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Neglecting the public and focusing on the private: 'The situation of education in Nigeria'

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ABSTRACT

This research looks into the problem of public education funding in Nigeria. Immediately after independence, great strides were made in the area of mass education. The government's efforts towards education recorded huge successes across the country. This period witnessed the establishment of great number of educational institutions, to complement what the country inherited from the pre - independent (colonial) administration. The major universities within the country today were established during that period, which introduced academic programmes that were relevant in preparing the foundation for growth and development of a newly independent nation.

The attention towards education lasted for a period of time, before reversal of fortunes set-in. The downturn could be traced firstly to the civil war that engulfed the newly independent nation just seven years after self rule, which created distrust among the various ethnic groups. The incursion of the military into government could be another reason for the neglect of the public educational institutions. The military at that moment was preoccupied with keeping the country together, rather than focusing on the provision of education and other social services. The lack of proper attention towards the education sector cuts across the different levels - from primary to tertiary. These two factors coupled with the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) led to the collapse of the education sector of the country. With the collapse of public schools, the need for private schools became necessary and agitation for the approval of private schools started in earnest. Selection process into private schools are centered firstly on financial ability before other factors like academic ability are considered (a common practice in most parts of the globe), because they are first and foremost commercial ventures. With the level of poverty in Nigeria astronomically high, approximately 80% of the population relied on public schools for their educational needs as a result of the subsidized cost. The trend seems to have changed greatly, with a near total collapse of standard in public schools as a

result of government neglect over time. While at the same time, the private educational institutions have continued to spring up at every nooks and crannies in the country.

This thesis is going look into how the above scenario is going to affect the achievement of the MDG goal 2, and also how the deterioration of public education in Nigeria is going to affect the quality of life of the majority of the populace that depends on it for their intellectual needs.

ABBREVIATIONS

DFID - Department for International Development
EFA - Education For All
EFA GMR - Education for All: Global Monitoring Report
EFCC - Economic and Financial Crimes Commission
ICPC - Independent Corrupt Practices Commission
ICT - Information and Communication Technology
FME - Federal Ministry of Education
HDI - Human Development Index
IMF - International Monetary Fund
JAMB - Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board
LED - Local Education Authorities
MDG - Millennium Development Goals
NBTE - National Board for technical Education
NCCE - Commission for Colleges or Education
NCNE - National Commission for Nomadic Education
NECO - National Examinations Council
NPE - National Policy on Education
NPEC - National Primary Education Commission
NSEC - National Secondary Education Commission
NUC - National Universities Commission
SAP - Structural Adjustment Programme
TI - Transparency International
UBE - Universal Basic Education
UN - United Nations
UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPE - Universal Primary Education
WAEC - West African Examinations Council

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Chapter 1

1.1: Introduction

Western/Islamic education in Nigeria was an almost exclusive preserve of the missionaries (with minimal attention from the colonists), it all changed with independence in 1960. The then government of the newly independent Nigeria saw the need to develop the sector as a prerequisite to the development of the entire society. Upon the achievement of independence, every country in Africa placed school attendance for all ahead of other objectives. In the opinion of the leaders, by giving everyone the opportunity to attend school, the newly independent society would visibly differ from the colonial or pre-colonial order. This view has been supported in the work of Wohlgemuth (2006). In the case of Nigeria, giant strides were made towards that effect, both at the federal and regional levels with huge successes recorded. But all that began to change with the implementation of the Structural Adjustment programme (SAP) proposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in the 1980's, which encouraged a neo-liberal approach across every sector of the economy. Though opinion varied as to the reason for the introduction of the programme and why it specifically targeted the education and social sectors. Wohlgemuth (2006, p.4) in the analysis of the reason most countries in Africa encountered problems in the provision of education, is of the opinion that due to the size of the programmes introduced, it became increasingly difficult to administer it efficiently'. For the proper running of such wide range of educational programmes, a larger administration (which was lacking at that period) was required (ibid, 2006). As a result of the large size, improper planning and lack of cost awareness, these newly independent African countries encountered problems along the way as the educational programmes became difficult to manage effectively.

Similar scenario played out in other sectors as well for example in the provision of modern infrastructure and health services. These factors could be responsible for the introduction of the Structural Adjustment programme (SAP), but despite the increase in wealth accruing to most of these countries as a result of the discovery and exploration of mineral

resources, the same problem still exists today. This casts doubts as to the reason these newly independent countries were advised to implement the Structural Adjustment programme (SAP). With the failure of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) to achieve its intended goals, there seems to be little change in the running of the education sector (looking at the progress made so far). The education sector has emerged worse than it used to be before and during the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) even in the face of the introduction of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) which emphasizes the achievement of considerable development by 2015.

In this research, focus will be on the analysis of the present educational situation in Nigeria, and the clear social division such practice has created in the entire Nigerian society. The study will also look into the problem of achieving the millennium development goal number two (MDGs 2), as well as the quality of the output emanating from such mass enrolment processes in the face of poor funding of public schools. The problem created by the neglect of public education institutions has been very visible over the years at the primary and secondary levels of across the country. As a result of the neglect, there is evidence of near-total collapse of the quality of public primary and post primary schools in the country. With the restoration of democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999, there has also been a shift in the funding for public tertiary institutions. The tendency has been to limit funding for public tertiary institutions, and focus more on creating private tertiary institutions (which caters for the needs of the minority). This has resulted in the licensing of around fifty new private universities (with more applications still being processed) within a period of 10 years, which provides education for the upper and middle class of the society, while about 70% of the population living below the poverty level were being left out. The encouragement of private participation in the provision of education in Nigeria is in itself a welcome gesture; however it creates more problems than solutions if it results in the collapse of the government run schools.

