the originality and relevance of their presentations.

I wish to recommend this edition of *Foundations* to the education student. I am sure you will enjoy going through it in spite of the little lapses that the careful reader will no doubt spot.

S.A. Jimoh

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CHAPTER EIGHT

PHILOSOPHY OF NIGERIAN EDUCATION

BY

OYELADE, F. (PhD)

Introduction

In this chapter, Philosophy of Nigerian Education is discussed from two points of view. The points of view include the following:

1. An examination of what philosophy of Nigerian education is supposed to involve;
2. An examination of searches for philosophy of Nigerian education by various Nigerians.

An Examination of What Philosophy of Nigerian Education is Supposed to Involve

Philosophy of Nigerian education is supposed to involve systematic and coherent thinking about the whole domain of our experience of the universe such as to determine the function of education in attaining reality, knowledge and values. This is implied from the analysis of philosophy of education by philosophers like Butler (1951), and Akinpelu (1981). Philosophy of Nigerian education is supposed to involve systematic and coherent thinking about the whole domain of our experience of the universe, such as to determine the function of education in attaining:

- (i) reality (that is in terms of the nature of man, the society and the universe);
- (ii) knowledge (that is in terms of theory of knowledge,

and the truth); and
(iii) values (that is in terms of theory of values - what is valuable? What values are worth having?) Akinpelu (1981, p.9) specifically stated that "A genuine national philosophy of education must have these three distinct components." He stated that:

to formulate a viable philosophy of education for a nation, therefore, there are certain basic criteria which have to be observed. Such a philosophy must be based on the nature of man and of the society as conceived by that society. This can be found out through the social science disciplines of psychology, sociology, politics and anthropology. Secondly, it must be based on what that society considers the best type of knowledge worth having, and how it is acquired. Thirdly, it must rest on a value-system or a theory of what it considers most valuable and worth having (p.9).

He then concluded that:

the Western system of education which most of the developing countries have adopted will, if analysed, be seen to obey these criteria (P-9).

In a concise manner, what the philosophy of Nigerian education is supposed to be involved, has been stated with references to philosophical positions on the issue. Now, what has been the declaration of philosophy of Nigeria education by Nigerians over the years?

An Examination of Searches for Philosophy of Nigerian Education by Various Nigerians

Over the years, certain declarations of philosophy of Nigerian education have been made. Two major declarations have been made. The first one was made in a book titled: **A PHILOSOPHY FOR NIGERIAN EDUCATION** (Adaralegbe, 1972). Adaralegbe (1972) stated that the book contains the "Proceedings of the Nigeria National Curriculum Conference 8-12 September 1969" (p. iii); and that the Conference was planned:

to tackle the question of
reviewing and identifying a
national philosophy of education
as well as our national goals and
guidelines for curriculum
development (p. xiv).

He went on to state that:

by far the most significant of the
achievements of the Conference
is the bringing together of diverse
shades of opinion by people from
different walks of life to discuss
the education of the Nigerian
child. For the first time, it has
been possible for Nigerians to

deliberate, by themselves, on the aims and goals of education suited for their children (p.xiv). The guest speakers... range from university professors to government officials, school functionaries, farmers, traders and the lay public.... Have contributed immensely to the Conference's search for an educational philosophy for Nigeria (p.xvi).

Thus, the book ***A PHILOSOPHY FOR NIGERIAN EDUCATION*** contains a "search for an educational philosophy for Nigeria" (p. xvi) as well as identifying our national goals and guidelines for curriculum development (p.xiv).

The search led to analyses of issues and critical concerns in Nigerian education and formulation of recommendations for action about them (Adaralegbe, 1972 pp. xv and 211). Thus, the Conference participants analysed the following issues:

(A) Purposes of Education

1. The Purpose of Primary Education
2. The Purpose of Secondary Education
3. The Purpose of University Education.

(B) Implications for Implementation

4. Teacher Education
5. Education of Women
6. Education for Living
7. The Role of Science and Technology in National Development.

The analyses led to:

...review old and identify new national goals for Nigerian education, bearing in mind the needs of youths and adults in the task of nation building and national reconstruction for the social and economic well-being of the individual and society (p. 211).

The seven major issues analysed (as listed above) led to arriving at nine specific decision areas. These include:

- i. A National Philosophy of Education
- ii. The Goals of Primary Education
- iii. The Objectives of Secondary Education
- iv. The Purposes of Tertiary Education
- v. The Roles of Teacher Education
- vi. The Functions of Science and Technical Education
- vii. The Place of Women Education
- viii. Education for Living
- ix. The Control of Public Education.

These can be found on P. 211 of Adaralegbe(1972).

Thus, the search for a philosophy for Nigerian education led to some decision about philosophy for Nigerian education. But as can be seen from the decision stated in detail on pp.212 and 213 of the book **A PHILOSOPHY FOR NIGERIAN EDUCATION** (Adaralegbe, 1972), the statements of decision about "A National Philosophy of Education" do not contain detailed analyses of the nature of reality by the Conference participants (who represented the Nigerian society); the

statements do not contain detailed analyses of the theory of knowledge by the representatives of the Nigerian society; and the statements do not contain detailed analyses of the theory of values by Nigerians.

