

The Focus of Educational Development in Africa Since the Addis-Ababa Conference of 1961 and Tanananrive of 1962

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The research is financed by the Authors

Abstract

The focus of educational development in Africa since the Addisa-Ababa Conference of 1961. In the wake of political independence of many African countries, delegates of thirty-nine (39) African states and five European colonial powers (Belgium, France, Portugal, Spain and United Kingdom) decided to meet in Ethiopia to discuss, the way forward in terms of education in Africa. This brought about the turning point in the development of education in the continent. This meeting gave an important meaning and a formal expression to the educational consciousness that had been after the Second World War. This was the first time that the problem of education was tabled and discussed essentially by Africans at the continental level. This conference became important because of the targets that were set, and for so many years it became the yardsticks for measuring the achievement (in quantitative terms) of educational development in Africa countries both the long and the short terms of Ashby Commission targets – upto 1970. This paper therefore made recommendations, looked at the dysfunctionality of some areas and suggested solutions.

Keywords: Educational Development, Addis Ababa, Tanananrive, Ashby Commission.

DOI: 10.7176/JEP/10-3-16

1. INTRODUCTION

Social change in colonial Africa was brought about largely by the imposition of Western education, Christianity, Western economic forces, political structure and ideas. The European countries that participated in the African colonization were mainly Britain, France, Germany and Portugal. According to Uruakpa (1980) the competition among European nations for colonies which was known as the scrambled colonies which was known as the scramble for Africa, left African societies as multi-national states coupled with this people of the same ethnic groups found themselves being ruled, under different political entities. For instance, the Ewe was divided between Togo and Ghana. The Fulanis were found in Northern Nigeria, Chad and Niger. The Somaliland and the British Somaliland up to 1960 Southern Cameroun was administered together with Nigeria as a Mandated Territory under British colonial government. These were the peculiar situations which African nations came into being. Ellah (1988) said that the Europeans who came to Africa at first, came with an aim to engage in slave trade which was later stopped and replaced with legitimate trade (i.e. trade and agricultural produce) for the industrial revolution. Eventually what started as an economic venture was systematically transformed into an imperial colonial domination. The 1st to receive Western education in the 19th century were East Africa and what later became French Equatorial Africa, had their beginnings of Western education in 1800 (19th century) The Christian Missions thus played a key role in the introduction of Western education into most of African countries and in subsequent expansion.

Africa is the world's second largest and second most populous continent after Asia. At about 30.221,532km² (11.668,545sq m1) including adjacent Islands. It covers 6% of the earth's total surface area, and 20.4% of the total land area. With more than 900 million people in 61 territories, it accounts for about 14% of the World's human population.

In the wake of May 1961, when the down of political independence of most African countries was at it peak, delegates of thirty-nine African states and five European colonial powers (Belgium, France, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom) decided to meet in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to discuss the way forward in terms of education in Africa. This brought about the turning point in the development of education in Africa. This meeting gave an important meaning and a formal expression to the educational consciousness that had began after the second world war. This was the first time that the education of Africans was tabled and discussed essentially by Africans at the continental level. The conference was important because of the targets that were set by it, have for so many years become the yardsticks for measuring the achievement (in quantitative terms) of educational development in Africa countries.

The Relevance of the Conference

The Addisa Ababa Conference of African states on the Development of Education in Africa addressed itself to the problems of planning education in relation to economic and social development. The conference drew up two

types of plans a short term plan covering the period 1960 – 1965 and a twenty-year long-term plan covering 1960-1980. The short-term plan focused on three main issues. They are:

1. To redress the colonial educational situation on ground.
 - i) The expansion of secondary schools education, to raise, the secondary school enrolment which as at 1961 constituted only 3% of secondary school age population in Africa.
 - ii) A change in the school curriculum to conform to the developmental needs and expansion of teacher training facilities especially for the elementary and secondary schools and universities which stood at 40:3:0:2.
 - iii) The expansion of secondary school education to raise enrolment which in 1961 constituted only 3% of the secondary school age population in middle Africa.
2.
 - a) Objectives of the short-term to plan the educational system to meet the man power needs.
 - b) Objectives of long term: To raise the enrolment ratios of elementary schools, secondary school and the universities which stood at 40:3:0:2 in 1961 to 100:23:2 by 1980 as indicated in the long term table below.

Table 1: Long-Term Plan (1961-1980) Enrolment and Equivalent Percentages

Educational Level	1961-1962	1965-1966	1970-1971	1980-1986
	Enrolments (in thousands)			
Primary	11,586.0	15,279.0	20,378.0	32,808.0
Secondary Level	903.7	1,833.5	3,390.0	5,905.4
Higher	25.5	30.3	55.0	328.9
	Percentages of age group enrolled			
Primary	40.	51	71	100
Secondary Level	3.	9	15	23
Higher	0.2	0.2	0.4	2

Source: Final Report: Conference of African States on the Development of Education in Africa, UNESCO, 1961. The inventory of educational needs that were established by the Addisa-Ababa Conference are:

- The need for adult education
- The need for the education of girls who constituted only 30% of primary school enrolment and 22% for secondary school enrolment.
- The need for higher education geared to the production of high level man-power.
- The need for teachers of all levels of educational system to be retrained.
- The need for curriculum reform.

On the basis of these needs the educational structure that was envisaged to have been attained by then called for a six year free and compulsory primary education in order that 100 percent enrolment would be achieved by 1980.

Source: Final Report: UNESCO 1961 secondary education was planned to consist of two stages: Junior secondary school and senior secondary school, each of which would be of three years duration. Junior secondary education would be given in three areas: An academic stream, a vocational, technical stream, and a teacher training stream. Thirty percent of all primary school leavers would be offered places in the junior secondary schools. Of this percentage it was expected that 10% would be enrolled in general academic education. This group would pursue a six year academic programme from junior secondary through senior secondary school. The remaining 20% would enter vocational technical schools and teacher training colleges. According to the final United Nations report of (1961) 3.3 percent of all student who enter the lattel schools would have the chance for further training the senior secondary level. It was then estimated that 3.3% of all primary school leavers would receive both junior and senior secondary school education and that about 20% of this group or 2.3 or the 13 – 19 age group would be selected for Advance Level ('A' level) work followed by three years higher or university education.