1.2: Background of the Study

This thesis looks into the issue of education which happens to be the foundation for the development of every society. This opinion was supported by (ODUMOSU, NELSON-TWAKOR, AJALA) (n.d). Notwithstanding the fact that Nigeria is blessed with abundant natural resources, the non development of the knowledge based sector that would lead to the transformation of those resources into wealth for her teeming population, has resulted in turning them into curses with dire consequences. The issue of education development cannot be complete without mentioning the role of Britain (the colonial power) and the religious missionaries in the introduction and spread of both western and Islamic education in Nigeria. The concept "Neglecting the public and focusing on the private" is not necessarily an avenue for making comparisons between the public and private education in Nigeria. Rather it focuses on the failure of the government in redressing the inadequacies prevalent in the public education system, by way of pointing out the problematic issues and suggesting certain solutions. By so doing, the public schools could be brought to the same level as the private schools which are currently setting the pace in terms of quality. The study will also look into the problem of achieving the millennium development goal number two (MDGs 2), as well as the quality of the output emanating from such mass enrolment processes in the face of poor funding of public schools.

1.3: Previous research

Education in Nigeria witnessed fluctuations as a result of several factors that are really difficult to pin-point categorically. Wohlgemuth (1996) in his paper identified the reason for the initial hick-ups encountered by newly independent African countries. He specifically identified the large size, improper planning and lack of cost awareness as the reason that made it difficult for the earlier initiated education programmes to be administered efficiently. The achievement of the MGD2 is a daunting task for the

government of Nigeria, considering the numerous obstacles that are likely to inhibit her efforts. The author outlined these set of problems and proffered a host of solutions that needs to be implemented. These identified problems conform to the overall situation faced at the education sector in Nigeria. While the proposed solutions falls in-line with the needed programmes the country needs to initiate in order to achieve the 2015 goals as well as improve on quality of life. His identification of inadequate salaries and incentives of university teachers and other well-educated staff, conforms with research done by Adelabu (2005) whose findings also show that average monthly pay for government school teachers are barely enough for their upkeep.

To better understand the present situation of education in Nigeria, one needs to grasp the different policies and system of education implemented over a period of time. This aspect was dealt with by Gusau (2008) in his article, which stretched from the colonial period till 2006. While Gusau dealt with the different educational system and policies, Madunagu (n.d), on the other hand outlined the historical development of education as well as the timeline for the religious development.

Neo-liberalism as a theory option has proved (comparatively) successful in the developed north, as against the global south. Szirmai (2005) laid credence to this issue by giving reasons why developing (poor) nations cannot pursue similar development pattern as the rich nations. Despite the failure associated with the neo-liberalism, Harvey (2006) argues why the policy option is still being pursued in developing nations.

The issue of SAP is seen as having a negative effect on the education and other social services in developing countries. This issue was dealt with by Emeagwali (2011) in the research where she tried to show the link between the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) and the impoverishment of the population in Africa.

On the issue of Methodology, while De vaus (2002) gave a clear definition of Secondary analysis as an option for research, Chadwick, Albrecht, and Bahr (1984) on the other hand explore the reasons for conducting a research as well as adopting secondary analysis as a

research methodology for the purpose of answering research questions. The reasons they gave is not to be utilized in such a way as to undermine the benefits of carrying-out empirical research.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Global Progress Report (GPR) as well as the local office publication “Nigeria Millennium Development Goals” publishes periodic reports that outline the progress in Nigeria, with a view to ascertaining the probability of achieving the targeted goals by 2015. The reports are multi-sectored report, but for the purpose of this research, only the data covering the education sector will be analyzed. It covers estimates on enrolment at primary schools, primary completion rate and youth literacy etc, which are the targeted goals of the Millennium Development Goals number2.

UNICEF (2000) tackles the Quality of Education discourse by outlining its characteristics which includes safe, protective and gender friendly environment with adequate resources and facilities. These characteristics are supported by several research findings by Fuller (1999) on the correlations between learning environment and school performance, Carron & Chau (1996) on the performance of students studying in schools with improved facilities in India, corroborated by Willms (2000) on similar findings in Latin America as well as Sutton (1999) on research about changing the attitudes that discourages the participation of girls from education in Guinea. A report by DFID (2011), also showed the drop on the quality of education in Nigeria's Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme from 1976 to 1986. Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report, (2009) placed Nigeria's out-of-school children at an estimated 8 million (the highest in the world). In a research finding by David Theobald et.al. (2007) cited in Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report, (2008) the author reported that Nigeria is below international minimum standard in the area of basic educational infrastructure, and would require over US\$3. Billion to fix. The issues raised in these reports corroborates with those raised earlier by Wohlgemuth (1996).

Concerning the link between quality of education and its impact on quality of life, while (Christopher, 2005) argues on the difficulty in determining how quality education impacts

quality of life as a result of finding the right measurement, Zaid and Popoola (2010) argues that the concept "Quality of Life" means a whole lot of things depending on the status, residence and level of education of the person in question. In their research findings, it was discovered that the lives of rural women in Ekiti State will be much better if they are better educated and are able to access the baskets of information available to rural dwellers on how to improve the quality of their lives. To further show how Nigeria is faring terms of quality of education and quality of life as well as her prospect of meeting the MDG2 target, various data were collect from National Bureau of Statistics: "Social Statistics of Nigeria" (2009), National Literacy Survey (2010), UIS Data Centre: "UNESCO Institute for Statistics" and United Nations Statistics Division: "Millennium Development Goals Database". Other statistics were retrieved from United Nations Development Programme (2011), The World Bank: World Development Indicators (2009), United Nations Children's Fund: "The State of the World's Children" and National Bureau of Statistics (2010).

