

A Historical Reconstruction of the Colonial Government's Education Expenditure in Nigeria and the Place of the Girl-Child, 1940-1957

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Author's Short Bio

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Abstract

Gendered provision of formal education in any clime, is central to redressing the imbalance between male and female children's access to schools and colleges. But this was not the case under Nigeria's colonial administration from the inception of the alien rule at about the middle of the 19th century to the decolonisation period in the concluding years of the 1950s. Although public expenditure on education gradually increased after World War II especially on the founding of government schools and the provision of educational infrastructure across the country, it was Christian Missionaries rather than the government that blazed the trail in specifically addressing the issue of deliberate expansion of opportunities for female pupils in terms of increased enrolment in schools and colleges in southern Nigeria. This effort started in 1879 with the founding of the first girls-only secondary school in the yet to be constituted Nigeria, the Methodist Girls High School in Lagos, followed by St Anne's School, Molete, Ibadan which was founded in 1896. The first colonial government direct investment in the founding of girls only secondary school only came about thirty decades after when Queen's College was founded, albeit reluctantly, in 1927. Hence, this study only seeks to survey the size and quantum of colonial expenditure on education pursuant to its financial assistance to schools and colleges in the period, 1939-1957 and to discuss how gender sensitive this financial expenditure was. The study therefore interrogates the extent to which the British colonial expenditure on education from the period of World War II to the emergence of the first indigenous Nigerian government directly impacted on girl-child education, measured in terms of the number of girls-only secondary schools founded by or directly assisted financially by the colonial government during the indicated period.

Introduction

It is methodologically rewarding situating any discourse on the growth and development of education in Nigeria up to 1960 within three clearly delineable epochs: (a) the period from about the 16th century to 1920 during which Christian missionaries were the major if not the only development agents building schools and colleges and encouraging indigenous Africans to embrace formal western education (b) the period 1920-1950 during which time the colonial government grudgingly if not perfunctorily decided to support the missionaries in their education efforts and also took steps to found more schools and (c) the period from 1950 up to the present in which Nigerian indigenous efforts joined foreign efforts at establishing schools and expanding access to Western education. In all of these epochs, Christian Missionary activities in educational development in Nigeria which bore the inescapable imprimatur of Judeo-European values were most salutary in helping to broaden the frontiers of knowledge and in opening new vistas for the training of Nigerians in several ecclesiastical, technical and managerial skills.

However it is important to briefly show that Nigeria, even before British colonialism from about the middle of the nineteenth century to the twentieth was no stranger to western education. In fact by 1515, a school had been opened by the Catholic Mission in the palace of the Oba of Benin as the first attempt at bringing the western-styled education to Africans (Fafunwa 1974: 74-75). This initial efforts was however not pursued with vigour and so, it floundered and died off even before the middle of the 16th century. Yet gradual but steady infusion of formal western-style education began to be brought into the area that later became Nigeria in the first half of the 19th century and by 1847 the Catholic mission of West Africa had succeeded in planting a primary school in Calabar and Eket. Even the Qua Iboe Mission of Northern Ireland did not fail to establish a school in Uyo and another one at Calabar before the second half of the 19th century. But in nowhere were European Christian proselyte most successful in their zeal to infuse western education in the Nigerian area than in Lagos, Abeokuta and Badagry (Osoba and Fajana 1980: 571).

The Church Missionary Society (CMS) of the Church of England was the arrow-head of this effort.

They were so successful in the Badagry-Abeokuta axis that by the close of the first half of the 19th century they had founded more than six schools in this area. The peak of their achievement was recorded in 1859 when they founded the CMS Grammar School in Bariga, a suburb of Lagos. This school thus became the first secondary school to be established in what by then had not even become a colony of Britain, for Lagos was constituted a colony of England only in 1861 (Lawal 1987: 64). Since that time and up to the time that the British colonial government belatedly woke up from its slumber in providing public schools in the 1920s, many other schools were founded by different missionary bodies such as the Methodist, Catholic and the Presbyterian Mission.

Apart from primary or elementary education which was needed to make the “native” governable and for them to become easy vessels for the impartation of Christian beliefs and ethos, secondary education too, soon proved to be critical to the further consolidation and expansion of colonial rule. It was also needed to serve as a veritable base for the training of civil servants who would be able to take over from European expatriates and for the training of mission-men as priests, catechist, lay-readers, and so on. As such, mission churches invested heavily in the establishment of secondary from the coastal areas of the Niger-Delta to the hinterlands, even to as far north as the Bida Emirate. Table 1.0 below shows the pioneering secondary schools established in Nigeria by Missionaries and the Colonial government from 1859 to 1947.