Further strong point of the plan was its emphasis that at least 16% of all teachers should have had twelve years of basic education followed by three years of teacher training and that at least 45% of the rest should have the equivalent of the nine years basic education and three years of professional training. The first group would be responsible for junior secondary school teaching while the secondary group would teach in the primary schools. The immediate consequence of the Addis-Ababa Conference decisions was a rapid expansion of the educational systems in all African countries, at the primary, secondary and higher levels to meet the demand for educated and trained man-power at all levels for the rapidly expanding economic and social institutions that were trained after the attainment of independence. Besides this, there was the political necessity to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people who wanted schools for their children since they regarded education as the key to progress and mutual advancement.

However, there are six major factors that contributed to the spectacular results achieved in educational

expansion are as follows:

- i) The need for educated and trained man power at all levels for the rapidly expanding economic and social institutions that were created after the attainment of political independence.
- ii) The compelling political necessity to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people who wanted schools for their children since they regarded education as the key to progress and social advancement.
- iii) The sense of international solidarity and the framework of international co-operation which made available a substantial (although still inadequate) amount of external resources for the purpose of educational development in Africa. At the same time is Inter-African co-operation with its expression in the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (O.A.U) was considerably strengthened.
- iv) The Addis-Ababa Conference accepted the concept of “education as a productive investment” and as a major factor of economic, social and technological development. This factor explains why educational development has come to be equated with educational planning which in turn is closely related to the overall economic planning. To help African countries to plan their educational systems, UNESCO established a Regional Group for Educational Planning and Administration in Africa (1962-1968) which was later expanded to become the UNESCO Regional Centre for Educational Planning and Administration in Africa (1968-1970). In 1970, as a result of UNESCO’s decentralization policy, the centre became the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Africa, based at Dakar Senegal.
- v) Educational Planning, in pursuant to, the recommendations of the Addis-Ababa Conference, gained full acceptance in Africa. As the Director General of UNESCO pointed out in his speech at the (1968) Nairobi Conference on Education and Scientific and Technical Training in relation to Development in Africa, “Educational planning is not the effect of a passing infatuation with a new idea, but results from the clear recognition that it meets the need to bring educational systems up to maximum efficiency while, at the same time ensuring the balanced development of the individual”. The realization that education is no longer a privilege of the few but a fundamental right of all the people of Africa, irrespective of their religion, sex or tribe and that the guarantee for such a right is compulsory free primary education and equal opportunities for all and access to higher levels of education.

Dysfunctionality of the School System

As a result of the rapid linear expansion of the school system, the Addis-Ababa Conference fulfilled a vital function. Amongst them are – the provision of trained manpower necessary to sustain the imperatives of political independence and nation-building but, with the passing of the years. It became evident that much of the expansion was misdirected. The Addis-Ababa noted in the following statement that

The present content of education in Africa is not in line with either existing African conditions, the postulate of political independence, the dominant features of an essentially technological age, or the imperatives of balanced economic development involving rapid industrialization, but is based on a non-African background, allowing no room for the African child’s intelligence, powers of observation, and creative imagination to develop freely and help him find his bearings in the world...

And therefore the conference re-commended

That African educational authorities should revise and reform the content of education in the areas of the curricula, textbooks and methods, so as to take account of African environment, child development, cultural heritage and the demands of technological progress and economic development, especially industrialization.

The anxiety to expand the educational systems, inherited from colonial era as rapidly as possible in the “Romantic Sixties” little was done to implement the above, important resolution of the Addis-Ababa Conference. According to Beeby (1966) page 9. The progress of the educational expansion, the important issues of the conference were ignored and especially the quality of education in Africa and the state of the developing world. In his book he stated that

The passionate desire of common men and women to give their own children a better chance in life gave the demand for education its explosive quality and made it a political force that no democratic government could not resist. Since many of the parents were themselves illiterate, the pressure was for more education rather than better education and it was too much to expect them to be very concerned whether their demand for more primary schools represented the best use that could be made of the country’s meager funds for education. Nor could they have been prepared for educational inflation that rendered graduation from primary school, by the time their children

achieved it, no longer sufficient to buy the white-collar jobs for which they had sought it... (Beeby, 1966, p.9).

The rapid growth of the educational system has created a situation in many African countries whereby massive unemployment and underemployment of school-leavers with an adequate and irrelevant education co-exist with a critical demand for a skilled labour force to meet development needs. The employment crises is the result of a mismatch between an educational strategy aiming mainly at quantitative expansion of the academic streams and an economic sector has been unable to absorb a great majority of school leavers. The problem of the school leavers has not been the only cause for concern. The rapid expansion of the education system entailed high scholarisation, particularly at the primary level. In the follow up “Conference on Education and Science and Technical Training in Relation to Development in Africa” held in July 1968. It was noted that the enrolments in secondary schools and universities were going on according to the planned figure of 1961. The problem however was with the primary schools which were experiencing a high average dropout rate of 68% far in excess of the anticipated 41% dropout rate. It was obvious then that high scholarisation did not necessarily mean high retention rates in the school system. The excessive wastage rates, associated with certain short-comings of the education systems and particularly the unsuitable nature of the educational content, entailed such high unit costs that further quantitative expansion often appeared to be out of the question. To put it more accurately, it became clear that quantitative expansion could not be sustained without prior quantitative improvement and educational reform.