The main conclusions to be drawn from this review of previous research are that the various findings in most cases corroborates one another at different intersections regarding the progress made so far, as well as problems currently being faced in education sector in Nigeria, her prospect of achieving the Millennium development goal number 2 and how quality of education affects the quality of life.

1.4: The rationale behind the study

Development is a continous process, and past mistakes can easily be addressed if there are well defined policy framework in place, with strict adherence to practical implimentation. This thesis is significant in causing that change of policy by making recommendations that could help improve the situation for future development. It should be noted that the education sector in Nigeria is suffering from a whole lot of issues that are mainly national in nature, albeit with international factors having certain influence as well. It should be pointed out that the world is a global village and the events in far distant lands now have a

great influence in others with Nigeria being no exception. The irony of the situation is that the positive distant events happening in other lands have not being well adapted internally for the developmental benefit of the masses. Certain countries formerly at the same level of educational development with Nigeria few decades ago has made giant strides in the area of access, funding and quality while Nigeria still lags behind considering the statistics from the EFA reports. Some of the indentifiable problems that will be discussed in this thesis, that are facing the education sector in Nigeria today are (in no particular order) corruption, policy inconsistency, inadequate infrastructure and poor remuneration of the academic and non-academic personel etc.

1.5: Research questions and the Objectives of the study:

The main objective of the thesis is to indentify how the neglect by government has created several direct and indirect problems plaguing the development of the education and social sectors in Nigeria, and suggest possible solution that could help tackle the situation.

In this thesis, the research problem assumes that the government is not doing enough in raising the quality in public schools. The public academic institutions cater for the needs of majority of the population. On a casual investigation, it might seem very obvious that the government subsidizes education to the barest minimum, but a critical look at the basic indicators of quality education outlined by UNICEF, (2000) paints a different picture all together. While on the one hand, it has never been the policy of government to shift attention from the public school system towards the private school system, but on the other hand, such has been practically the case in the past few years considering the lackadaisical attention towards public schools. It is obvious that the public school system is confronted with barrage of problems militating against the proper implementation of policies, but there could be available remedies. With the MDG2 target date just a few years away, it is imperative to note how the government attitude towards policy and practice will affect the achievement of the goal. The notion of quality of education exists but is difficult to quantify and the research assumes also that it might be linked to the health indicators of Nigeria. Against this background and coupled with the fact that public

schools caters for the educational needs of majority of the population, this thesis will endeavour to answer the following research questions:-

1. What effect could the neglect of public educational institutions have on achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG 2) by 2015?
2. What effect could the neglect of public education have on the quality of life of the majority of the populace which relies on the public school system?

Sub questions:

- a. How does the implementation of Neo-liberal policies like SAP relate to the neglect of public schools?
- b. what are the indicators of quality of education?
- c. Is the quality of education discourse responsible for the health indicators?
- d. what factors could inhibit the achievement of the MDG2 and what are the possible solutions?

The questions above will help to clarify how the implementation of neo-liberal policies could be harmful to the provision of education in a developing country like Nigeria. It will also direct the country on the path of focusing on the problems militating against the implementation of education policies necessary for the achievement of MDG2 with the intention of exploring the right solution. Finally, it will help give an insight into the relationship between quality of education and health.

1.6: Scope and Delimitation

The scope of this these is going to cover some of the identifiable problems responsible for the neglect of the education sector in Nigeria - such as underfunding, corruption, policy inconsistency, as well as profer solutions that could help reposition the sector. While to answer the two major questions raised in this thesis, the author will rely on data from National Literacy Survey, Nigeria Millennium Development Goals Report in order to answer the question on achieving the MDG2 target goals. While data from National Bureau of Statistics, UIS (UNESCO Institute for Statistics) Data Centre, United Nations Development Programme as well as United Nations Children's Fund will be explored to answer the question relating to quality of education and quality of life. As the production of statistics in Nigeria is extremely weak, data must be treated with utmost care.

Chapter 2: Research methods

In this chapter, focus will be on the methodology to be utilized in achieving the aim of answering the research questions. This research will utilize secondary analysis as methodology for the purpose of answering the research questions. Secondary analysis could be defined as the re-analysis of previously collected data by other researchers for the analysts purpose (De vaus, 2002). Research are carried out for many reasons among which are - desire to solve social problems such as crime, conflicts, drug abuse and level of school dropout (Chadwick, Albrecht, and Bahr, 1984). But at other times the research could be used to determine the potential detriment of deviating from the normal course of action, especially when it is used as a cetral part of some decission-making process (Ibid, 1984).

This research is centered on the later - the potential harm the neglect of public educational institutions will have on the achievement of the MDG goals and the consequent effects on the quality of life of the populace. The non implementation of policies (or the practice of abandoning well thought - out policies of the predecessor) is a clear deviation from norm that has stalled the development of education in Nigeria. By using secondary analysis, the research will try to rely on existing set of data and apply them for the purpose of finding answers to the research questions. The reliance on secondary analysis will not of course rob this research of the nitty gritty of data collection, because it is going to be conducted on originally gathered data that utilized the tradidional mechanism like - interviews, questionnaire, participant observation etc (Ibid. 1984).

