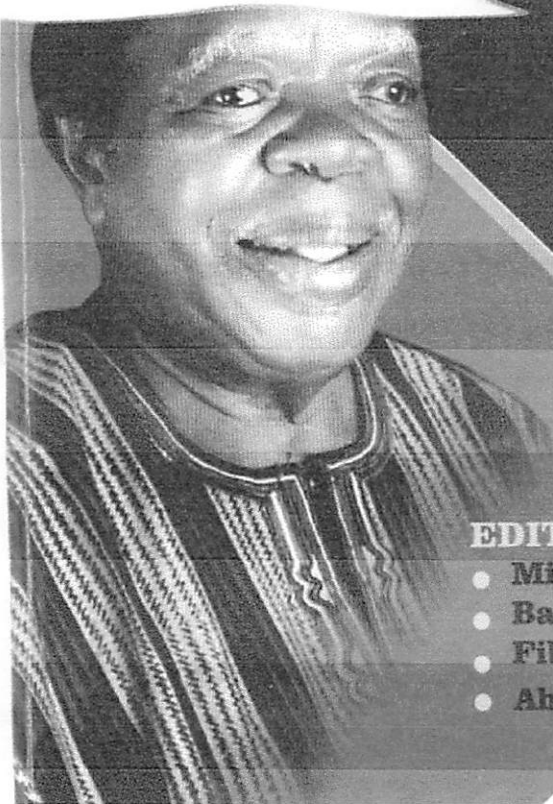


Theory & Practice

of Educational Research

A Book of Readings in Honour of
Professor Augustus Adedoke Adoyinka (Mnae, Fhoedson)

Vol. 1



EDITED BY

- Michael Omolewa
- Bashiru O. Lawal
- Fibainmine G. Paulley
- Abdulrahman-Yusuf M.

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Michael Omolewa

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FOREWARD

I am delighted to write a foreword to the two volumes of the book titled *Theory and Practice of Education in Nigeria*, written to honour the historian and philosopher of education, Professor Augustus Adeleke Adeyinka (JP), a Fellow of both the Historians of Education Development Society of Nigeria (*fhodson*) and Higher Education Research and Policy Network (*sherpn*) and member of the prestigious Nigerian Academy of Education (*mnae*). The large number of chapters, eighty-seven, contributed by scholars from within and outside Nigeria, is a testimony that the man in whose honour the book is written is by all standards an academic icon. I am not surprised because my interaction with Professor Augustus Adeleke Adeyinka has shown that he is indeed a serious-minded academic who is ready to share his wealth of experience with others, with a view to making the university grow. As Acting Vice Chancellor, I have come to admire the man for his sense of dedication, devotion to duty, humility and fatherly disposition to official assignments.

I am impressed by the wide coverage of the various areas of education, in eighty-seven chapters, arranged in the following eight sections, which are divided into two volumes, with Volume One having four sections, namely, Philosophy of Education; History of Education; Sociology of Education; Teaching and Curricular Issues; and Volume Two also having four sections: Science Education, Research, Tests and Measurement; Educational Administration/Management and Planning; Psychology/Guidance & Counselling; and Technical and Vocational Education and Training. The book is, therefore, a complete representation of what education covers in the formal education sector. Professor Adeyinka's multiple areas of specialisation are History of Education, Philosophy of Education, Sociology of Education and Curriculum Studies. Not only does the book cover these areas, other areas of education are also covered, which is an evidence that the chapter contributors are within and outside Professor Adeyinka's areas of scholarship, an evidence of his acceptability by scholars in all areas of education. I am also impressed that chapter contributions include the ones received from scholars in other institutions where Professor Adeyinka has worked, and from such other countries as South Africa, Sudan, Australia.

Generally, the book has succeeded in examining the different aspects of education by presenting an holistic landscape, opportunity, challenges and implications for policy makers and practitioners in education. The book also portrays the idea of unity in diversity within the theory and practice of education, implying that despite the various sub-divisions of education, the whole purpose of education has been presented as that of developing the individual so as to make him/her useful to himself/herself, his/her family and the nation. The language of presentation is lucid and precise. The authors have tried to keep the simplicity and versatility of the book high.

The chapters are rich, robust, topical, insightful and thought provoking and written in such a way that operators of the education industry such as teachers, planners, administrators, policy makers, students, politicians, scholars and the general public will certainly benefit from it.