The Establishment of Universal Primary Education

The Universal Primary Education which had been instituted by a majority of countries in Africa was aimed at ensuring equality of opportunity for all children with regard to access to schools. In many countries access to schools has not meant the same educational opportunities for boys and girls or for all the people in the society. Besides the problem of wastage, two other problems hindering quantitative expansion of education are:

- 1) The problem of disparity in educational opportunities and attainment between different geographical areas of the same countries, or between different ethnic groups in the same country. Inadequate provision of educational facilities e.g. primary schools not offering a full primary school programme or the complete lack of primary or secondary schools in some areas.
- 2) The problem of children not going to school because of the inability of their parents, due to poverty, to pay for their education: children going to school but dropping out for one reason or the another, without completing the course.
- 3) Again inspite of the rapid expansion of the educational system and the large expenditure entailed, the Nairobi Conference Education and Scientific and Technical Training in Relation to Development in Africa (1968) had recognized that, the majority of the African countries had not reached the target fixed at the continental level for the period of the Addis-Ababa short term plan (1961-1965) and in particular, that for many of them free universal primary education in 1980 did not appear to be a likely prospect. The review and discussion of the situation by the conference revealed that probably the major factor hindering rapid educational expansion was to be found in the high rates of wastage. The conference however noted that

The enormous wastage at the primary school level is measured by the fact that for the continent as a whole, only 32% of pupils enrolled in the first year complete their first year.

- 4) Another problem affecting the prospects for attaining universal primary education in the region are, firstly, Africa’s high rate of population growth, which means that the heavy task of meeting the backlog has to be accomplished at the same time that a large number of new places have to be found. Between 1970 and 1975, the African was expected by the United Nations to grow at 2.8 percent. Secondly, the educational backlog is higher than in any region since it was the last of the world’s great regions to embark on the development process continued social pressure for more educational opportunities coupled with financial constrains and population growth which had choked the progress made in reducing the number of illiterates, have made it necessary for policy-makers to look beyond the formal school system, for alternative means of getting education. The needs for such alternative means of giving the youths and adults in particular who had not the benefit of education has become imperative.

These problems account for the uneasy feeling of disillusion with education which set in at the end of the 1960’s quite in contrast with the high hopes with which the decade began. At the time of the Addis-Ababa Conference of 1961, institutional schooling of children and young people was assumed to be a broad highway to national prosperity and international well-being. By 1968, when the National Conference took stock of progress, the realization had dawned that the Addis-Ababa enrolment targets are more unrealistic when set against limited resources and exploding populations. It has also become obvious that quantitative expansion of education, if it could be realized at all, was an inadequate measure of educational growth and development, that, value attention

needs to be paid to the quality of education offered in the schools. By the end of the 1961 National Policy-makers had hence began to look towards quality and relevance in education rather than simple quantitative targets.

Developments in the Late 1960's The Moscow meeting of Experts

In seeking to define "quality and relevance" in the late 1960s, fresh appraisal were made of the institutional structures of education and the means by which they were administered and controlled for the first time since the mass schooling spread around the world in the 19th century, the concept of the school itself was called into question and alternative means of providing education were explored. One of the first international meetings which addressed itself to qualitative issues in education was the meeting of experts on the curriculum of General Education held in Moscow in January 1968. The meeting was attended by 33 experts from 22 countries.

Four major proposals were made by the meeting. These were as follows:

1. **National Centres for Curriculum Development and Research:** The meeting noted that curriculum development is a complex process requiring trained people to develop specifications learning materials, evaluation procedures and research systems. Effective curricula are developed only where the nation has a curriculum centre manned by teams of experts. The meeting therefore called on UNESCO to help member states in raising up National Curriculum Centres to speed up the process of curriculum development, research, and training.
2. **Exchange of Experience:** The process of curriculum development, the meeting noted was well known in theory, what was needed then was the practice of curriculum development called upon UNESCO to organize training sessions of one month or more where National teams would be invited for training and exchange of ideas and experience.
3. **Assistance in Curriculum Development and Evaluation:** The meeting further recommended frequent international regional and national meetings of curriculum experts to assist in the evaluation and development of curricula.
4. **Training of Specialists in Curriculum Development:** The meeting lastly recommended that "assistance be given to countries to establish or expand the systematic training of educational specialists in the field of curriculum development and when advisable to assist groups of countries having similar problem in the organization regional courses for this purpose. As a result of these recommendations of the meeting other international meetings were held to give particular attention to curriculum development and other issues related to improving the qualitative aspects of education.

The Nairobi Conference of 1968

At the conference of Education and Scientific and Technical Training of Relation to Development in Africa, held at Nairobi Kenya, from 16th to 17th July 1968, the Ministers noted that despite a decade of determined and considerable financial commitments made since the Addis-Ababa conference by African systems, and despite the significant progress achieved, in the majority of African countries the results so far still fell far short of those expected at the first half of the Development Decade launched by the United Nations in 1960. For this and other reasons, the conference only focused on the issues of Educational training and the training of educational planners and managers especially in relation to primary education. The conference started by examining the problems and needs of planning education in relation to both educational development and general development. It examined the methods and objectives of educational planning and the ways and means of implementing educational plans. The conference stated that "planning must be continuous, integrating, flexible process, and particularly concerned with obtaining education of the highest quality and the highest efficiency... it also pointed out that planning should emphasize the structure, methods and content of education just as it has emphasize the qualitative aspects in the past. It further stated that planning should be centralized and done at the local regional and national Levels.

Two important recommendations made were:

1. Attention be given to Second Development Decade, to increasing the qualitative and quantitative output of both school and out of school education according to the requirements and the trend of economic and social development and the efficient functioning of the educational system, in particular by reducing, repeating and drop-outs.

It was however noted that the needs and aspirations of a changing society be reflected in a constantly improved curriculum: that new methods be employed to promote individual development and that new structures be provided for life-long education and for administrators and management involving the participation of all concerned.