Conditions Precedent to Government Funding of Education

Take note that by the end of World war I, Nigeria’s educational system had become significantly well-established and influential that the British colonial government had then become interested in what went on in that vital sector of the Nigerian society. It should be noted that this concern was not necessarily altruistic for the leavers of the school who were the educated elite of that time had become the pillar of fierce opposition to colonial rule and the subjugation of Africans’ interest to British colonial gain and expediency. Graduates of the schools built by the missionaries had increasingly become the rallying points for anti-colonialist agitations (Coleman, 1956: 63-141). So, the colonial government sought to influence the educational system in order to prevent the breeding of a huge crop of intellectuals who shared rabid anti-British sentiments and saw in the imperial rule their common enemy. Colonial administration also sought to intervene in order to discourage the educated folks radicalising the pupils especially under the influence of virulent communist ideologies which were rife in the Third World countries by then. Four steps were taken to perfect this plan of direct colonial government intervention. First, the government decided to begin by establishing its own schools to raise school leavers who could at least, be trusted to defend British values and ideologies. Second, it took steps to determine the curriculum as to what was taught in schools; third, it decided to curry the favour of the Missionary schools by offering financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid and fourth, it imposed a regulatory cum-legal framework designed to set the required quality of education for school leavers by making ordinances setting minimum academic standards for teacher-education and students’ examination and certificates (Ihenetu 2000: 454-458). All these were encapsulated in the different educational policies that had to be enforced in Nigeria during colonial rule and they have, except the issue of financial assistance, been sufficiently interrogated elsewhere in scholarly works (Nduka 1964; Fafunwa 1974; Taiwo 1980).

This study is divided into five sections. The first is introductory, showing the beginning of western education in Nigeria. The second section discusses the conditions precedent to the funding of education and the offering of grant-in-aid to secondary schools while the third section analyses government total expenditure from 1939/40 to 1957 and the proportion of this that went directly to education. The fourth section enumerates the girls-only secondary schools founded during the corresponding period showing their statistical significance in terms of their proportional funding vis-a-vis either boys-only or mixed-schools. The fifth and final section contains the conclusion to the study.

Colonial Government’s Public expenditure profile

Nigerian colonial government put no one in doubt as to what was its fiscal priority- law and order, railways and raw materials (especially agricultural produce sourcing and export) (Gavin and Oyemakinde 1980: 497-500; Ogunyemi 2008). The government was particularly shy of having to commit itself to any expense if it would not directly bring benefits to British investors or the Crown and so, was reticent in spending on social welfare goods such as education and health services. No better evidence of this reticence could be got than from the profile of the proportion of public revenue committed to education in the periods of the alien rule especially on the direct founding of secondary schools and colleges during the period 1900-1957. Just as shown in table 1.0 below for instance, between 1859 and 1920, missionaries (Catholic, Christian Missionary Society (Anglican Church), Presbyterian, African Church and the Qua Iboe Church) were the ones that were very active in bring formal education to Nigerian peoples. Within this period only 13 (or 22.8%) out of the 57 schools founded were established by the colonial government – (i) King’s College, Lagos, (ii) Alhuda College, Zaria, (iii) Government Secondary School, Ilorin, (iv) Government College, Katsina-Ala, (v) Ondo Boys High School, Ondo, (vi) Government College, Kaduna, (vii) Queen’s College, Yaba-Lagos, (viii) Ibadan Government College, Ibadan, (ix)

Barewa College Zaria, (x) Government College, Umuahia, (xi) Government Secondary School, Owerri, (xii) Edo College, Benin and, (xiii) Victory college, Ikare-Akoko. It is important to state at this juncture that all the schools (Missionaries and colonial government) were initially at least up to 1949, exclusively for boys, the girl-child being excluded. But while the government was not so interested in building schools, it was nonetheless keen on controlling them.

The first of such attempts at controlling the schools was mooted even as far back as 1882 and 1887. In 1882 for instance, the colonial government promulgated the Education Ordinance on the 6th May of that year which law was only amended in 1888. The law as pointed out by Taiwo (1980: 11-12) directed:

- (i) The establishment of a "General Board of Education" with the powers to appoint and dissolve the Local Board of Education as it might find necessary. The power to appoint this "General Board of Education was conferred on the British Consul then resident in Accra and later in Lagos;
- (ii) Classification of schools into (a) Public Schools maintained entirely on public funds and (b) Private schools assisted financially by government by grant-in-aid;
- (iii) Appointment of an Inspector of Schools to be paid not more than £400 per annum which sum would be shared by the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and Lagos in the ratio of 2: 1;
- (iv) Admission of children of indigent pupils whose parents have been adjudged as paupers;
- (v) Offering of financial grants to Teacher Training Colleges and;
- (vi) Conditions for grant-in-aid to private assisted schools to be based on: managerial control, attendance of pupils at school and examination results.