I commend and identify myself with the initiators of this laudable project to honour one of us, our own Professor Augustus Adeleke Adeyinka, in this manner and wish *Baba* Adeyinka God's grace and benevolence in all his endeavours as he continues in his efforts of teaching and developing others for the benefit of the society. Therefore, I wholeheartedly recommend this book for all stake holders in the education sector and the general public, to update their ideas on the theory and practice of education in Nigeria.

Professor Samuel G. Edoumiekumo
Acting Vice Chancellor,
Niger Delta University,
Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State
14th September, 2017

PREFACE

This two-volume, eighty seven-chapter book titled *Theory and Practice of Education in Nigeria*, is written to honour the historian and philosopher of education, Professor Augustus Adeleke Adeyinka (*JP*), Fellow of the Historians of Education Development Society of Nigeria (*fhedson*), Fellow of the Higher Education Research and Policy Network (*herpn*) and member of the prestigious Nigerian Academy of Education (*mnae*), among other prestigious academic organisations. Professor Adeyinka is, by all standards, an academic icon.

The idea of writing a book to honour Professor Augustus Adeleke Adeyinka was conceived in 2016 by a group of his upcoming academics in the Niger Delta University where he is currently teaching on contract appointment, after retiring gloriously from the University of Ilorin, considering his immense contributions to the development of human capacity through the instrumentality of education in Nigeria and the world at large. The idea was sold to Emeritus Professor Michael Omolewa, who gladly bought the idea and subsequently set the process on with the charge that the project should be completed before the 2017 Conference of Historians of Education Development Society of Nigeria slated for the Niger Delta University where the Professor is currently working. The way contributors embraced the idea of the project was a pleasant surprise to the initiators of the project. What this shows is that the man, Professor Adeyinka, on whom the book is written, has goodwill among the operators of the educational landscape in and outside the country that he must have had contact with over the years as everybody was very enthusiastic in contributing to the project. Professor Adeyinka is a grandfather/great grandfather and an academic mentor to many people in the educational circle, particularly in the sub-field of Philosophy of Education and History and Policy of Education, his major areas of specialization.

Bamiro's (2008: xiv) description of the life of an academic icon as
*a spirit of commitment to the highest ideals of scholarship
and service, ... a spirit of 'can do', resilience and
determination to overcome all obviously daunting odds, a
capacity to turn problems into catalysts for progress and to
recast challenges in the form of golden opportunities to
prove beyond any doubt that the human spirit cannot be
broken*

is equally true of Professor Augustus Adeleke Adeyinka.

Professor Adeyinka is a distinguished, renowned scholar of international repute, a practising Christian and a responsible family man. All through his working life, Professor Adeyinka has been in the educational circle, teaching in both Nigeria and the world at large. So, writing a book titled *Theory and Practice of Education in Nigeria* in his honour is a good idea, for that is what he has been doing and saying all through his life as a scholar. To him, education should serve the purpose of acting as a vaccine to meet the world's multi-faceted challenges.

The book, which is in two volumes, has eighty seven chapters in all, arranged into the following eight sections, with each volume having four sections: Thus Volume One has four sections, namely:

Section A: Philosophy of Education;

Section B: History of Education;

Section C: Sociology of Education; and

Section D: Teaching and Curricular Issues;

while Volume Two, which continues from where Volume One stops, also has four sections, as follows:

Section E: Science Education, Research, Tests and Measurement;

Section F: Educational Administration / Management and Planning;