To this and, with very special interest to *Primary education* the conference invited African governments to ensure that the primary education system of African countries, in way varying from country to country.

- a. Achieved as soon as possible the 100% school enrolment at primary level which was scheduled for

- 1900 in the Addis-Ababa plan and which is in conformity with the right to education and which is also in conformity with the desire of education shown by the peoples of Africa and the democratization willed by the governments.
- b. Contribute to the strengthening of National Unity.
 - c. Bring out the social and cultural integration of children.
 - d. Act as factors of change in economic and social development.
2. In order to reform the content and orientation of primary education with a view to ensuring that:
- (a) The risk of child being uprooted is reduced to the minimum.
 - (b) The aim of the primary school is not only learning but preparation for life as well.
 - (c) The primary education inculcates in the child respects and a taste for manual work.
 - (d) Requisite attention is given to the possibility of using the National languages as languages of instruction and determining the optimum age and the most effective methods for teaching the first language of wide communication.
 - (e) Primary education, in both rural and urban areas provides all the children with the same basis knowledge and offers them the same chances of continuing their education.
3. To improve the output of the primary education systems, in particular by reducing the enrolment wastage rates.
4. To provide for the continuous in service training of teachers.
5. To create rural orientation primary teacher training institutions.
6. To reform the structures of primary education and post primary education in accordance with the new objectives assigned to primary education.
7. To introduce adult measure and the different educational activities which are needed to supplement the expansion and reform of primary education as part of the rural and more generally social and economic development.
8. To make the necessary provisions for integrating primary school leavers in society.
9. To bring the school closer to the community and the community closer to school.
10. To improve rural living conditions and to raise the prestige of the farmers, in order to prevent the school from a rural exodus.
11. To encourage greater co-ordination between the work of educational planners and of those responsible for economic development.

Similar views and recommendations especially related to educational planning and international cooperation were made by the international conference on Educational planning which met in Paris in August 1968. The Nairobi conference however also accepted the proposals for the establishment centres of excellence made by the OAU at its ninth session in September 1967. The idea of the centres of Excellence was to develop specialized education programmes in some African Universities to programmes in some African Universities to undertake research and offer post-graduate training in areas of critical importance to high-level manpower needs, while the OAU emphasized excellence in science and technology (Geology, dinatology water resource planning, human medicine and pharmacology, food science and technology, applied science and technology, marine science and technology), the Nairobi Conference drew attention to the need for excellence in the social science and humanities as well. Centres of excellence never got established. However between 1974 and 1980 UNESCO made definite proposals and arrangements for establishing a network of institutions of science and technology on the lines recommended by the conference of Ministers of African member states responsible for the application of science and technology to development (CASTAFRICA) in Dakar January 1974. The network is referred to as African Network of Science and Technology Institutes (ANSTI). January 1980 the ANSTI Secretariat was established in the regional office of science and technology for Africa in Nairobi. The objective of ANSTI are to bring closer in collaboration between engineering, scientific and technological institutions involved in post-graduate training and research in Africa. ANSTI also arranges the placement of visiting professors organizes seminars, and offers post-graduate fellowship. So far a network involving nine engineering fields and their basic science fields has been established in a number of African countries. The engineering fields are as follows: agricultural engineering and food processing technology, chemical engineering, civil engineering, electrical and electronic engineering, energy, mechanical engineering, mining and geological engineering and water resources engineering. The four basic science fields are chemistry geology (or computer science), mathematics (including statistics) and physics.

Developments in the 1970s

Curriculum reform and training. Some of the important outcomes of the Moscow meeting of Experts in 1968, the Nairobi Conference in 1968 and the international planning conference in Paris also in 1968 were the increase in the awareness of the importance of curriculum development and evaluation, and the process of educational planning. The seminar on the reform of the primary school curriculum attended by thirteen participants from

twelve African countries from November 25-30, 1975 in Dakar, Senegal and the IIEP African National Seminar for Advance Training in Systematic Curriculum and Evaluation held in Achimota, Ghana (14th July to 15th August, 1995) and attended by 67 participants from twelve English speaking countries, were also the direct outcomes of the recommendations of the Moscow meeting.

African Regional Seminar for Advanced Training in Systematic Curriculum and Evaluation: The recommendations of the international meeting of experts in Moscow, 1968, resulted in the international seminar for advanced training in curriculum development and innovation being held in Granna, Sweden in 1971. The seminar was attended by teams from different countries. An important recommendation of the meeting was that there should be regular training facilities in curriculum development at the regional and international levels. This recommendation led to the formation of the international curriculum organization (ICO) made up of curriculum centres and institutions in 40 countries in 1973. The ICO was interested in processing the extent of expertise in curriculum development in a number of countries as a step to developing requisite training programmes. Within the same period the International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP) in Paris was also interested in assessing the training needs in the area of curriculum planning in some selected countries. The related interest of these two international bodies culminated in the organization of the African Regional Seminar for Advanced Training in Systematic Curriculum Development and Evaluation at Achimota, Ghana, the seminar was organized by the IIEP in co-operation with ICO, the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA), the German Foundation for International Development (GFID). The main foundation for International Development (DSI), the UNESCO division of structures and content of life-long education and the British regional office for education development in Africa (BREDA). The aim of the seminar was to provide high level training and systematic curriculum development and evaluation for the curriculum specialist staff of twelve African countries areas grouped by the seminar included, the state of the art in curriculum theory, the social, political and economic forces affecting curriculum development, curriculum evaluation, educational technology and curriculum development, and teacher training. It was at this seminar that the head of some of the curriculum centres in Africa who were present at the seminar, decided to form the African curriculum organization (ACO) as an association of nationally recognized curriculum centres in Africa. The ACO was formally established in September, 1976.