Again, in 1887, government also sought to influence the school system which by then it was yet to start investing in by building government schools when it made another Education Ordinance which sought to regulate the following things:

- (i) Certification of Teachers
- (ii) Scholarship for students in secondary and technical institutions and
- (iii) Power of government to open and manage schools in any part of the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, the Colony and the Protectorate of Lagos (Taiwo 1980: 12).

Yet, Nigerian colonial government did not take any meaningful steps in providing western education more than the trajectory set for it by the missionaries until it established the King's College in Lagos in 1909 being the first secondary school built by the government entirely from public funds. However, an external stimuli came from the Americas in the 1920s to jerk the government from its complacency in providing secondary education. This was the Foundation set up by the Phelps-Stokes Commission also known as the "African Education Commission" (Taiwo 1980: 65-66). The foundation had constituted a pool of dedicated funds via the philanthropy established by an American, Miss Caroline Phelb-Stokes in 1911, meant exclusively for promoting the educational growth and development of the blackperson in the Americas and in Africa. The Foundation had made a study of the conditions of western education for the black in Africa by their respective colonial masters between 1920 and 1921 and came up three years after with a report. The report was a damning condemnation of the colonial masters especially Britain for their failure to provide access to publicly funded education and to assist the private sector chiefly, the missionaries, in their own schools to expand education for the black child. The report surveyed the need for education in Africa and concluded that kind of education given to pupils must be in tandem with the local community's needs and ways of life and, it therefore took steps to aid and finance this. Hence, in 1925 and jointly with the British colonial government of Nigeria, a Memorandum was initialled by the foundation and the government to the effect that thenceforth, government should take the following steps to expand the frontiers of western education in Nigeria:

- (i) Adapt education to the local conditions of the people;
- (ii) Increase public expenditure on education by building more schools and colleges especially teacher training colleges;
- (iii) Schools founded and managed by private institutions should if they achieve a satisfactory standard, be accorded equal importance to public schools and as such be funded or at least be part-funded through grants-in aid from the public purse and the Foundation and;
- (iv) That instructions in schools and the provisions of recommended text books be made in the local language of the pupils at least, in the primary schools for a start.

With this report and memoranda came a change in the level of enthusiasm by the colonial government in the funding of education. Thus and as shown in table 2 below, whereas, between 1877-1882, it only spent just the sum of £200 on education in the whole of Nigeria, by 1925/1926, a year after the memoranda was signed, its expenditure on education had climbed to a significant amount of £116,301, though still representing a minute proportion (1.89%) of its total expenditure of £6,136,487 in the corresponding period. However, government began to found more schools after the memoranda and as a result from 1925 to 1948 a total of 6 government secondary schools were founded across the country, which was still a far-cry from the 23 founded by missionary/voluntary agencies during the same period. The Missionary and other private schools however began

to receive financial assistance based on the terms of the memoranda earlier mentioned especially the one concerning standards and certification of teachers. In other words not all schools owned by the private sector received funding, only those that met the conditions of standards/quality, managerial control and attendance of students at schools. However, since there were very few girls only schools in fact, except in 1927 when the government managed to establish one in Yaba Lagos, no single public school for girls existed in all of Nigeria apart from the ones built and managed by the missionaries which were few and far-in-between. Hence, girls-only schools got too little promotion at the secondary school level from that time till the beginning of World War II.