Section G: Psychology / Guidance and Counselling; and

Section H: Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

VOLUME ONE

SECTION A: PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

This section contains seventeen (17) chapters. In chapter one, *Paulley, Abdulrahman* and *Ikioumoton* introduce the man, Professor Augustus Adeleke Adeyinka, highlighting his contributions to educational development, while in chapter two, *Esther. Grey* and *Ezekiel* discuss Professor Adeyinka's teaching philosophy. In chapter three, *Adeyinka, Paulley* and *Ikioumoton* introduce the concept and value of philosophy of education. This is followed in chapter four by *Udesi* discussion of the significance of philosophy in education. The matters arising from the *Otonti Nduka's* Western thought with reference to African cultural background and education is the focus of chapter five, anchored by *Osaat* and *Anagwo*. *Amaele* and *Anagwo*, who authored chapter six, focus their discussion on Paulo Freire's liberative concept of education in the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Chapter seven, authored by *Oyelade* and *Olaniyi*, centre their discussion on the philosophical foundations of the Nigerian National Policy on Education. Ivan Illich and the deschooling process is the focus of chapter eight, authored by *Adeyinka, Paulley* and *Ikioumoton*. *Agih*, the author of chapter nine, discusses democracy and education, focussing on the philosophy of John Dewey, while utilizing citizenship education for solving Nigeria's problems is what *Jekanyifa* discusses in chapter ten. In chapter eleven, *Adeyinka (Jr)* takes a look at Ivan Illich and the schooleless society in an age of digital technology. In chapter twelve, *Adeyinka, Ikioumoton* and *Paulley* direct their attention to the concept of justice in Aristotle's philosophy, highlighting its implications for socio-political life in Nigeria. *Gabriel*, author of chapter thirteen, based his discussion on adolescence and crime in Nigeria, highlighting the teaching of moral education, enforcement of discipline and inculcating right values as cures. *Adeyinka* and *Paulley*, in chapter fourteen, highlight the major trends in the development of educational ideas, while *Akanbi, Jekanyifa* and *Abiolu* x-ray the role of education and women's power in the maintenance of peace culture in Nigeria in chapter fifteen. The implications of philosophy of adult education for practice is *Zuofa's* presentation in chapter sixteen, while *Maliki* in chapter seventeen, which concludes the section on philosophy of education, discusses the philosophical basis for guidance and counselling.

SECTION B: HISTORY AND POLICY OF EDUCATION

This section on History and Policy of Education has twenty one chapters, starting with *Omolewa* discussing, in chapter eighteen, how the historian can contribute to the process of selecting heroes in Nigeria. In chapter nineteen, *Okorosaye-Orubite* centres his analysis of Nigeria's National Policy on Education, asking the rhetorical question: Who failed who, is it the policy, the Nigerian state or the Nigerian people themselves for whom the policy is meant? The evolution of the Sudanese modern education policy is what *Izerig* discusses in chapter twenty, while *Osokoya* and *Abdulraham*'s contribution in chapter twenty-one is on the conceptual and phenomenonal analysis of universalization of education in Nigeria, using the universal basic education as a case study. In chapter twenty-two, *Aminigo* identifies the educational development and scholarship in the Rivers/Bayelsa zone of the Niger Delta Region since the creation of the two states in 1967 and 1996 respectively. In chapter twenty-three, *Muraina* outlines the development of education in Nigeria since the country was amalgamated in 1914. This is followed in chapter twenty-four by *Ahmed*'s discussion of the history and nature of science and linking both with science education. In chapter twenty-five, *Oghenekohwo* and *Frank-Oputu* discuss comparative education in developmental perspective. *Adeyinka*'s focus in chapter twenty-six is on the developments in the secondary school curriculum and examination systems in Anglophone African countries. *Ofoha*'s discussion in chapter twenty-seven is on how Africa can meet the challenges of the global knowledge economy through the introduction of innovative approach to teaching, learning and research in higher education in the continent. In chapter twenty-eight, *Harry* centres her presentation on an appraisal of the historical development of compensatory education in Nigeria. In chapters twenty-nine and thirty, *Olayanju* and *Uyoata* present the evolution and development of the pioneer colleges of education in the South-Western states of Nigeria from 1964-2009; and how the Nigerian education system could be invigorated for societal development in the 21st century respectively. *Oyebamiji* in chapter thirty-one presents the issue of literacy education as a catalyst for national development, while *Agu* and *Isei*'s interest in chapter thirty-two is on the theories and practice of education in Nigeria, focusing on the strategies for the effective implementation of the National Policy on Education. Trending path to professional teacher education in Nigerian colleges from 1964-2014 is the focus of chapter thirty-three, authored by *Olayanju*; while *Wellington* and *Ogeibiri* in chapter thirty-four trace the historical background of entrepreneurial development in Nigeria. For *Saidu* and *Oyediji* who wrote chapter thirty-five, the focus is the history of education and national development, with special reference to vocational and technical education. The challenging trend of poor performance of students in the Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE) in South-West states and the way forward is the focus of chapter thirty-six, the last chapter in Section B, authored by *Akanbi*.

SECTION C: SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

This section has only one chapter, chapter thirty-seven, co-anchored by *Igwesi* and *Ziprebo*, on the role of parents in children's education in an age of globalization.