The application of fresh, creative approach and style to existing data is one of the advantages of secondary analysis. This opinion is support by (Chadwick, Albrecht, and Bahr, 1984). Another advantage derived from secondary analysis is the consideration of the economy of money and time (Glaser, 1962 cited in Chadwick, Albrecht, and Bahr, 1984). Research is often capital intensive and demands the devotion of lots of time at every stage. Secondary analysis curtails this excesses by devoting much time and

resources analyzing, creating and interpreting the meaning of the already existing data, rather than on the costly stages of design and data collection (Chadwick, Albrecht, and Bahr, 1984: p260). Primary data collectors often analyze a handful of the data they collect during the course research, thereby locking away or discarding other relevant and useful data already in their possession (Ibid, 1984). So by doing a secondary analysis, the society is saved from losing a large bank of relevant data previously collected either for the similar research or for the the purpose of a totally different research.

In addition to the advantages of using secondary analysis for the purpose of this research, care will also be taken to avoid its pitfalls (Gilbert, 2008). These pitfalls includes the problem of assessing the validity of the data beign analyzed, the timeliness of the data and the complexity of data structure etc (Ibid, 2008). Statistics from international organizations for example, sometimes reproduce data from country offices, while at other times they merely make use of inhouse estimates by analyzing past data available to them. They do their analysis in most cases without taking into consideration the events that has taken place within that country since their last data.

The method to be employed in this research is the Analysis of documents and materials with the Historical Research approach that will allow the analysis of past data and relate them with the present condition, and also reflect and provide probable solutions to present issues and problems confronting the educational sector in Nigeria. Historical research will enhance my quest for answers to questions such as - When the neglect of the education sector began. It will also help give possible answers to how it all started as well as to what extend the neglect has negatively impacted the development of the country and try proffer possible solutions to the problem. Given the fact that the research is going to be using secondary data, besides the EFA Global Monitoring Reports from 2003 till date (which will feature prominently) it will basically be analysis of the several data provided by published reports from international organizations (especially those of the United Nations (UN) and her specialized agencies like the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) the International Monetary Fund (IMF) /world bank and published prognosis of other international organizations), national data released periodically, relevant articles and a host of independent research findings needed to

answer the research questions. The method to be employed (as mentioned above) should be able to answer the basic question of the neglect of the educational sector by successive Nigerian government and the possible consequences.

2.i: Method of data selection

In carrying-out this research, access to published data was not easy to come-by, and upon this realization the author relied mainly on the online publications of the official country report, organizations, agencies and findings by respective individuals cited in the research. Developing search terms is usually the best way to begin online data collection. Thanks to the advancement in information technology, most paper publications by international organizations now have online versions. Getting to the right source usually becomes complicated as a result of the multiple results that are generated on every search. To overcome this problem, the author relied only on the official websites for the data needed. In order to ensure that the data collected conforms to answering the main research questions, the author relied on official government data and those from credible organizations. While in answering the other issues raised in sub-questions of the research, the author relied on previous findings by independent researchers on the various issue.

To answer the two main research questions, two main data categories was selected:

For the question on achieving the MDG2 target goals, the following data was selected:

National Literacy Survey (2010): Primary school Enrolment from 2004 and 2008/Secondary school Enrolment 2004-2008;

Nigeria Millennium Development Goals: Report 2010;

United Nations: MDG global progress report (2011);

United Nations Statistics Division: "Millennium Development Goals Database": Total net enrolment ratio in primary education, both sexes/ Nigeria 2006 and 2007

The following data was selected to answer the question relating to quality of education and quality of health:

West African examination Council, May/June 2003-2008 results - percentage of students with at least 5 credits including English and Mathematics (considered basic requirement for further studies in the university in Nigeria), published by National Bureau of Statistics; UIS Data Centre: "UNESCO Institute for Statistics": Primary education enrolment Nigeria 2006 and 2007;

National Bureau of Statistics (2010): Quality of primary school teachers as a percentage of total number of teachers;

United Nations Development Programme (2011): Human Development Indicators 2011;

The World Bank: World Development Indicators (2009): Mortality rate, under – 5 (per 1,000) / Nigeria;

United Nations Development Programme (2011): Human Development Indicators 2011;

United Nations Children's Fund: "The State of the World's Children": mortality ratio (MMR) / Nigeria 2008; Life expectancy at birth / Nigeria: UNPD_World Population Prospects_2006 (International estimate) / 2000-2005 .

To answer the sub-questions and connect them to the main questions, the following materials were selected by the author:

The work by Wohlgemuth (1996) entitled "A Perspective for the Future", in Project 2015, Southern Africa Regional Studies. Stockholm: SIDA, was needed in identifying some of the problems faced by the education sector and the possible solutions necessary in order to raise the quality of education and set the country on the path to meeting the MDG2 target by 2015. The also author explored the publication by Department for International Development (DFID) (2011), containing research findings by several authors on the problem of quality of education. The publication 'Education for All by 2015: will we make it? Nigeria country case study' by Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2008), also contains findings from several researchers which helped to answer questions centered on quality of infrastructure in public schools and school enrolment which forms the MDG2 target. Furthermore, the publication by UNICEF (2000) entitled 'Defining

Quality in Education', listed the indicators of quality education. This publication proved helpful in linking the quality of education sub-question to the main question of quality of education and quality of health. The research finding by Zaid Yetunde Abosedo and Dr. S.O. Popoola (2010) on 'Quality of Life among Rural Nigerian Women': The Role of Information, was also instrumental to show the link between the effect of quality of education and quality of life. The newspaper article published in Leadership Newspapers (2011) with title 'WAEC Results: Only 30% Pass Maths, English', was needed to show that as at 2011, the learning-outcome achievement in national examinations is still quite low. This helped to update the 2003-2008 data published earlier by the National Bureau of Statistics. The data was necessary to show that learning-outcome achievement could be a measure of quality of education.