Table 1.0: Secondary Schools Founded in Nigeria up to 1949

S/N	School	Date Founded	Founder	Enrolees
1	CMS Grammar School, Bariga, Lagos	1859	CMS Mission	Boys only
2	Methodist Boys High School, Lagos	1878	Methodist mission	Boys only
3	Methodist Girls High School, Lagos	1879	Methodist Mission	Girls only
4	Baptist Academy, Lagos	1885	Baptist Mission	Boys only
5	Hoppe Waddell Training Institute, Calabar	1895	Presbyterian Church of Scotland	Boys only
6	St Andrew's College, Oyo	1896	CMS Mission	Boys only
7	St. Anne's School, Molete, Ibadan	1896	Catholic Mission	Girls only
8	Baptist Training School, Ogbomoso	1897	Baptist Mission	Boys only
9	Oron Training Institute (now Oron Boys High School)	1897	Presbyterian Church of Scotland	Boys only
10	St. Paul's College, Iyienu, Awka	1900	CMS Mission	Boys only
11	Methodist Boys High School, Oron	1903	Methodist Mission	Boys only
12	Wesleyan College, Elekuro, Ibadan	1905	Methodist mission	Boys only
13	Abeokuta Grammar School, Abeokuta	1908	CMS Mission	Boys only
14	King's College, Lagos	1909	Colonial Government	Boys only
15	St. John's College, Bida	1909	CMS Mission	Boys only
16	Alhuda College, Zaria	1910	Colonial Government	Girls only
17	Ibadan Grammar School, Ibadan	1913	Private/CMS Clergyman	Boys only
18	Ijebu-Ode Grammar School, Ijebu-Ode	1913	CMS Mission	Boys only
19	Eko Boys High School, Lagos	1913	Private/Clergyman	Boys only
20	Government Secondary School, Ilorin	1914	Colonial Government	Boys only
21	Government College, Katsina-Ala	1914	Colonial Government	Boys only
22	Etinan Institute, Etinan	1915	Qua Iboe (Irish) Christian Mission	Boys only
23	Ondo Boys High School, Ondo	1919	Colonial Government	Boys only
24	Duke Town Secondary School, Calabar	1919	Qua Iboe (Irish) Christian Mission	Boys only
25	Government College, Kaduna	1920	Colonial government	Boys only
26	Methodist College, Uzuakoli	1923	Methodist Mission	Boys only
27	Ibo Boys High School, Uzoakoli	1923	CMS Mission	Boys only
28	Baptist Boys High School, Abeokuta	1923	Baptist Mission	Boys only
29	Dennis Memorial Grammar School, Onitsha	1925	CMS Mission	Boys only
30	Queen's College, Yaba, Lagos	1927	Colonial Government	Girls only
31	Ibadan Government College, Ibadan	1927	Colonial Government	Boys only
32	Barewa College, Zaria	1927	Colonial Government	Boys only
33	Government College, Umuahia	1927	Colonial Government	Boys only
34	United Memorial Grammar School, Ibadan	1928	CMS Mission	Boys only
35	St Gregory College, Lagos	1928	Catholic Mission	Boys only
36	St. Thomas' College, Ibusa	1928	CMS Mission	Boys only
37	St Chrles College, Onitsha	1929	CMS Mission	Boys only
38	Aggrey Memorial College, Arochukwu	1931	Private Individual	Boys only
39	Igbobi College, Lagos	1932	Methodist & CMS Missions	Boys only
40	Oduduwa College, Ile-Ife	1932	Private-Individual	Boys only
41	St Teresa's College, Ibadan	1932	Catholic Mission	Girls only
42	Christ The King College, Onitsha	1933	CMS Mission	Boys only
43	Christ School, Ado-Ekiti	1933	CMS Mission	Boys only
44	Ilesa Grammar School, Ilesa	1934	Community	Boys only
45	St. Patrick's College, Calabar	1934	Catholic Mission	Boys only
46	Holy Rosary College, Enugu	1935	Catholic Mission	Girls only
47	Government Secondary School, Owerri	1935	Colonial Government	Boys only
48	Edo College, Benin	1937	Colonial Government	Boys only
49	Ibadan Boys High School, Ibadan	1938	Private Individual	Boys only
50	Queen of the Rosary College, Onitsha	1942	Catholic Mission	Girls only
51	Olivet (Oyo Baptist) High School, Oyo	1945	Baptist Mission	Boys only
52	Remo Secondary School, Sagamu	1946	CMS/Methodist/Community	Mix school
53	Anglican Girls Grammar School, Lagos	1945	CMS Mission	Girls only
54	Imade College, Owo	1946	Community	Boys only
55	Victory College Ikare-Akoko	1947	Colonial Government	Boys only
56	Hussey College, Warri	1947	Private individuals	Boys only
57	Ahmaddiya (Anwar-ul-Islam) College, Agege	1948	Ahmadiyya Mission	Boys only

During World War II however, that is from the fiscal year 1939/1940 up to the 1944/1945 fiscal year,

Nigerian colonial government expenditure on education picked up though sluggishly. In the 1939/40 fiscal year for example and as shown in table 2.0 below, government committed to education the sum of £264,461, which accounted for 4.06% of its £6,498,565 total expenditure in that year (GoN 1940: 16). This was unprecedented, for, the level of expenditure prior to that time only oscillated between 1.3% and 3.6%, so, when expenditure climbed even during the war to more than 4% of total expenditure, such a development could only be fairly interpreted as indicative of government's new-found interest in education during the period. But again, as it was before the 1930s, most of this expenditure went into financing boys-only schools to the almost total neglect of the girl-child as most of the then existing schools shown in table 1.0 above were boys only schools with the exception of course of them St Anne's Girls School Molete Ibadan, Methodist Girls Secondary school and the Anglican Girls Grammar School, both in Lagos.