SECTION D: TEACHING AND CURRICULAR ISSUES

This section has a total of twelve chapters. Chapter thirty-eight, written by *Agi*, is on the affective domain as the spring board for effective teaching and learning. In chapter thirty-nine, *Amadioha* presents the concept, types and uses of instructional materials for the teaching-learning situation. Global best practice of teaching practice supervision is the focus of *Hamilton-Ekeku*'s chapter forty, while in chapter forty-one, *Ajoku* introduces the Nigerian experience of the teaching profession in a comatose (depressed) economy. In chapter forty-two, *Osemene* discusses the need for the availability and utilization of audio-visual aids for the effective teaching and learning of Agricultural Science in secondary schools. The implications of peer group as a tool for cooperative learning to the post-secondary school teacher is the focus of *Nemine* and *Timi-Johnson*'s chapter forty-three. In chapter forty-four, *Charles-Zalakoro* expresses the concern for how reshaping the benchmark for teachers' conditions of service would enhance the effective implementation of the school curriculum in Bayelsa State. The focus of *Nwaokugha* in chapter forty-five is on new directions for teaching practice in Nigeria's teacher education. In chapter forty-six, *Owede* and *Sele* discuss the need for giving priority attention to emerging social-issues in society to enrich the Social Studies education curriculum in Nigeria. The place of instructional media in the teaching of introductory technology is what *Nemine* presents in chapter forty-seven; while in chapter forty-eight *Mbachu* and *Benwari* focus their attention on classroom management as a panacea for effective curriculum delivery. The last chapter in this section, which is chapter forty-nine, written by *Saliu*, *Okoro* and *Lawal* focusses on quality of teacher education programme as a correlative instrument for youth empowerment in Oyo State of Nigeria.

VOLUME TWO

SECTION E: SCIENCE EDUCATION, RESEARCH, TESTS AND MEASUREMENT

This section has a total of seven chapters. Chapter fifty, by *Buseri*, focusses on the theory and practice of science education in Nigerian secondary schools. In chapter fifty-one, *Fehintola* highlights the strategies to be employed in encouraging children to study science as a tool for enhancing development. In chapter fifty-two, *Akporehwe* discusses teacher/student relationship as a tool for the latter's academic performance in science. Research instrument development for education and the social sciences is the focus of *Offor*, *Epelle* and *Obiyai*'s discourse in chapter fifty-three. *Hamilton-Ekeke* in chapter fifty-four provides guidelines for the writing of the methodology chapter of an undergraduate final year project work. In chapter fifty-five, *Amutari* provides a general overview of tests and their construction, while *Moses* and *Benwari* conclude the section with chapter fifty-six, which directs the attention of readers to ICT and science teaching in Nigerian schools.

SECTION F: EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION/MANAGEMENT & PLANNING

The section also has seven chapters. *Major*'s discourse on introduction to educational planning is the focus of chapter fifty-seven. In chapter fifty-eight, *Omosidi* and *Oyediji* introduce readers to the application of network analysis in educational planning, while

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The editors are grateful to all the contributors, particularly the indigenes of the clan of History, History and Policy of Education, Philosophy and Philosophy of Education and Sociology of Education, the clans to which *Baba Adeyinka* rightly belongs, for their support and submissions that made the book project see the light of day. The moral and financial support of the following senior members of the Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University, is hereby acknowledged and highly appreciated: Professor John Cecil Buseri, *JP, fnae*, the pioneer Vice Chancellor of the Niger Delta University, who also contributed a chapter because of his high regard for Professor Adeyinka; the Dean of the Faculty, Professor Akpoebi C. Egumu; Professor Osa Tawari, Dean of Graduate School; Professor Tuemi T Asuka, former Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) for reviewing the book; Professor Comfort C. Zuofa, former Dean of Student Affairs; Professor Emmanuel E. Osuji; and many others in the Faculty of Education. Professors A. K Okorosaye-Orubite and Amakievi I. O. Gabriel, the father and mother, respectively, of the historians of education clan in the Niger Delta Region are appreciated for the leadership roles they have played in grooming the upcoming historians of education in the Region and in ensuring that this project succeed.

Societies honour their heroes and heroines in different ways and styles. It is, therefore, the chapter contributors' own way of honouring this quintessential scholar of international repute. To all chapter contributors, therefore, the editors are profoundly grateful. As you honour a worthy hero, may the good Lord bless and honour you as well. Thank you and congratulations for making our dream come true.