The mode of selection was done after extensive reading of various publications. The main determinant during the selection process was answering the main questions and sub-questions posed in the thesis. Then the issue of credibility and general acceptance was considered in opting for official government data and from the selected organizations. Concerning work by individual researchers, in answering the research questions the majority of those explored worked in conjunction with the organizations selected earlier or their specialized agencies.

Chapter 3. Theory

On this chapter, focus will be on the theoretical framework to be utilized in achieving the aim of the research. The theory needed to interpret research questions greatly enhances the analysis of the available data being utilized during the course of the research (Chadwick, Albrecht, and Bahr, 1984). The theory to be employed in this research will illustrate both the relevance and irrelevance of relying on the neo-liberal approach towards the provision of education in Nigeria. It will shed more light on the interlocking nature of under funding of education to the overall quality of life of the population. A learning environment (just like a living environment) reflects the kind of life one obtains from it. A learning environment with well trained personnel, modern quality infrastructure, secured and clean environment is likely to turnout quality and employable graduates. While a neglected and abused learning environment which lacks basic amenities, filthy and deteriorated infrastructure and poorly trained / remunerated personnel will equally turnout graduates albeit, questionable and unemployable. The public-private dichotomy in the education sector in Nigeria, is similar to the usual "us and them" phenomenon and there is certainly power tussle to determine which gets better attention. There is some sort of disconnection between the government and the governed in the society like Nigeria just like in most developing nations (Transparency International, 2011). And this disconnection clearly manifests itself in the way public institutions are managed for the benefit of the masses.

3.1: Neo-liberalism

For the purpose of this research, more emphasis will be placed on the Neo-liberal theory. The main reason for that is to show the reason it is not well suited for the provision of education in a developing country like Nigeria. Neo-liberalism entails market driven

approach to government policies that emphasizes open market, efficiency of private enterprises and deregulated and liberalized trade. It lays greater emphasis on commoditization of every sector of life i.e., everything could be bought and sold with little or no exceptions. Neo-liberalism is based on neoclassical theories of economics that envisages the transfer of control of the economy to the private sector, with the expectation that it will lead to a more efficient government and improve the socio-economic health of the nation (Cohen, Joseph Nathan, 2007).

3.2: Welfare Theory

In this concept of governance, the state takes responsibility for the social well being of the entire populace. It is based on the principle of equal opportunity, equitable distribution of resources. The welfare state provides free and quality education and other social services. In contrast to the application of the neo-liberal theory in the provision of education in Nigeria, the government should endeavour to classify education as an essential sector that requires special attention. For the equitable distribution of the countries wealth, social welfare schemes in the education sector would be a very good policy in reaching out to the majority of the population which falls below the poverty line. Nigeria might not be so endowed with enough resources to subsidize every sector, however certain services like the provision of education needs to be placed on the front burner. This is because education happens to be the bedrock of other development. Every other sector relies on the education sector for the provision of their manpower needs. The welfare system has proved successful in the countries it is practiced (especially in most European countries), in reducing the rate of illiteracy, poverty and infant and maternal mortality.

3.3: Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP)

Suffice it to say that Neo-liberalism came to most countries in the global south unprepared, through the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). But despite the failure of the programme, the underlining principles have been directly and

indirectly being a reoccurring feature in the policies of the affected countries. Failure might not have been envisaged with the introduction of the programme, but numerous commentators (especially from the affected nations) still viewed the programme as a deliberate attempt to put a stop to their young and fast developing economies. This view has often been termed “Conspiracy theories” by the very group of nations that initiated and sometimes deceptively advised the implementation of the programme in various nations. In an article entitled “The Neo-Liberal Agenda and the IMF/World Bank Structural Adjustment Programs with Reference to Africa”, Emeagwali tried to show the link between the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) and the impoverishment of the population in Africa (Emeagwali, 2011 cited in Kapoor (ed.) 2011, pp3-13). She does this by pointing out how the IMF policies of 1980s and 90s (with special mention of SAP) was an extreme form of monetarism and austerity measure that encouraged the cut in government spending to education and other social sectors . This policy was carried out without any plan for bailouts or stimulus packages and also undermining the suffering and inconveniences suffered by the masses as a consequence to the implementation (Emeagwali, 1995 cited in Kapoor (ed.) 2011, pp3-13). In her submission, SAP was conceived as a tool for global dominance between 198-82 with stringent conditionalities. This conditions includes; forced currency devaluation, privatization of essential industries, trade liberalization and the most devastating among them being the removal of subsidy in education, health and other social services (Ibid, 1995). Though the aim of SAP was for debt repayment, Emeagwali argues that one of the main purposes was the socialization of the debts, so that the entire population of Africa carries the burden for the repayment (Ibid, 1995). This they did through the payment of school fees, purchase of foreign made essential commodities as a result of the collapse of local industries as well as payment for obtaining basic health care (Ibid, 1995).