By the middle of the 1930s, the agitation for more colleges built by the government had become very loud. Nationalist leaders championed these agitations and as such the colonial government conceded by establishing a Technical College at Yaba in 1934 and a University College in Ibadan in 1948 (Ogunyemi 2010: 36-37). But this was very small efforts compared to what the missionaries were doing in teacher education in the same period, the Anglican Church (the CMS Mission) was most outstanding in establishing post-secondary educational institutions in Nigeria although and as it was under the secondary education, it was essentially for boys. Hence, before 1940, 4 strategic teacher training colleges had been built by the CMS in Nigeria. The first was the legendary St. Andrews College, Oyo (1896), followed by four others - St Luke's College, Ibadan, St. Peter's College, Abeokuta and St Peter's College, Samaru - the latter was the first and only Teacher Training College in the whole of Northern Nigeria before the Second World war. These Teacher's Colleges were all-male colleges, which again pushed further down the number schools available for girl-child education during colonial rule. In other words, by 1949, just a year before actual indigenisation and Regionalisation policy on education began in Nigeria, out of the 57 Secondary schools founded in Nigeria by both the public and the private sectors, only 8 were for girls exclusively, namely: (i) Methodist Girls High School, Lagos, (ii) St Anne's School, Molete (Ibadan), (iii) St. Theresa's College, Ibadan (iv) Queens College, Lagos, (v) Holy Rosary College, Enugu, (vi) Anglican Girls Grammar School, Lagos, (vii) Queen of Apostles School, Kaduna (later renamed Queen Amina College) and (viii) Alhuda College, Kano, representing a paltry 14.03% of total number of secondary schools in Nigeria attracting by consequence only about 14% of public funding of secondary education in the corresponding period since all of them were assisted by the colonial government financially during the period. it was in fact, not too financially feasible to be running an all-girl alone school in those days because of poor enrolment rate.

Table 1.1: Notable Secondary Schools in Nigeria 1950-1960

S/N	School	Year Founded	Founder	Enrolees
1	Egbado College, Ilaro	1950	CMS Mission	Boys only
2	Our Lady of Apostles College, Lagos	1950	Private/Clergywoman	Girls only
3	Aquinas College, Akure	1951	Catholic Mission	
4	Nigerian College of Arts, Science and tEchnology, Zaria	1952	Colonial Government	Mix school
5	Nigerian College of Arts, Science and tEchnology, Ibadan	1953	Colonial Government	Mix school
6	Oyemeku Grammar School, Akure	1953	Community	Mix school
7	St. Louis Secondary School, Ondo	1954	Catholic Mission	Boys only
8	Gboluiji Grammar School, Ile-Oluji	1954	Community	Mix school
9	Manuwa Memorial Grammar School, Iju-Odo	1954	Private/Community	Mix school
10	Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology, Enugu	1955	Colonial Government	Mix school
11	Badagry Grammar School, Badagry	1955	CMS Mission	Boys only
12	St. Monica Girls School, Ondo	1955	Catholic Mission	Girls only
13	St. Catherine's Anglican Girls School, Owo	1956	CMS Mission	Girls only
14	St Joseph's College. Ondo	1956	CMS Mission	Boys only
15	Methodist High School, Okiti-Pupa	1956	Methodist Mission	Boys only
16	Government College, Makurdi	1957	Colonial Government	Mix school
17	Holy Rosary College, Idah	1957	Catholic Mission	Girls only
18	Anglican Grammar School, Iju-Itaogbolu	1957	CMS Mission	Mix school
19	African Church Grammar School, Oka-Akoko	1957	African Church Mission	Mix school
20	Olofin Anglican Grammar School, Idanre	1957	CMS Mission	Mix school
21	St. Patrick's College, Oka-Akoko	1959	Catholic Mission	Boys only
22	Anglican Grammar School, Igbara-Oke	1958	CMS Mission	Boys only
23	Ondo Anglican Grammar School, Ondo	1959	CMS Mission	Mix school
24	St. Louis Grammar School, Akure	1960	CMS Mission	Boys only
25	Fiwasaye Girls Grammar School, Akure	1960	Private/Community	Girls only
26	Ife Girls Grammar School, Ile-Ife	1960	Community	Girls only

Again, and as shown in table 1.2 below, from 1950 up to independence in 1960, only 6 notable girls-only secondary schools were founded. This means that from 1859 when the first secondary school was established in Lagos up to 1960 only 14 girls-only secondary, 10 mix schools and 61 boys-only schools were

built in Nigeria. in percentage terms therefore, whereas the boys-only schools accounted for 70.8% of the total, girls-only schools only accounted for meagre 17% while mix schools accounted for the remainder 12.2%. it should be noted that whereas all the boys-only schools received financial assistance under the 1925 Memorandum on education not all girls-only schools did; the exception being Fiwasaye Girls Secondary School Akure. The reason was not because the school fell below the standard required by the Memorandum but because by that time, the school proprietor was capable of financing all the schools needs thus requiring no significant public expenditure input.