Further, we would like to thank the management of the Niger Delta University for providing an environment that is peaceful and friendly, not only for teaching, but also for research and the dissemination of the findings of research.

The assistance of Mr. Preye Tinkorogha of the Niger Delta University Resource Centre for typesetting the work as well as efforts of Pastor Daodu Olukayode who provided the cover design of the book are equally being appreciated by the editors.

We wish to thank Professor Augustus Adeleke Adeyinka, the father of the clan of Historians and Philosophers of Education, for making himself available for the long interviews and supporting our efforts to document his ideas and contributions to the theory and practice of education in Nigeria. We pray that God should grant him long life to see the growth and development of the children, grand and great grand children he has nurtured, and is nurturing, to grow to maturity.

Finally, we are most eternally grateful to God Almighty, the source of all knowledge and wisdom, for His love, grace and mercies on all of us, who took part in this project. Let all glory and honour be ascribed unto Him for seeing us through the project.

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Chapter Seven

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE NIGERIAN NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION

Ayotunde F. Oyelade & Abiodun J. Olaniyi

Introduction

Philosophical foundations of the Nigerian National Policy on Education would be discussed in this chapter by first considering what is meant by philosophical foundations of education. Next would be consideration of Nigerian National Policy on education. Philosophical foundations of education implies philosophical basis of education. Thus, philosophical foundations of the Nigerian National Policy on Education implies philosophical basis of that policy. The Nigerian National Policy on Education contains government's statements on the operation of education in Nigeria (Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN, 2013:13).

In effect, philosophical foundations of the Nigerian National Policy on Education implies the philosophical basis of government's statements on the operation of education in Nigeria. It follows that in this chapter, philosophical basis of government's statements on the operation of education in Nigeria would be discussed. The statements are as found in the National Policy on Education 2013 (FRN, 2013).

The statements feature government's course of action (operation) on education, from the elementary level to the tertiary level of education. The statements feature details of operation of education in Nigeria from the basic level to the tertiary level of education.

The National Policy on Education: Basic, Post-Basic and Tertiary Education

In the Nigerian National Policy on Education, the basic level of education is the education given to children from 0 to 15 years of age; while the education given to children for the next three years, in the senior secondary school, is post-basic education. However, the education given in technical colleges, and vocational enterprise institutions, is discussed in the national policy as part of post basic education (FRN, 2013:36-40).

Mass Education and Nomadic Education are not discussed as part of post basic education, rather they are discussed as part of basic education; because they feature mass literacy, adult and non-formal education equivalent to basic education (FRN, 2013:43). The education is given to adults, children and youths of formal school age outside the formal school system. It is to provide functional basic education for adults and youths who have never had the advantage of formal education or who left school too early (FRN 2013:43). It is to provide remedial and life-long education for youths and adults who did not complete [basic] secondary education; and to provide on the job vocational and professional training for various categories of workers and professionals in order to improve their skills (FRN 2013:43).

Tertiary education, according to the government, is the education after post basic education given in institutions such as universities, inter-university centres (such as the Nigeria French Language Village), innovation enterprise institutions (IEIs), colleges of

education. polytechnics, monotechnics, and other specialised institutions such as colleges of agriculture, schools of health and technology and the National Teachers' Institute (NTI) (FRN 2013:52).

The national policy on education discusses the features of these three levels of education (basic, post basic, and tertiary) mentioned above into some detail, and then goes on to discuss Open and Distance Education, Special Needs Education, and Educational Support Services (FRN 2013:63-73). Further, it discusses Planning and Administration of Education, and Funding and Partnerships (FRN 2013:74-83).

While basic education is universal and compulsory, post basic education is not. Moreover tertiary education is also not compulsory (FRN 2013:18, 81). While basic education exposes learners to basic literacy, numeracy, and functional education (FRN 2013:17-28; 43-51), post basic education (secondary) exposes learners to additional literacy, numeracy, humanities, and vocational education (FRN 2013:29-42). Tertiary education exposes learners to general education, specialised education, and vocational education that could enable learners to explore the society and the world intensively and extensively, with the possibility of expanding knowledge, skills and values for the betterment of individuals and the world (FRN 2013:52-69).

