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**DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY**

**TOPIC:**

**THE DEVELOPMENT PROFILE OF NATION WITH A  
POPULATION OF 80% ILLITERATES**

**A TERM PAPER**

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**TITLE**

THE DEVELOPMENT PROFILE OF A NATION WITH A  
POPULATION OF 80% ILLITERATES

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to God Almighty for his countless grace and blessings and to my family for all their support.

## PREFACE

Illiteracy has been a ravaging problem in most African countries, so Nigerian is never an exception. This work therefore tends to explain in few built comprehensive words, the development profile of a country with 80% illiterates.

The first chapter takes up development, generally discussing the types and showing the development that took place before and after independence, the second chapter explains education in Nigeria, describing it in both the informal and formal setting chapter three explained the development education has undergone in Nigeria, show the ravaging effect of illiteracy factors that led to it. The last chapter concludes by showing the role the family and Government have to play in order to eradicate illiteracy.

In the course of writing, it came to my awareness that this topic has been treated by so many writers, who have all brought out meaningful ideas from their daily experience and helped in the development of this work. I will also like to acknowledge some bodies like UNESCO for so many of their research books. I acknowledge Nnamdi Azikiwe Library UNN for providing me with resources, my course mates who also helped in their own little way, not forgetting my lecturer Mrs Joy. I. Ugwu and for all my readers I appreciate you all.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## DEVELOPMENT

### INTRODUCTION

Development is the qualitative growth that takes place in a country, region, sector or establishment. It is qualitative because it is not measure in number. (Quantitative) but in the goals attained and heights reached. Development in the educational sector is of paramount importance to the country, this is because the more literate the population get, the more the man-power.

The world is generally classified into the developed, developing (of which Nigeria is among) and under-developed countries, Nigeria as a country falls under the developing countries, us is the case in most African Countries. (Forrest,1994.)

## **1.1 TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT**

There are different types of development, which are as follows;

- i. Educational Development
- ii. Economical Development
- iii. Cultural Development
- iv. Agricultural Development

In economical development the country's progress in terms of trade (imports and exports) are taken note of. Here there should be balance of payment. A country should be able to boost of a very high Gross Domestic Product before it can be considered to be economically developed.(Forrest,1994.) Means of production should be plentiful and adequate labour provided.

In the educational sector, development can be measure, with the no of literates that a country can boost of. It amounts to the quality of the labour force provided. In Nigeria, the 6-3-3-4 method is being used, where we attend six years in the primary schools, three years in the junior secondary,

three years in the senior secondary and four years in the university. Educational development also involves equipping the already existing schools with adequate amenities and qualified teachers.

Cultural development can be seen from the angle of people changing their way of life. This can be achieved by abolishing the bad cultures “Mary Slessor stopped the killing of twins in Calabar (Schuma,1965), the manageable ones can be modified e.g. the dressing pattern is still maintained in most African countries, but the materials used in smoking than might not be totally African and sometimes African dressings are interchanged with western dressing. Other things include hygienous ways of doing things to ensure a healthy living, better shelters from the adverse weathers and other numerous ones.

In Agricultural development, it can be measure with the number of harvest, the application of machinerics such as tractor, plough, harrows and other sophisticated implements, the application of fertilizers to ensure



increased fertility and the introduction of more plants or species of plant into the agricultural system.

## **DEVELOPMENT BEFORE AND AFTER INDEPENDENCE**

The coming of white men in Nigeria led to so many good and bad developments. It can be traced back to the Eighteenth Century. In 1886, the Royal Niger Company was chartered under the leadership of Sir George Tanbman Goldie (Thurstan,1978.)

. In 1900 the company's territory came under the control of the British Government, which moved to consolidate. Its hold over the area of modern Nigeria. On January 1, 1901 Nigeria became a British protectorate(Thurstan,1978.)

. In 1914, the areas were formally united, Lagos being the colony. In 1960, precisely 1, October Nigeria received her independence. Nigeria which is situated at the Western Region of the African continent is known'

for their bounties agricultural products. Nigeria produced 98% of their food before independence. The main concentration was palm produce and some other cash crops like cocoa, coconut, cashew, onions, tomatoes, etc. Most of them were exported and the money used in boosting the economy. After independence, agriculture was still blooming, but after few years, oil was discovered and things never remained the same. Everybody's focus shifted to oil.