Table 1.2 Girls-Only Secondary Schools, 1879-1960

S/N	School	Date founded	Founder	Enrolees
1	Methodist Girls High School, Lagos	1879	Methodist Mission	Girls only
2	St. Monica Girls School, Ondo	1955	Catholic Mission	Girls only
3	Alhuda College, Zaria	1910	Colonial Government	Girls only
4	Queen's College, Yaba, Lagos	1927	Colonial Government	Girls only
5	St Teresa's College, Ibadan	1932	Catholic Mission	Girls only
6	Holy Rosary College, Enugu	1935	Catholic Mission	Girls only
7	Queen of the Rosary College, Onitsha	1942	Catholic Mission	Girls only
8	Anglican Girls Grammar School, Lagos	1945	CMS Mission	Girls only
9	Our Lady of Apostles College, Lagos	1950	Private/Clergywoman	Girls only
10	St. Monica Girls School, Ondo	1955	Catholic Mission	Girls only
11	St. Catherine Anglican Girls School, Owo	1956	CMS Mission	Girls only
12	Holy Rosary College, Idah	1957	Catholic Mission	Girls only
13	Fiwasaye Girls Grammar School, Akure	1960	Private/Community	Girls only
14	Ife Girls Grammar School, Ile-Ife	1960	Community	Girls only

It should be mentioned however, that there was an exception to the inclusion of the girls in secondary education within the boys only dominated schools. The exception was the Remo Secondary School in the Ijebu Province of Western Nigeria which, from the start of the school in 1946 and for the first time in colonial Nigeria, decided to admit both boys and girls together in a mix-school system unlike the accepted orthodoxy of the time. So, this school started from scratch as a "mix-school" and trained both boys and girls together within the same walls. The school was founded through the joint effort of both the Methodist and Anglican Churches in the Remo Division of the Ijebu Province.

Educational Developments in the 1950s up to Decolonisation

Educational development of Nigeria in the 1950s generally was however still not satisfactory despite the very enthusiastic pioneering efforts of Christian Missionaries in establishing schools. Education being always a huge investment requiring large financial commitments without any significant direct financial rewards would, giving the conditions of infrastructure development in any Third World country, Nigeria inclusive, require government substantial financial investment (Usoro 1983). This was the point sorely missed either intentionally or otherwise by the Nigerian colonial government. So, leaving the sector to private missionary efforts was like conceding defeat to the under-developed nature of the Nigerian socio-political system because education would always be critical to modern development. It is in fact, a condition precedent to what W. W. Rostow (1960) has masterly articulated as the "take-off" stage for the economic development of modern states. Missionary schools and a few government schools notwithstanding, when the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) popularly known as the World Bank launched a survey of the level of educational development of Nigeria and the requirements in that sector in 1954, its findings were indeed sobering. The Bank found the level of Nigeria's educational development measured in terms of the number of school age children who were either out or in school grossly abysmal. It wasted no time in reporting quite frankly that:

At the beginning of 1953, only 20 per cent of Nigeria's five million children between the ages of seven and fourteen were in school: about two out of five in the East, one out of three in the West and one out of twenty in the North...only 20,000 are enrolled in general secondary schools (IBRD 1954: 40-41).

If the picture was that ugly for general secondary schooling for all of Nigerian school age children, that for girls only was even more appalling. In fact, development in girl-child education did not significantly improve in the 1950s up to independence except that by 1953 colonial authorities had begun to set in motion machinery for the decolonisation of Nigeria and each Region was now responsible for its educational advancement because education ceased to be an exclusive prerogative of the Federal/Central authority. Thenceforth, each Region had the latitude to plan its own educational development at its own pace. The Western Region was the first to seize this opportunity and it seized it to be fullest extent possible. Chief Obafemi Awolowo, one of Nigeria's leaders noted for educational development had been voted into power as Premier of

the Western Region and, with him in the saddle together with lieutenants such as the Fourah Bay (Sierra Leone) trained educationist, Mr. Michael Adekunle Ajasin together with the Western Region's Minister of Education, Chief S. O. Awokoya, developed a road-map for the educational development of the Western Region (Fafunwa 1974: 189).