In the National Policy on Education, Open and Distance Education is discussed as a form of tertiary education wherein learners and teachers need not be in physical contact (FRN 2013:63-64). Special Needs Education is discussed as a form of education designed to meet the peculiar needs of persons who have various unique needs (for instance as a result of visual impairment, hearing impairment, and multiple disabilities); similarly persons who are gifted and talented need peculiar attention. Moreover, persons who are albinos have various challenges, including vision problem, skin problem, and stigmatization, so they need special attention. Thus, Special Needs Education is for all levels of education—from basic to tertiary (FRN 2013:65-69). Finally, Education Support Services, Planning and Administration of Education, and Funding and Partnerships are discussed for all levels of education.

Philosophical Foundations of the Nigerian National Policy on Education

While various statements are made in the national policy on education about features of various levels of education and various areas of education, the thinking of government about education generally and specifically is found in all the discussions. This thinking of government about education and particularly about Nigerian education contains the philosophy of Nigerian education; put more properly in the context of this chapter, this thinking of government contains the philosophical foundations of the National Policy on Education.

The philosophical foundations of education contain the thinking about what is ultimately real for education to pursue, what constitutes knowledge that education should pursue, and what constitutes value that education should aspire to achieve (Akinpelu, 1981:9; Lucas, 1969:196). In the case of Nigeria, as found in the National policy on education, the thinking about ultimate reality, knowledge and values that serve as foundations for Nigerian education are found in the discussions on basic education, post basic education, tertiary education, special education and so forth.

This thinking is stated generally at certain times and specifically at other times. For instance, in the Philosophy and Goals of Education in Nigeria (FRN 2013:13-16), the government makes general statements about education being for the pursuit of self-fulfillment and general development of the society; promotion of unity in Nigeria, Africa, and world peace; development of sound and effective citizen; promotion of democracy, principles of freedom, equality and justice; and promotion of dynamic economy (FRN 2013:13-14).

Specifically, the government emphasizes that the quality of instruction at all levels of education shall be oriented toward inculcating the following values:

- (a) Respect for the worth and dignity of the individual;
- (b) Faith in man's ability to make rational decisions;
- (c) Moral and spiritual principles in inter-personal and human relations;
- (d) Shared responsibility for the common good of society;
- (e) Promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological development of all children; and
- (f) Acquisition of functional, skills and competencies necessary for self-reliance (FRN, 2013:16).

These are indications of not only the "values" that Nigerian government would want education to pursue, but also indications of what the government considers to be ultimately really worth pursuing and what constitutes knowledge worth acquiring. This is because the statements include:

- ❖ Moral and spiritual principles in inter-personal and human relations;
- ❖ Man's ability to make rational decisions;
- ❖ Promotion of physical, emotional and psychological development of all [learners];
- ❖ Acquisition of functional skills, and competencies necessary for self-reliance.
- ❖ Respect for the worth and dignity of the individual; and shared responsibility for the common good of society (FRN 2013:16).

In this new arrangement of the statements made earlier on, it can be seen that education for the development of moral and spiritual principles implies education that recognizes spiritual reality of life; also education that respects man's ability to make rational decisions implies education that recognizes rational reality of man. Similarly, education that acknowledges physical, emotional, and psychological development implies education that recognizes physical, emotional and psychological realities of individuals and the world. The education proposed the recognition of the worth and dignity of the individual learner and the society – these also have metaphysical dimension.

Moreover, according to the specific statements rearranged above, it can be seen that knowledge can be pursued in moral perspectives and spiritual perspectives. Knowledge can also be pursued in physical, rational, and psychological perspectives. Knowledge can be pursued in individual and shared perspectives. Knowledge is to help in acquisition of functional skills in various areas of competencies. Knowledge is what helps in promoting the common good of the society. Knowledge promotes physical, rational, emotional and

psychological development of the individual learners and the society. Knowledge promotes sharing of responsibilities in the society, such that people develop with the consideration of others in the society. That is, knowledge recognizes the need to support others in the society, it emphasizes constructive tendencies; and discourages destructive tendencies. In addition knowledge promotes, or should promote life-long learning (FRN, 2013:14, 16).

Similarly, in the specific statements rearranged above, it can be seen that values to be promoted through education should be moral, spiritual, rational, physical, vocational, the worth and dignity of the individuals, and shared responsibility for the common good of the society. All these are stated specifically in the national policy on education (FRN 2013:16). This implies that statements about ultimate reality, knowledge and values in the National Policy on Education are made in the section on Philosophy and Goals of Education in Nigeria (FRN 2013:13-16) in various ways to the extent that the philosophy of education might not be immediately understood and appreciated. However, after careful reflection on the various imports of the various ways in which the statements are made, it becomes easy to see that the philosophical foundations of education in the National Policy on Education indicate spiritual, moral, rational, physical, psychological, functional, vocational, individual, shared responsibility, and life-long emphases on education (FRN 2013:13-16).