There were oil booms in the 1970's and Nigeria joined OPEC, precisely in July 1971(Oyewole, 2000.)

. As oil production and revenue rose, the Nigeria government created a dangerous situation as it becomes increasing dependent on oil revenues and the international commodity market for budgetary and economic concerns eschewing economic stability(Shaw, 1978.)

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.Nigeria is the most populated country in Africa,2007 united states estimated 148,000,000 people.The country is listed among those with the fastest economical growth.(Julius1994.) It has a Gross Domestic Product in 2006 of \$191.4 billion (Shaw, 1978.)

In Nigeria, it cannot boast of much development in its educational sector. Most part of the country is still filled up with illiterates. Nigeria's natural resources include tin, iron ore, limestone, niobium, lead, zinc etc. but the mining industry in Nigeria are almost non-existent (Julius, 1994.). It has French car manufacturer Peugeot, English car manufacturer Bedford (Palmer, 1997). For good in Nigeria except of course for corruption.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0 EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

In Nigeria, it can be said that it has experience changes from informal education to the era of formal education and now both are combined even in formal settings to achieve a desired effects.

### **2.1 INFORMAL EDUCATION**

Education in Nigeria started in the informal setting, where little children are acquainted with the norms and ethics expected of them. At young age, they are being told to always greet elderly ones and help the old people when need be, while growing up, household duties like sweeping, washing of dishes and fetching water are being done by the children. At the advance of puberty, the girl child begin to go into the kitchen to learn how to prepare meals, she would be taught what to do in her unclean week (during menstruation) and how to treat her husband and organize her household. Since she would be getting married in no distant time, child birth is equally

discussed. On the part of the boys growing to adulthood, they accompany their fathers to the farm for cultivation of crops. They also learn how to sharpen machetes, make sharp arrows, tap palm wine and tie up barns when the harvest is approaching. The culture of the people and stories that relate to their background are passed on from generation to generation through this form of education. This creates a sense of belonging in the mind of children and makes them worthy representatives of their different culture background. It also helps for easy identification. Unlike formal education, informal education has no curriculum, no certificate to offer, it is only there to help the Nigeria child get use to his environment and things expected of him.

## **2.2 FORMAL EDUCATION**

This can be trace back to the days of missionaries, precisely 1842. Education at this time was regarded as of fundamental importance to the spread of Christianity (Oyewole, 2000.). Missionaries established and can

schools in Nigeria at the early times. They designed curriculum for such schools and devoted their meager resources to the opening of schools for the young (Palmel, 1997).

All Missionaries who came to Nigeria combined evangelical and educational work together. Consequently, early schools were founded by The Methodist Church of Scotland Mission, The Church Missionary Society (C.S.M) and The Roman Catholic.

However, the spread of western education in the north was not as smooth as it was in the south. This was because they enjoyed the Islamic system of education for many years before introduction of western education. However, (Wole, 1996.), efforts were made by different mission to open primary schools in the north. The subjects taught in majority of the schools included scripture, English compositions, Arithmetic, Geography, music, singing and for girls sewing “(Forrest 1994). the emphasis in the infant classes was on the teaching of writing in arithmetic. formal education

came with its benefits as it resharpened some of our cultural heritage, developed our society and made life a lot more easier for all.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3.0 EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In Nigeria, educational development is in a gradual process. By 1882, the CMS had seventeen elementary and infant day schools for boys and girls in various parts of Lagos. These schools even under the direction of Lagos Church of England school Board, while others were managed by the boards of the church missionary society (Shaw, 1978).

After some time, the standard system of learning stopped and primary, secondary and tertiary institutions came into light. Attendance rate in secondary schools are 54% for male and 46% for female. There is little or no difference in the rate of attendance at the tertiary levels,

At the end of learning in a primary school, one leaves with a first school leaving certificate, after secondary school, one leaves with a school certificate and after the tertiary institution, it is degrees. These certificates are used in securing jobs in different fields and specialization; they show proof and are regarded as revenue for making money through employment.