The then Mr. Michael Adekunle Ajasin (later, popularly called Pa. Ajasin, spent virtually the whole of his adult life as a teacher and education policy guru). It was he who wrote the blue-print and road-map for a free education programme in the Western Region (Ige 1995: 66) from which the citizens of that Region far more than any other citizens in the other Regions of Nigeria benefitted from government-supported and funded educational expansion programmes. He later became the Governor of Ondo State of Nigeria from 1979 to 1983. That road-map which he wrote was to make the Western Region become the most educationally advanced part of Nigeria from the 1950s until the 1980s. This was reflected in the huge number of government schools (primary and secondary built during the period and in the Free Compulsory PRIMARY education policy of the government in the Region effective from 1953 up to January 1966. The government also made sure that more girls-only schools were built. But by far more important was its support more for mix-schools than for either male only or female only schools, a departure from what was prevalent in the pre-1950 era. Table 1.1 above again shows that from 1950 to 1960, only 6 girls only secondary schools were established and all but one of them in the Western Region – St Monica Girls Secondary school, Ondo, St Catherine Anglican Girls grammar School, Owo and Holy Rosary College, Idah, Fiwasaye Girls Grammar School, Akure and Ife Grammar School, Ile-Ife. However, this still shows a significant lesser opportunity for the girl-child than for boys. The six girls only schools accounted for just 24% of the secondary schools founded in the period.

It should be noted that even in the Western Region where there were more girls-only schools than in the other Regions of Nigeria, girl-only secondary schools was not a priority. This attitude to girl-only schools pervaded the Nigerian educational landscape from 1950 up to the actual transfer of power to the Regions as independent entities in 1957 (for the Eastern and Western Regions). and in 1959 (for the Northern Region). In other words, measured in terms of the girls-only secondary schools founded during this period, the Northern Region was the least developed while the eastern and Western Regions and indeed, the Nigerian federation only made modest achievements.

Table 2.0 Colonial Expenditure on Education in Nigeria, 1939/40-1956/57

Fiscal year	Education expenditure (£)	Total Expenditure (£)	% of total expenditure
1877-1882	200	n.a	-
1896	2,000	n.a	-
1914	47,900	3,648,615	1.31
1925/26	116,301	6,136,487	1.89
1934/35	225,038	6,226,710	3.61
1939/40	264,461	6,498,565	4.06
1940/41	259,546	7,354,325	3.52
1941/42	282,882	7,026,894	4.02
1942/43	352,896	8,998,795	3.92
1943/44	481,226	9,976,537	4.82
1944/45	485,113	10,132,599	4.53
1945/46	615,663	10,692,775	5.75
1946/47	866,135	14,051,688	6.12
1947/48	1,390,700	17,185,940	8.09
1948/49	1,467,741	23,898,427	6.10
1949/50	314,808	28,253,090	1.11
1950/51	284,037	30,388,203	0.93
1951/52	388,691	43,672,900	0.89
1952/53	85,657	44,103,490	0.19
1953/54	87,661	55,003,278	0.15
1954/55	227,216	60,668,345	0.37
1955/56	493,975	55,386,554	0.89
1956/57	569,854*	62,924,874	0.90
Total	9,309,701	512,229,091	3.0**

Sources: (i) Government of Nigeria (1926) *Annual report department of education*. Lagos: Government Printer, 4. (ii) Government of Nigeria (1937) *Nigeria Handbook, 1936*. Lagos: Government Printer, 164, (iii) FRN (Federal Republic of Nigeria) (1957) *Report of the Accountant General of the Federation together with financial statement for the year ended 31st March, 1957*. Lagos: Government Printer, 51.

n.a: Data not available. * Includes expenditure on antiquities and social welfare. **average percentage for the

period covered.

This low level of activity in the founding of girls only schools even in the so-called educationally advanced Western Region accounted for the very low level of enrolment of the girl-child in schools in the period after independence. The very worrying and especial cases of the five northern Nigerian states of Jigawa, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Yobe will suffice here. These states who always pushed the national school enrolment average downwards have consistently since the 1960s failed to enrol up to 20% of their citizens in secondary schools. For example in the 1993/94 the states and in that order enrolled only 12.70%, 15.19%, 13.80%, 8.50% and 17.04% of their girl-children in secondary schools (FOS 1996: 85). From 1984/85-1994 academic years, and as table 3.0 below shows, the national average for girl-child enrolment oscillated between 41.8% and 45.9%. at no time since the independence of Nigeria in 1960 has the national enrolment figure for girl-children nationally, been up to 50%.

However in the states of the south, average enrolment for the girl-child is significantly above the national average. In fact in some states such as Ondo, Osun, Oyo, Lagos, Anambra, Imo and Delta states, the percentage enrolment of girls in secondary schools as at 1994 were, in that order: 93.25%, 90.62%, 85.05%, 90.31%, 94.67%, 92.91%, and 90.27% (FOS 1996: 85). these were areas of Nigeria which quickest in investing in formal western education and in which the missionaries were very active before the 1950s.