Equal Educational Opportunities

The emphases stated above warrant the pursuit of equal educational opportunities for all learners (FRN 2013:14). The pursuit of Mass and Nomadic Education for adults, children, and youth who did not benefit at all or adequately from basic education; the pursuit of Special Education for learners with unique needs as a result of health challenges or because they are gifted (FRN 2013:65-69); the pursuit of Vocational Enterprise Education for post-basic education students and senior secondary school students who may not proceed to tertiary education (such that they could learn technologically based trade and thereby earn a living) (FRN 2013:38-40); the pursuit of Open and Distance Education (such that learners who are workers could also have access to tertiary education without necessarily being in physical contact with their teachers) (FRN 2013:63-64) – all give indication of government's recognition of the need to provide equal educational opportunities for all people capable of learning in Nigeria (FRN 2013:14). As specifically stated in the policy,

this philosophy of Nigerian education is based on the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and the provision of equal opportunities for all citizens of the nation at the basic, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system (FRN 2013:14).

The government could only provide universal education at the basic education level only (FRN 2013:18). In addition, the universal basic education manifests equality of access to education but not the right to equal education (see Akinpelu 1981:214-221). It follows that the policy contains statements about equality of educational opportunities that do not translate to right to equal education.

If granting "equal opportunities for all citizens of the nation at the basic, secondary, and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system" would warrant funding education at all levels of education as it is done at the basic education level, then the government could achieve tremendous results in education for individual and societal development in spiritual, moral, rational, physical, vocational, psychological, individual, shared responsibility, and similar dimensions. But if the statement of equal educational opportunities does not mean funding education in the sense that it is done at the basic level of education, then the statement does not imply adequate pursuit of the concept of equal educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education (FRN 2013:14). It implies equal right to education, rather than right to equal education which is a better option (Akinpelu 1981:214-221).

Conclusion

It follows that the government can be seen to have good philosophical statements on what constitutes ultimate reality, knowledge, and values worth pursuing in Nigerian education (generally and in specific areas of education); but it does not have adequate pursuit of the philosophical statements in certain respects in the operation of the education.

For the operation of the education to be in consonance with the philosophical statements, the education at the basic, secondary and tertiary levels should be funded by the government (see for instance FRN 2013:14). Presently, however, the funding is largely at the basic level only, and even then, the nature of the funding demonstrates provision of equality of access to education at that level, not provision of equality of education in the sense of right to equal education.

It would be provision of equality of education in the sense of right to equal education when the beneficiaries are exposed to general and specialized education to the extent that all of them can benefit from the education according to their utmost abilities in their various areas of talents (Akinpelu 1981:217-221).

However, this kind of education may not be easy to fund for all citizens, for it would mean that all citizens would be educated to the utmost of their abilities in their various talents, regardless of the financial capabilities of government. The financial capabilities might not be able to support this provision all the time; but this is the more acceptable interpretation of the philosophical concept of equality of educational opportunities (Akinpelu 1981:217-221; Silver 1973; Warnock, 1977).

If the more acceptable concept can be pursued, it would be for the benefit of the individuals and the society at large. However, if the concept cannot be pursued in terms of provision of education for all citizens up to the utmost of the individual learners' abilities, it may be pursued up to the end of senior secondary education, as it is done in the developed nations such as United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA), France, Japan, Germany and Russia. The pursuit of universal education in these countries up to the end of senior secondary schooling helps them to achieve individual, societal, spiritual, moral, rational, physical, psychological, emotional, and similar developments, to the extent that these countries determine the direction of development in the world today.

Recommendations

In the light of the demand for the provision of equality of educational opportunities in the Nigerian National Policy on Education (see FRN 2013:14), which is in consonance with the philosophical foundations of Nigerian education (FRN 2013:14), it would be important for the government to consider the provision of universal education for all citizens up to the end of senior secondary schooling. This could be done as it is done in the developed nations mentioned above.

Finally, in the pursuit of equal educational opportunities, the various learners should be encouraged to appreciate vigorously the need to support one another for individual and societal development; and this can be pursued through emphasis on moral and spiritual education, but particularly through emphasis on the fear of God.

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