Statements about man being rational and being in need of self-realization, freedom, moral and economic development, as well as spiritual, physical, emotional, scientific and technological development are copiously made.

The theory of knowledge in terms of what constitutes knowledge and the truth, is also stated in terms of need for 'relevant and balanced knowledge of facts about local and world phenomena', 'acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical, as equipment for the individual to live in his society', 'training of the mind in building valuable concepts, generalizations, and understandings of the world around us'. Moreover, it is discussed that knowledge should also lead to 'self-realization, better human relationships, self and national economic efficiency, effective citizenship, national consciousness, national unity, social and political progress, scientific and technological progress, national reconstruction'.

The Theory of Values

What is valuable? What values are worth having? is stated in terms of the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and of society', 'respect for the worth and dignity of the individual', 'man's ability to make rational decisions', 'the guarantee of fundamental human freedom in the social, economic and political sphere', 'moral and spiritual values in interpersonal and human relations', 'shared responsibility for the common good of society', and 'the promotion of the emotional, physical and psychological health of all children'. Moreover, 'equality of educational opportunity for all Nigerian children so that each can develop

according to his own ability, aptitude and interest' is also recognized as an educational value in the implementation of the issues of concern in the **'NATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION'** (pp 212-213).

The content of education at the various levels of education, primary, secondary and tertiary 'must reflect the past, present and future of the dynamic Nigerian society in terms of the role the individual is expected to play in the present modernization process'(p.212).

It can be seen that the analysis of the "National Philosophy of Education" on pp.212-213 in the Proceedings of the Nigeria National Curriculum Conference involves some statements of systematic and coherent thinking by Nigerians about the experience of Nigerians, such as to determine the function of education in attaining reality, knowledge and values. The statements are however, not made in great depth until one looks into statements of the 'goals of primary education', 'objectives of secondary education', 'purpose of tertiary education', 'the role of teacher education', 'functions of science and technical education', 'the place of women's education', 'education for living', and 'control of public education' - all of which contain elaboration of the statements on the 'National Philosophy of Education'.

When the various areas of decision are considered altogether, that is decision areas: i-ix contained on pp. 212-224, it would be seen that the National Curriculum Conference participants of 8-12 September 1969, made statements that involve systematic and coherent thinking about Nigeria's experience, such as to determine the function of education in attaining reality knowledge, and values.

Some of such statements have been mentioned, some of the others include:

function of public education in the
development of the

individual for national progress and national reconstruction' (P. 221); "We must ensure a balanced school programme between the humanizing disciplines and the sciences to allow for the development of the abiding values and attitudes that sustain society" (p. 219); Education at all levels should be geared to the development of the total personality of the individual in our society. It should be used as a positive step in building a Nigerian nation. It is the duty of the state to provide diversified curriculum in the schools to meet the needs of both men and women who will play their role in our modernization process (P. 219).

Education for living requires a strong and positive identification with the societal values and ways of life within a dynamic society. In a gradual process of change, such education must equip the child to improve upon that social life and leave it better than he found it. Thus, there ought to be a tripartite co-operation among

the school, the home and the community agencies to ensure that they all know what their functions are (P. 221).

Education for living must make children and adults ready to be leaders and followers in the task of nation building... to be concerned with the individual child's needs, emotions, wants, fears, and his intellectual, spiritual and physical growth into a mature adult capable of self-direction through self-discipline. It must be geared towards national unity, national reconstruction... (p. 221).

Schools must be less rigid and more flexible. We must stress spirit of adventure and challenge youths to question time-honoured beliefs and customs (p. 221).

The control of Nigerian education should be shared between local authorities, state governments and the Federal Government to help attain the nation's philosophy and goals

for education within the shortest possible time (p. 221).

When all the statements of the Conference participants are considered in the light of formulating a "National Philosophy of Education" for Nigeria, it would be seen that the statements somewhat involve a declaration that Nigeria's philosophy of education should be Social Reconstructionism: as enunciated by Brameld (1956) and Counts (1932).

A second major search for a philosophy of Nigerian education is contained in the book titled **PERSPECTIVES OF QUANTITIES AND QUALITIES IN NIGERIAN EDUCATION**, edited by Awokoya (1980). The book contains deliberations of various Nigerians on "the development of education envisaged between now (that was 1980) and the year 2000" (p.1). The book features a synthetic report of the deliberations of the Nigerians who met at the instance of the Nigerian Educational Research Council, on the development of education envisaged in Nigeria. Their deliberations led to the "consensus... that Nigeria should adopt a philosophy of developmentalism in order to reach parity with the world" (p.1). But when the "philosophy of developmentalism" is critically analysed, it would be seen to be actually a theory of education rather than a philosophy of education. However, with certain modifications to the theory of education, it can be found to be akin to the philosophy of Social Reconstructionism as enunciated by Brameld (1956) and Counts (1932).

In effect, the two major searches for a philosophy of Nigerian education by Nigerians, suggest the adoption of philosophy of Social Reconstructionism (otherwise known as Cultural Reconstructionism), as philosophy of Nigerian education..

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