3.4: The positives and negatives of the neo-liberal theory

Assertions that neo-liberal policies as practiced in Nigeria are generally ineffective needs to be viewed with skepticism considering the gains achieved so far in a hand full of sectors. The telecommunication sector stands out as a shining example of a well

implemented policy of deregulation/liberalization which is a common neo-liberal terminology. The phenomenal rise in the number of people with affordable access to telephone could be attributed to the general acceptance that greeted the policy of deregulation of the sector. This was also a relief to the general populace, as it helped revive the hitherto government run telecommunication sector that has performed below par since inception. On the contrary, the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) which resulted in the reduction on cuts to the funding of education, health and social care as well as led to increase in the price of basic necessities was counter productive in almost every nation where it was implemented (Emeagwali, 2011 cited in Kapoor (ed.) 2011, pp3-13). The situation in sub-Saharan Africa (Nigeria in particular) poses more questions considering the fact that the nation was still reeling from the effects of colonialism and civil war, before the introduction of the programme. She was still in the process of building basic infrastructures as newly independent states to cater for the needs of her teeming population, and so was not ripe to implement neo-liberal policies. The policy has been tested for a very long time with partial success, through wars and counter wars, revolutions and counter revolutions, even when these African nations were still mere colonial enclaves of Europe. It is also disheartening to note that the same countries that foisted the neo-liberal policies on the newly independent African countries more or less barely implemented the policies wholesomely as it appears on paper. These countries, in some cases never implemented those policies at all (in certain sectors) in their domain. Clear examples are in the area of free Medicare, free education and student loan schemes as well as agricultural subsidies which is meant to offset any effect of deregulation and ward-off any form of foreign competition. This revelation supports the accusation that the policies were designed to disrupt the home grown development initiatives of the countries of the global south.

There are solutions to the problems of neo-liberal policies in the public education sector. Developing (poor) nations cannot pursue similar development pattern as the rich nations, based on the fact that the achievement of success in the rich nations was based on capitalist exploitation of the rest of the world according to Marxists and radical critics of modernization theories. This argument was supported by (Szirmai, 2005). So in order to

achieve success in all sectors of development, underdeveloped nations (such as Nigeria) needs to liberate themselves from the capitalist world economic mode of development. She needs to look inwards and produce a flexible homegrown/localized policy that can suit her developmental challenges. Developing nations are capable of achieving (even surpass) the same successes of the rich nations by learning from past experiences and adapting to new conditions, rather than hoping to follow the same paths of the rich nations because of the difference in historical periods (ibid, 2005). This opinion is well suited in the education sector of Nigeria, where successive regimes still insist on implementing neo-liberal policies on the advice of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, to the detriment of the majority of the population. Rather than striving to impress the international community on the achievement of global policies on education and development, Nigeria should rather look inward and identify the areas that are in serious need of help. The primary education sector needs to be well positioned to be able to produce competent pupils to the secondary level and the same procedure should be replicated further to the tertiary level.

Neo-liberal policies are still being retained in the provision of education despite the failures of Structural Adjustment Programme. The reason could be ascribed to the past influence of colonialism. The exploitative capitalists tendencies of the most powerful nation states in the form of imperialism and colonial or neo-colonial exploitation, seems to be continued even after they (the imperialists) physically left the territories. This argument was put forward in his constructivist arguments on the theory of uneven geographical development by (Harvey, 2006). He argues further that local comprador classes that collaborated with them, continues the process of exploiting the territories internally, with the help of their inherited access to military and political powers for the benefit of their former masters, as well as to create a good life for themselves (Ibid, 2006). This assertion clearly explains why failed neo-liberal (exploitative) policies within countries of the global south still finds its way into new administrations even in the face of democratic changes that has taken place over the past decades.

Unlike the welfare system, neo-liberalism helps create uneven development (Ibid, 2006) to the benefit of one group and the detriment of the other. Neo-liberalism is hostile to (and withdraws from) welfare provision and its role on the provision of free public education, healthcare and social welfare are diminished. The underlying aim of a neo-liberal state is to create good business climate in order to optimize the conditions for capital accumulation, not minding the adverse effects on employment or social well-being (Ibid, 2006). Cynics might argue that students study in public schools in Nigeria at a very subsidized rate (which might be contrary to the goals of neo-liberalism), but the underlying question is – what is the state of the public school system and what percentage of the children of public officers attend public schools within Nigeria? With the exclusion of the 102 special federal government colleges (Unity schools), it will be absurd to find the children of public office holders in public schools. It should be pointed out that these unity schools alone consumes about 80% of the secondary school budget each year, with the total number of secondary schools in the country numbering over 10,000 in Nigeria. This statement was supported recently by the former Minister for Education in Nigerian and current Vice president of the World Bank Dr. Oby Ezekwesili (NOBOH, 2011). In addition, Ezekwesili explained further that 23,400 of the 27,212 staff (86.6 per cent) of the Ministry of Education were engaged in these unity colleges to the detriment of the others, yet the success rate of their students in the recent West African Examination Council, Senior School Certificate Examination (WAEC, SSCE), and the 2010 Secondary School Certificate Examinations results released by the National Examination Council (NECO) was about 15% (ibid, 2011). In conclusion, despite the shortcomings of neo-liberal policies in the education and other social sectors, it still remains a very viable option in so many other sectors. Neo-liberalism if well implemented helps to boost the economy, by creating the much needed jobs that will be filled with the teeming graduates produced in various academic institutions. One major disadvantage of the welfare system is ‘debt burden’, due mainly to the over reliance on social benefits from the government. In order to avoid overdependence on social benefits, people needs jobs after graduating from training, and the private sector has always been at the fore front when it comes to job creation.