Conference of Ministers of Education of African Member States, 1976

The fourth Regional Conference of Ministers of Education of African members states was held in Lagos, Nigeria, from 27 January to 4 February 1976. The conference was organized by UNESCO in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The Lagos conference was convened with the following terms of reference:

- i) To review the development of education in Africa since the Conference of Ministers of Education held in Nairobi in 1968.
- ii) To study the present trends in education in the region and the problems raised by the renewal of education systems, giving due consideration to social, economic and cultural development needs and in the context of life-long education.
- iii) To define the problems calling for priority treatment and to establish guidelines for activities in the field of educational development and renewal both at the level of the member states and in the framework of regional and international cooperation.

The conference had as its theme “Mass and Basic Education in Support of Development”. It examined in detail, two very important issues of direct relevance to curriculum development in Africa, namely, problems raised by the renovation systems and the need for curriculum reform in Africa. As regards problems of renovation of education in Africa, the Director-General of UNESCO, Amadou-Mahtar M’Bow, in his opening speech to the general conference said, “one of the essential aims of renewal is in my opinion, to close the gap which all too often – at least until recent year has separated education from working life and the conditions specific to the country concerned. Indeed, the search for greater “relevance” seems essential if educational systems are to function more efficiently and are to be firmly rooted in the realities of the African situation. This search should naturally – as is very often the case – involve a reform of content, one which rejects the objectives of formal systems inherited from the colonial period to base itself on the political social and cultural options of the state in question. It is a course of satisfaction therefore, to note that a great many African countries have set up institutions for the separation and reform of curricula – or have strengthened ones existing already – either within ministries or universities, or independent bodies. Drawing on African traditions, as opposed in the desire for self-identification and an understanding or others, in order to intensify the sense of cultural identity, the new curricula should certainly inculcate the child with those values, attitudes and aspirations which will make him a genuine African. In this connection, it could not be over-emphasized the importance of promoting African languages as means of instruction. The use of these languages offers various educational advantages, but they are also irreplaceable that “they alone can transmit a cultural heritage the integrity of which is constantly jeopardized

by an often traumatic colonization.

Two conditions seem essential. Firstly, identification with a culture should go hand in hand, in the case of the African child and adolescent, with a sense of belonging to the community of the nations of the world and a desire for receptivity towards others. Secondly, the renewed esteem for African cultural values and traditions in all their richness and abundance as a way of relating with others and with the whole world must avoid the temptation to become backward looking. On the contrary, it would appear as one of the elements of a novel synthesis in which most useful contributions of the past are mingled with the knowledge, values, and attitudes needed for an understanding of today's world and control over an often in clement environment. This of course implies much greater stress on basic training in the sciences, but it is also imperatives, as part of a life-long education preparing the individual for his future role that education should provide knowledge which will enable young people and adults alike to understand the machinery of national and international relation so that they maybe better able to participate in the changes needed in their societies and are able to build a new and more just international order.

Concerning curriculum reform, the Lagos Conference said that curriculum reform should lay great emphasis on actual experience in the environment and on actual social conditions and should incorporate productive work children and adolescents must be sad from the feeling of unreality occasioned by the conflict between a bookish imported culture, and the exigencies of a daily life in which productive activities look so large. In addition to its importance for economic development, this line of emphasis as an educational value and an ethical significance in that it exults those values which are essentials to the promotion of human dignity (it in any case simply represents a return to African traditions which until the colonial period, made no such harmful distinction between learning and everyday life.

Naturally, the quest for relevance ought not be limited to the reform of programme content methods and the very spirit of education and the educational atmosphere should also be adopted in the realities of Africa and to aspirations of its peoples would therefore, be desirable for teachers not only to be fully uplifted, but also prepared for their new role. In their function as educators of the entire community, they should live in symbiosis with it, learning from it and achieving a synthesis between cultural traditions and developments.

A concern for relevance in many cases also makes it necessary to revise the rules that have been followed hitherto with regard to examinations and promotion, which are in most cases too similar to those used in the systems of the former colonial powers and which because of the successive elimination they entail, tend to increase wastage rates to an extent which the African countries cannot afford. Moreover, they constitute an element of rigidity and formalism which permeates, the very spirit of the educational and take no account of values, experience and skills which could well be used in many cases as criteria in assessing achievement and attitudes. This is particularly serious in the start of an education which is designed to be life-long. The division into successive levels linked to one another springs from an elitist outlook than from a rational organization directed towards the satisfaction of the aspirations of individuals and the needs of society African schools will continue to turn out hundreds of thousands of young people doomed to underemployment and unemployment so long as the various levels of schooling are not designed also to provide the skills that give access to productive employment, even though additional short courses of training may be needed in some cases.

In general, there was an important observation made by the Lagos Conference – that education could not be seen in isolation since the pre-requisites of educational development were economic, social, cultural and political. In the light of this observation, the conference urged African countries to spend efforts in improving adult education, non-formal education or out of school education, and teacher education. Basic education should be linked to a life-long education and university education, as well as made relevant to the needs of their respective societies. Further many type of education offered should make an effort to link the school to the community and to working life.

The recommendations of the Lagos Conference dealt with the following points:

1. Greater priority to research and education for economic development.
2. Use of local resources for the production of teaching equipment.
3. Education should make students employable.
4. Middle-level skills and related technological subjects should be introduced into the secondary school curriculum.
5. Schools should be organized in such a way that they become self-managed and self-financed unit.
6. Efforts should be made to train handicapped children and their teachers.
7. National languages should be developed and used as media instruction.
8. Educational planning should be part of the country's overall economic and social planning.