Table 3.0: National Summary of Secondary School Enrollment, (selected years) (in millions)

	1984/85	1985/86	1988	1989	1990	1992	1993	1994
Total Enrolment	2988	3088	2942	2724	2902	3601	4032	4451
Total Male	1739	1755	1730	1582	1661	1979	2182	2429
Total Female	1249	1334	1212	1142	1241	1622	1850	2032
% Male	58.2	56.8	58.8	58.1	57.2	55.0	54.1	54.4
% Female	41.8	43.2	41.2	41.9	42.8	45.0	45.9	45.6

Source: Federal Office of Statistics (1996) *Socio-Economic Profile of Nigeria, 1996*. Lagos: FOS, 84.

It should be conceded however that this was not caused primarily by poor funding of girls-only schools but more by adverse social and cultural practices especially in Northern Nigeria which delimited the girl-child and prevented parents from promoting their education beyond the primary school level. But it is also true that the very little attempt at establishing these girls-only schools was major contributory factor at a time that most of the public and Missionary schools were only for boys.

Hence the combined debility of poor/non-establishment of secondary schools and increasingly poor funding of education from the central government from the 1950s up 1960 combined to delimit the girl-child education in Nigeria. it should be noted that even under colonial rule when the central government was very active before the 1950s in supporting private schools and in founding few ones that it decided to found, the general funding of education was very poor. In fact, the highest level of funding of education done by the colonial government as shown in table 2.0 above from 1914 to 1957 was in the 1947/48 and the 1948/49 fiscal years when it spent the sums of £1,390,700 and £1,467,741 respectively on education accounting for 8.09% and 6.10% of total public expenditure in the corresponding periods (FRN 1957: 51).

Expenditure by the federal government on education began to shrink very rapidly from 1950 onwards. For instance and as further shown in table 2.0 above, in the fiscal year 1949/1950 and from a height of 6.1% of total expenditure, education expenditure dropped to only 1.11%. when the government spent only £314,808 on the sector. This was even lower in proportional terms than what was spent on education in 1914 some 36 years earlier. Progressively therefore and in the fiscal years 1950/1951 up to the 1956/57, education expenditure dropped to less than 1% of total expenditure with the worst scenario recorded in the 1953/54 fiscal yeas when education expenditure accounted for a paltry 0.15% of total government expenditure.

It should be noted that the year 1954 was significant in the annals of power and intergovernmental relations in Nigeria because it was the year in which the Nigerian federal system and constitution was finally legitimated (GoN 1954; Udoma 1994: 142). That year therefore saw the enactment of the fist federal constitution of the country, the Oliver Lyttleton Constitution by which greater powers over social development including education and health were shared concurrently by the federal centre and the Regional component units. It was also the year in which out of a total of £55,386,554 spent by the government only £87,661 was committed to education; Nigeria's education never had it so bad. This meant that girl-child education which had consistently received less patronage would and did in fact receive the worst treatment under the country's public expenditure profiles

Conclusion

Funding, supervision and intellectual leadership are the three critical prerequisites for the building of an robust educational system. During colonial rule, British authorities in Nigeria sadly, left these vital requirements to the private sector. Private investors such as Missionary agents and churches had to spend huge sums of money to provide schools and colleges for Nigerians. But they could not go very far. The colonial government which had

sufficient and better financial resources vacillated in investing in secondary education first, for the reason of financial cost and second for the colonial policy of limiting the provision of western education to the primary level that would be sufficient in giving clerical and missionary skills to the African under that scenario, gendering the provision of education by ensuring balance in enrolment and the distribution of schools was never contemplated. As such, the schools that were reluctantly established by government were only open to boys; the girl-child suffered in access to education. Thus, the trajectory of Nigeria's educational development up to 1960 significantly left without adequate attention, the girl-child education. Although Christian missionary efforts started quite early in providing western-style education but this was not significantly gendered enough to factor in the need for balance and even development of sexes. Nigeria's colonial administration was most culpable for this for, apart from the fact that she took too little too late steps in setting up schools in Nigeria, being concerned more about its own economic survival and accumulation of surplus value in the Nigerian area, she was too insensitive to consider the need for a gendered provision of education, even after she reluctantly came into the scene in the 1920s. Therefore, most of the schools that were established before independence in 1960 and the public financial expenditure of more than £9.3 million that went to them from about 1877-1957 catered for the needs of boys only schools to the neglect of that of girls as most of the schools enrolled from the beginning, only boys. This lopsided educational development later, after independence, adversely affected the girl-child enrolment and the position of the woman in the scheme of things within the Nigerian socio-economic space.

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