Chapter 4: Brief History of the Education in Nigeria

The concept “Education” could be ascribed different meanings, depending on the context and the particular situation it is being used. But for the purpose of this thesis, UNESCO goes beyond the literal definition by describing education as one of the fundamental human rights that is central to the realization of other developmental goals (Szirmai. 2005). And based on that assumption by UNESCO, certain functions and tasks are ascribed to education, which includes the following:

1. The promotion of economic growth and development (ibid, 2005). This implies that it is not sufficient alone to invest in economic development without the investment in human capital. There cannot be development in the education sector if all investment goes to the building of school infrastructure, without the corresponding investment on the people that will be responsible to explore those infrastructures for the purpose for which it was built. The same goes for other sectors for example there could not be engineering projects without well trained engineers and there could not be well functional hospitals without well trained doctors, nurses and other health related workers.
2. Modernization of attitudes and mentalities in society (ibid, 2005). In this case, in the current global society that we live in, a well educated person will be in a better mental position to comprehend the difference in the lifestyles that others possess and be able to tolerate their different ways of life. Such societies usually encourage the peaceful coexistence of all and sundry, with peaceful attitudes and relatively more law abiding than less educated societies. Education will help reduce the incidence of violence that is prevalent in most societies as a result of indifference and non tolerance to the rights of others. It helps people to understand where and when their right begins ends and when the right of others begins and ends as well.

3. Education contributes to the increase in developmental goals such as increased life expectancy, reduced fertility, and improved health (ibid, 2005). The contribution of education to healthy lifestyle cannot be underestimated. An educated person is well aware of the risk attached to every lifestyle he/she chooses to live and tries as much as possible to minimize the effect both to one's self and to others. Education of the girl child will lead to better choices as regards to teenage/unwanted pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections. She will be in a better position to plan and manage the home, decide how many children, when is the right time to have them and how best to raise them without diminishing her other contributions to the society.
4. Education helps to reduce the incidence of gender inequality (ibid, 2005). A society that provides education without recourse to gender discrimination will sooner or later realize that both genders can contribute equally to the development of the society. However, the women might have a slight edge when it comes to contributing to the society, due to the added responsibility of child bearing and raising.

To further buttress the point on the functions ascribed to education, Wohlgemuth, (1996) argues that one of the crucial factors for development is human resources development. Human resources development could be defined as how people develop through knowledge skills and attitudes (Ibid, 1996). Like natural resources, humans require proper education in order to tap the hidden resources in them. It should be pointed out that every individual is endowed with different talents and abilities, which can only manifest themselves through a well functional programme of education development. Just like other natural resources, human resources require well functional tools for proper exploration. It requires a lot of planning, refining and other value adding enhancements before the hidden resources in every individual. The concept human resources development according to Wohlgemuth encompasses all knowledge that influences a positive change whether as an individual or a group like – formal and informal education, capacity building and institutional development etc (Ibid, 1996). So in essence, human

resources development in the form of capacity building and institutional development as pointed out by Wohlgemuth (1996), coupled with the other benefits enumerated earlier by Szirmai (2005) are well defined functions and tasks ascribed to education that is beneficial in the achievement of other important development. Nevertheless, for these attributes to be beneficial to Nigeria as a country, she needs to put her priorities right in the area of financing, attitudinal change in the area of policy implementation and manpower training of the public education sector. She will need to borrow a leaf from the developed world in the area of supporting public education institutions, because this is the best way to reach a higher percentage of the population especially the poor and socially excluded. This should not be seen as a call to import wholesale programmes from abroad, but rather use a supermarket approach in implementing education policies that has succeeded in other countries. She has to do this by taking into consideration the socio-economic, cultural, political and even environmental peculiarities of the country. More so, the issue of relevance (Wohlgemuth, 1996) of the programmes to be implemented when juxtaposed with the goals set to be achieved should also not be left behind.

In order to avoid backwardness, Nigeria needs to position her education sector so as to achieve the above mentioned functions ascribed to education. The word backwardness could be described as the unwillingness or inability to catch up with the dynamics of a western centered capitalism. This definition was supported in the historicist/diffusionist interpretation of 'towards a theory of uneven development' (Harvey, 2005). In the same interpretation, whole people are portrayed as been incapable of shaping their own history with the exception certain countries (ibid). But as long as there were exceptions, it clearly shows that every people are capable of shaping their own histories and even influence developments elsewhere with hard work and sincerity of purpose. Nigeria in this instance stands a better chance of being included in that exception by going back to the drawing board to discover where the fault lies. The fact that Nigeria was able to make considerable progress in the area of education immediately after independence should be enough to boost her confidence and propel her to that exception list. By getting to where we were before the collapse (even without petro-dollars), the country can achieve more with the amount of oil wealth available to her today. It is a pity that Nigeria in 2011 is still striving

to achieve the millennium development goals number 2 (which is unrealizable by 2015 going by the indicators), but rather than focus on the achievement of that goal, the country should do more by including quality assessment which seems to be lacking in the programme.

In Pre Independent Nigeria, there existed the 8-6-2-3 (8 years primary, 6 years secondary, 2 years higher school certificate and 3 years University) system of education till 1954, when the colonial administrators changed it to 6-5-2-3 (6 years primary, 5 years secondary, 2 years higher school certificate and 3 years University) till their handover to Nigerians (Gusau, 2008). The National Policy on Education (NPE) document of 1977 forms the basis of the current Nigerian education system, and it has been updated from time to time with its last revision with full implementation being in 1990. Further revisions have taken place since then, but implementation is still being awaited. The National Policy on Education (NPE) document addresses a number of issues which includes girl child education, balancing the provision of education across the different regions of the country as well as the issue of quality. The revised policy of 1983 introduced the 6:3:3:4 system of education in the country. The system entails 6 years of primary, 3 years of junior secondary, 3 years of senior secondary and a minimum of 4 years of tertiary education (depending on the course of study). A revision in 2006 introduced the 9:3:4 Universal Basic Education (UBE) system in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and education for all (EFA) , by merging the primary and junior secondary education as a result of rising number of drop-outs after the basic six years primary education (Teboho, 2000). The system is meant to address that issue, but implementation is a huge factor because infrastructure in all primary schools needs to be upgraded in order to accommodate the teaching of post primary school subjects. A number of changes have already taken place in anticipation of the full implementation of the system – like the stoppage of the first school leaving certificate examination usually taken upon completion of the first six years of primary education. The stoppage caused disruptions in the special federal run government colleges (unity schools), because new students are usually selected following a special National Common Entrance Examination for those in their sixth year (graduation year) in primary school (Ibid, 2000). A recent