A New Systematic Trend of Educational Development from the 1970's

It is very important to note that the 1960's was a period for the recognition of the importance of education in social, political and economic growth. Several attempts were made, most especially at the Addis-Ababa

Conference of 1961, to provide the basis for qualitative planning of education, however, not much was done to improve the quality and relevance of education until 1970. Much of the formal education offered during colonial era was of course not relevant to the respective countries. Phelps-Stokes Commission which toured schools in some West African countries in 1920 and 1921 made the following observations:

“If the pupils were asked to sing any song they liked, the chances were strong that we would hear ‘the British or English song... when asked to sing an African song or any chant used in their own plays, a laugh invariably went through the whole class... similarly, if we talk about history, we soon discovered what happened in 1066 about their own history – nothing.”

Issues of the relevance and the quality of education, examinations, textbooks etc. did not assume much importance in the decade immediately after independence. Considerations of relevance and quality were to be taken up in 1970s. It should however be realized that the education malaise of the 1960's was not a problem of the developing countries alone, but of the developed ones as well. It was this state of affairs which led to the convening of an international conference on the world crises in education (Willeamberg, Virginia, USA, 1976) one of the outcomes of which was Phillip Coob's book: *The World Crises in Education*. What was required, therefore, of the international community was to make a global and concerted study of the objectives and procedures of education in the contemporary world, UNESCO made its own contribution to this efforts by taking the lead in organizing in 1970 an international education year which prompted fresh thinking and innovation in a large number of countries and, at the same time, made a preliminary appraisal of the situation at the international level. As a logical follow-up in this action, the Director-General of UNESCO, appointed a seven-man international commission on the development of education, under the chairmanship of Mr. Edgar Faure in 1971. The commission's report, learning to be on the basis of its reading of the present state of education throughout the world, indicated the main lines along which education should be redirected in conformity with its new functions and goals. The approach to education put forward in learning to be and owes great goal which will lead to the concept of “life-long education.” The concept of life-long education” adopts a broad and functional view of education – a view that equates education not simply with “schooling” but with “learning”, regardless of where or how the learning takes place seen in this regards, education is obviously a life-long process spanning the years from earliest infancy through old age and taking many different forms only one of which is formal schooling.

The call for life-long education in Africa has mainly taken the form of adult education either for simple literacy for vocational and professional training. One of the regional programmes for adult professional training is the Pan African Institute for Development based at Buea and Yaounde in the Republic of the Cameroon. The institute offers management training programmes in rural development for government officials and private persons all over Africa. For adult literacy there is the Afrolet organization based in Nairobi which offers advisory services to national adult literacy programmes in Africa. Also based in Nairobi in the African adult education association. The association comprises of national adult education associations in 16 African countries, 41 affiliated institutions and about 300 individual members. The objectives of the association are to arrange conferences, seminars, workshops, and study-tours on adult education problems and issues in contemporary Africa. The association further plans programmes for the training of adult educators and also encourages and offers advisory services to educational associations on the organization of conferences, seminar courses, etc. Also included in the category of life-long education programmes is the large number of youth education programmes existing in virtually all African nations.

With respect to the training of curriculum specialists for the formal education sector mention should be made again of the African Curricular Organization (ACO) which was formally published in 1976. The ACO is presently made up of other countries represented by their national curriculum centres. Those of the ACO is to strengthen expertise in curriculum development, research, and evaluation in Africa. To achieve this, the ACO in conjunction with the Kenya institute of education, and the University of Nairobi has mounted a post-graduate course in systematic curriculum development for training the staff and associated members of national curriculum centres. The course is based in Nairobi and is a bilateral object between the Kenya government and the German government with the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTC) as the supplementary agency for the German government. The course leads to an award of the post graduate diploma in curriculum development by the university of Nairobi. It is expected that curriculum specialists trained through the ACO programmes will be one of the agents for making qualitative improvements in the school curriculum of their respective countries.

There are still other regional educational programmes which has been concerned with qualitative improvements in African education since the 1970s. Two of such programmes are the African Social Studies Programme (ASSP) based in Nairobi, and the Science Education Programme for Africa (SEPA) based in Accra. The ASSP is composed up of 16 countries, represented by their ministries of education or curriculum centres. The major objectives of the ASSP are to make qualitative improvements in the teaching of social studies in

schools and in the improvement of materials for teaching and learning. SSPA, on the other hand has a post-graduate course for science educators based at Njain University in Sierra Leone and is also concerned with the development of science teaching methods and science teaching materials for African schools.

Recently an attempt at qualitative curriculum reform has been the development of environmental education programmes as part of the school curriculum. The environment became important in the 1960's when it was realized that the physical environment was being affected by hazards such as pollution arising out of industrial growth in the developed countries. It was later realized that there are a lot of other environmental problems due to under-development. The lack of adequate sanitation in developing countries, health problems, malnutrition, unsafe drinking water supplies, food shortages, and the consequent desertification due to the cutting down of trees for firewood etc. are all problems associated with poverty, ignorance, and under-development. It has been realized that the solution to these problems is not only with the application of science and technology, but also lies principally with education in order to provide people with knowledge, attitudinal changes, and a positive commitment to improve the quality of their environment. The international environmental education programme, a joint programme of UNESCO and UNEP, has developed a programme on the nature, role and objectives of environmental education as a basis for developing environmental education programmes as part of the school curriculum.

It would be noticed that most of the development in African education since the 1960s have been made to the formal education sector. It has been realized however that formal education systems are generally very slow in changing their curricula to meet changing needs principally due to the bureaucratic nature of their controlling bodies. On the other hand out-of-school education equivalently called "non-formal education" has been found to be more flexible and adaptable to meet rapid economic changes and is therefore more useful for the fast production of manpower. Criticism of formal education have led to increasing attention being paid to non-formal education in many parts of Africa. Non-formal education is given outside the regular school system by both governments and private agencies and is generally work-oriented. Its basic purpose is to organize courses which combine both theoretical and practical work experience in specific trades. It emphasizes practical on-the-job training and therefore has the assets of low costs, speed of training and learning, and the provision of skills which are of immediate use. Candidates for non-formal education are usually people who have not had the opportunity for formal education, people who have had basic education but have not had the opportunity for learning some skills, and skilled workers who need further training. Besides these groups of people non-formal education is also provided especially by government agencies for economically potential areas of the country as well as for those socially disadvantaged areas of the country as a means of preparing the people in such areas for effective participation in economic and social life. Essentially three different forms of training programmes are offered in this direction. The first is the vocational industrial training programmes offered by both governments and private businesses. There is secondly agricultural extension services provided for farmers in the rural areas, and there is community development programmes carried out by the government ministries for education, social welfare and community development.