### 3.1 ILLITERACY IN NIGERIA

In Nigeria, it cannot boast of much development in its educational sector. Most part of the country is still filled up with illiterates. Although the coming of western education has come into the country for a very long time, yet much of the populations are not yet educated. In Nigeria this seems to be a prevailing problem, as many are being denied even the basic education (Balogun 1998). During military regime, when General Olesgun Obasanjo came into power he introduced Universal Basic Education (U. B.; E.). Where every Nigeria child is supposed to attend at least the primary school which is free. In urban areas, people seem to attend at least up to the secondary level.

Illiteracy has led to a decrease in the development rate of the country. It is more in the rural areas, where only few schools are readily available. Science and technology cannot be said to be steady as many not have access to them (Thurston, 1978). Even in the agricultural sector, many local farmers do not know how to make use of fertilizers in order to improve yield. Health

wise, eradicating malaria and other similar diseases has being a problem because, the masses are not literate enough to know that they are to come to the hospital when such occasion arises.

Naturally, Africans are not known to be promiscuous, so the spread of HIV/AIDS is not as quick as it is in some other continent. But lack of cultural development, <sup>is not helping matters.</sup> They circumcise people with an object, without sterilizing it, the victims may in this way get infected. Another case is the offering of wives or daughters as 'kola' to a very special visitor. Polygamous family is not also helping things and all these are caused by illiteracy, thus leading to retarded development.

In the economic sector, Nigeria can be said to be blessed with human and material resources, but harnessing them to achieve aims prove to be difficult, because the citizens do not possess the ~~right~~ skills. Even in case where an individual is making so much money, he cannot know the proper way to safe guard, improve and invest his money, all due to illiteracy. In rural areas, they leave the lucrative agriculture for white collar Jobs in the

city all because they do not want to stress themselves. And this has shaved the balance of payment as imports are greater than exports.

### **FACTORS THAT CAUSES ILLITERACY**

Some problems have contributed to the large illiterate populace. One of them is low quality of thatching. Here the few schools have unserious teachers which make the students illiterate as they should be (Curle. 1963)

Another problem is poverty this is because education is very expensive in Nigeria. Most pupils cannot buy their basic reader (Oyewole 2000). Also in the rural areas people cannot sometimes free themselves from work, particularly during intensive cultivation periods.

Another reason why the elimination of illiteracy is proving a relatively slow process may lie in the fact that not all those attending classes do achieve literacy, at least to the extent of being able to put it to practical use. In some institutions certificates are being awarded on the basis of a test, but the test may not be standardized and may even be conducted by the teachers

themselves. Consequently some of those who receive certificates are not sufficiently prepared to make use of them. (Balogun, 1998.).

Lastly, Africans feel that sometimes it is a waste of time to go to school, because that time could be used in making money thereby increasing the illiterate masses.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSIONS

The rate of development in a country like Nigeria cannot be expected to amount to much. In order to reduce the illiterate masses, everybody should participate starting from the family to the government.

The families that think that sending their children to school is a waste of time should change such ideology. They should be enlightened to know the benefits of education. Even the female child should not be denied the right to education as is the case in most Nigerian villages.

The government should begin to feel the need for a more selective approach in order to develop the nation. Resources should be concentrated on specific schemes or areas where there exist both the interest to learn and the opportunity to use literacy for concrete ends of economic significance. Where legal supports are inadequate, educational administration may relapse into confusion and educational standard suffer. (Forrest, 1994)

Since it is hard to see into the future and foresight is particularly at a discount in these developing countries, it is difficult to take account of things to come (Shaw, 1978). In attempting to provide for future growth and development some things must be taken care of, though education in any country is deeply marked by the spirit, attitudes and needs of its people. It is expected that future growth will not be a purely local development, but it will be influenced to a greater or lesser extent by the experience of the rest of the world. What we look forward to therefore, is not a new purebred strain but a new hybrid. It is to be hoped that it will possess the vigorous properties that cross-breeding so often ensures. The cross-breeding being literacy and with this in mind, we shall all see that Nigeria will be a better place in few years to come.

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