By 1970s a lot has been done and achieved to improve the quality and relevance of curriculum content both within the formal school system and within the non-formal educational system. Some of the issues which are now engaging the attention of educators and curriculum developers are textbooks and instructional material production, use of local languages for instruction, educational financing appropriate teaching methods and strategies, and the critical issue of providing the right type of knowledge and skills as one of the solutions to stem the tide of unemployable school leavers.

Conclusion

African nations emerging from colonial rule were determined to translate into practical policy, the aspirations of their peoples. Education was hence seen as the effective weapon in the fight against illiteracy and ignorance and a lever for overall economic and social progress and as such was to be given the highest priority in national development programmes.

The Addis Ababa conference was to make an outline of an educational development plan aimed at providing economic growth and social progress in African countries. What the Addis-Ababa conference achieved instead was to create an awareness along African nations on the low levels of their literacy rates and the need to make effective plans for increased quantitative output from the school system. Later in the late 1960s and the 1970s they developed a great concern in all African countries about the quality and relevance of education to the socio-economic and cultural aspirations of African peoples. The problems that have been encountered in this endeavour are essentially those that have been discussed above and which under-lie the dysfunctionality of the educational system. These problems have given rise to the increasing skepticism that investment in education is not producing the desired results.

The whole purpose of education and its objectives as well as its quality and relevance are hence being criticized and continuously reviewed. This skepticism is providing justification in some countries, for the

restriction on the further expansion of the primary school system and a rigid control on the number of children that go to primary schools to the secondary school – a situation which has rendered the attainment of the targets of the Addis Ababa plan difficult if not impossible.

There is concern about what happens to the many young boys and girls who complete the primary school course and cannot go on to the secondary schools to those who drop out before completing the primary school or works still, about the many boys and girls particularly in the rural areas, who do not go to school at all. There is increasing anxiety among African leaders, that the high hopes expressed at Addis Ababa, and the great expectations and “near faith” of the African peoples in the “magic of education” to transform economic and human conditions for the better are fast turning into bitter disillusionment like everywhere in the world, questions are being asked as to the aims of education, the concepts underlying programmes and methods, the place and role of education in development, and also what contribution education can make to strengthening national independence and safeguarding the original cultural identity of each nation within the context of African unity and solidarity. So, if the decade of the “sixties” was one of aspirations and great expectations leading to the quantitative expansion of the African educational system, (the decade of the ‘seventies’ was one of sober reflection and exploratory action leading to the renovation of education in Africa). It is important to bear in mind that education is mainly a social business, and like society itself, it is not static, it is a dynamic process concerned with both social and personal experiences, which require analysis selection, reflection and continuous evaluation.

It is therefore important and we should reflect and remember that education can only be understood when we know for what society and for what social position the pupils are being educated viewed in this context, the process of education is considered too important to be left entirely in the hands of educators alone, that any genuine efforts to regenerate education in Africa must involve not only classroom teachers, but also educational planners and policymakers (in various government ministries), parents and guardians of children, community leaders (in particular leaders of the various religious bodies who are proprietors of the majority of educational institutions), as well as those whose work and research directly or indirectly relate to education – formal, informal and non-formal because if ever any study was interdisciplinary, it is education.

Ashby Commission in Nigeria 1960

This commission ensured a balanced system of higher education the recommendations of the commission constitute the basis for the development of post school certificate and higher education in Nigeria for ten years.

The Ashby commission recommended four Universities, at this time, Nigeria was a developing country in relation to man power finance and resources. (Though one was later added). The five universities were established as autonomous institutions as follows.

University of Nigeria Nsukka

According to Azikiwe (1937) universities have been responsible for shaping of the destiny of races and Nations and individuals. This university was opened October 7, 1960.

Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

This university was formally opened on October 4, 1962. The cordial principle upon which the university was established was to impart knowledge and learning to men and women of all race without distinction on the grounds of races, religion or political belief.

University of Ife:

The university of Ife was opened on October 24, 1960 but was not recommended by Ashby commission but came by a default. The case for the establishment of the university was argued by a member of the committee. Dr Sanya Onobamiro who later became the Minister of Education in Western Region.

He contended that four universities as recommended by the commission will not be able to meet the needs of Nigeria higher education in the next ten years. He recommended the establishment of an additional regional universities in each of the regions which would bring the number to seven. He proposed in his minority report that the university by the western regional government should come under this category. He reasoned that in favour of the establishment of Ife, the Action Group, the vibrant leading party in the western region had been critical of the university college, Ibadan. On the basis of commission’s recommendation in Nsukka and Zaria were to be established and owned by their regional government but assisted financially by the Government. He pointed out that the western region would be left without any university. He further pointed out that given the introduction of Universal Primary Education 1955, there had been an astronomical increase in the number of primary school pupils who would begin to clamour for university education. Within higher education on the concurrent legislative list and the commitment of the Action Group to the promotion of social, economic and political advancement of the people, one could see why the government decided to provide a university for the West. This decision was written in the Western region sectional paper (No 12 of 1960: 3) on the establishment of

a university in western region.

This government has considered the present position and the new situation that might arise seriously regards it as its duty to take the proper measures to safeguard the interests of the people of Western Nigeria in the provision of facilities for higher education. it is in order to meet the challenge of the situation that the government has decided to build a new university initially from regional funds somewhere in Western Nigeria, fatunwa (1974: 187. 188) pointed out that the Federal Government adopted the proposal for university of Ife as one of three regional university and to go to assign assets of the Nigeria College of Arts and Science and Technology Ibadan to it.

Thus with these arguments the Western region got its own share of a regional university owned, planned and nurtured by itself to cater for the higher educational needs of the region.

University Of Lagos

The university of Lagos was opened October 4, 1962 in a temporary site of surulere on Lagos mainland as a non-residential university as recommended by the commission. With the university of Ife, there were three regional universities and all had began teaching.

Short Comings of Ashby Commission Targets

The targets recommended by the commission were inadequate the estimate for the supply of higher level manpower needs for a period of twenty years 1960 - 1980 become grossly inadequate even before 1970.

Ashby estimate for 7, 500 university enrolment by 1980 was rejected by the Federal Government in its white paper and replaced it with an estimate of 10,000. Moreover, it was true that the Federal government decided to establish ten universities yet with a population of 50 million as at then five universities were inadequate. An upward of ten universities would have been more adequate for a twenty year period.

The recommendation by the commission for the new universities to seek protection from some well established universities overseas was surprising. After more than eighty years of battle for a West Africa university that would reflect African Nationality, one would not be expected to start affiliating to Western universities. By 1964, the Mid - Western state was created and became a region without a university. By 1970, the university of Benin was founded. This brought the number of universities to six, these constitute the first generation universities.

Table 2: First Generation Universities with Location and Dates

S/N	DATE	LOCATION	NAME OF UNIVERSITY
1	1960	Nsukka	University of Nigeria
2	1961	Ile-Ife	University of Ife (Obafemi Awolowo)
3	1962	Zaria	Ahmadu Bello University
4	1962	Akoka	University of Lagos
5	1962	Ibadan	University of Ibadan
6	1970	Benin City	University of Benin

Source: Compiled from various calendars of the universities.

By 1970, Nigeria has six universities with five of them in the South and with five in the geographical North. This was a case of lopsidedness. In adopting the first National Development Plan (1962-1968) and the Ashby recommendations. The Federal government announced its determination to pursue vigorous policy of manpower development that would rectify the existing balance and lopsidedness in educational development and to promote the economic development of the nation.

The philosophy of Nigerian Education as derived from the five cardinal objectives as defined in the National Development plan (1970 — 1974) states that apart from providing the specialized manpower needed by society, higher education should aim at nation building, promotion of economic and social well being of the nation, self reliance and self sufficiency. The second development plan immediately after the Biafra Civil Nigerian War. It was a period of reconstruction and rehabilitation the problem of national Unity and integration was seriously embarked upon and education was one of these areas that had focused attention.

In 1969 a National Conference was convened in Lagos to review the Nigerian Educational system. In the course of the conference the Federal Minister of Education emphasizes on the need for using education for National integration. (Adaralegbe 1972: 18) says: "It is no doubt the desire of our people that we should evolve a system of education that will integrate and bind us together as a nation so that our diversities may never be used as a means of alienating us from one another but of strengthening our unity emphasizing our independence".

Problem Areas - Suggested Solutions as well as recommendation

With the establishment of five universities in 1962, the enrolment rose to 3,636. By 1970 the universities had enrolled 14,000 students, the above statistics revealed that the number of persons demanding for admission into the universities were far more than the existing universities.

University College programmes was described as being narrow as the colonial administration did not pursue an agendum of training high - level manpower for many of the professions. Each of the universities began to provide various courses yet, solid foundation was still to be laid for science oriented courses that would lead to the reshaping and revolutionize the society. More — over the expectation of the commission “saw Nigeria in 1980 a nation of 50 million people commanding attention in world affairs and a people playing their part in a technological civilization”.

The above expectation of the commission was not realized for though the graduates of the first and even second generation were expected to be self reliant, technologically oriented and able to fit into society. However, it was found that because the curricular tilted in favour of arts, the important areas of National need. Agriculture for instance was neglected from inception till date. Moreover, there was duplication of courses. Virtually all the universities offered same courses and so problem of specialization was not solved.

The commission recommended that universities should be national in outlook and students solely admitted on criteria of academy merit, universities were to apply for academic freedom. This became a problem area with creation of Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB). Admission by academic merit gave way to other non-academic oriented criteria. Academic freedom was lost too because with creation of the National Universities Commission (NUC), universities were more or less assigned courses and instructions on the minimum and maximum credit units (NUC Annual Report (1990:3).

Furthermore, the commission envisaged that universities should have autonomy in managing their affairs, however external controls should be expected in the area of finance. Autonomy was never realizes because of ethnic government of the day. The E.M Njoku and Oyenuga, Soya are classic examples. The universities turned into centres of ethnic tussles and the protagonists had ready made answers that “he that pays the piper dictates the tune”.

In conclusion the Nationalists (Pan Africanists) criticized British monopoly of university education and agitated for an American oriented university. The Federal Government of Nigeria’s 1954 Constitution did not make universities executive subject of the Federal Government. University was on the concurrent legislative list. Each region could therefore be acting right to establish a university of its own.

Ashby commission tried to ensure a balanced system of higher education. The policy of higher - level manpower production was to be ensured and pursued vigorously by the federal government as a means of restoring balance. It tried to ensure that the educational system would be improved within the limits of the budget, and it saw in 1980 a nation of 50 million people commanding attention in world affairs and a people playing their part in technological civilization.

The commission recommended a concentration of higher education in university institution through the provision of degree courses suited for Nigeria. Four universities were to be established according to Ashby’s recommendation but Nigerian Government established five universities at Nsukka, Ile Ife, Zaria, Lagos and Ibadan.

Generally Ashby targets were inadequate and were exceeded. With 50 million people more universities would have been inadequate or insufficient, today there are more people demanding for admission but there are not facilities to accommodate the students already in the universities.

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