publication in the Daily Trust Newspapers reported that a presidential team is recommending the modification in Nigeria's 6-3-3-4 education system, to introduce a year of schooling for five-year-olds, essentially reworking the system to 1-6-3-3-4 (Daily Trust, 2011). This report (if approved by the government) will invariably halt the implementation of the 9-3-4 system, in order to avoid policy clash. It is difficult to pinpoint the direction the country is heading in terms of education policies.

The responsibility to ensure the coherence of national policy procedures and for ensuring that the regional policies operate within the parameters of national policy as adapted for local needs lies with the Federal Ministry of Education (FME), while National Council of Education coordinates education policy at the political level (Ibid, 2011). Administration is shared by the federal, state and local councils through the respective education commissions. This responsibility is carried out through various commissions established for the different education sub-sectors - National Primary Education Commission (NPEC) responsible for primary education, the National Secondary Education Commission (NSEC), the National Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education Commission (NMEC) and the National Universities Commission (NUC). There are also the National Commission for Colleges or Education (NCCE) , National Board for technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) etc (Teboho, 2000).

Examination in secondary school level are conducted by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) which coordinates examination for the Anglo-phone countries of West Africa, as well as the National Examination Council (NECO) that conducts examination for Nigeria alone. The education sector is in a deplorable state plagued with myriad of problems and available solutions that will be discussed in later chapters.

4.1: The historical development of education in Nigeria

This could be divided into different stages (Maduagwu, n.d):

4.1. I: Before Nigerian Independence in 1960 (Ibid):

- The coming of Christian and Muslim missionaries

This period is characterized by diverse views from different commentators. While some view it as the actual process of Christianization and islamization of the Nigeria society, others views this period as the stepping stone for the European and Arabic colonizers to get a foothold across Nigeria and beyond. However which ways these commentators see the situation, the process came with a mixed baggage as a result of the mixed motives behind the religious invasion such as –:

- The entrenchment of western/Islamic education across the country,
- suppressing and sometimes completely erasing of the local Nigerian religion and culture,
- Entrenchment of persistent (never ending) conflict across the society till the present day,
- creating a western/Islamic versus local dichotomy in the country.
- creating a common ground for the interaction of the hundreds of different / diverse peoples inhabiting the Nigerian territory.

- How Christianity and Islam were embraced by Nigerians

Christianity and Islam split the country into two equal halves in terms of population, but Islam has a larger chunk of the territorial land mass (accounting for about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the total land mass). The British colonial administration managed to amalgamate the northern (predominantly Moslem) territory with the southern (predominantly Christian) into what is known today as Nigeria. Christianity and Islam was embraced differently by the differently regions of the country. The southeast (predominantly Christianity) and the core north (predominantly Islam) could rightly be referred to as the core Christian and Moslem regions of the country, because they fully embraced the respective religions. While the southwest (with Christianity having an edge) and the middle belt (with Islam having an

edge) accepted both religions.

- The growth of Christian and Muslim schools

The growth of both Christian and Muslim schools in Nigeria took the form/pattern of the spread of the two religions across the regions. While the southeastern and the core north were made up of predominantly (or solely) Christian and Moslem schools, the southwestern and middle belt had a mixture of Christian and Moslem schools. But upon the attainment of independence from Britain, the trend was changed by the new independent local administration. The establishment of educational institutions seemed to be done on religious grounds, due to the fragility of the union. The government at a point in time took over the running schools hitherto run by religious organizations in order to forestall unity among the people. Students were no longer admitted to such schools as a result of their religious beliefs. The government saw the development of education as the basis for the development of the entire society, so in order not to create divisions among the people, unity schools were established across the country with the sole aim of entrenching unity in diversity. Religious schools played a very important role in the educational advancement of the country. Notable leaders of the country went through the religious schools. The schools impacted high academic and moral standards on their students (which seem to be really lacking in our schools today) and the teachers were staunch disciplinarians. Though the religious schools played very important roles in the academic and moral upbringing of their wards, there seems to be a conflict in the spiritual teachings of the various religious schools. These conflicts are both inter-religious and intra-religious. Different denominations proclaim theirs to be the true and only form of worship of God, thereby entrenching divisions not only between the Christians and Moslems, but also within the various Christian denominations and the Moslem denominations as well. This has been one of the major reasons why the government has been reluctant to handover the schools to their former religious owners, despite the intensified clamour for the return especially in recent times.

4.1. II: From 1960 till the end of the civil war in 1970 (Ibid):

This period could be described as the beginning of educational development in Nigeria that has the interest of the people as a major priority. The new indigenous administration inherited a colonial infrastructure that was established to serve the economic and political needs of the colonist. The educational sector was not spared in these policies specifically aimed at checking the activities of the nationalist movement. This was a trying period in the unity of the country. Every sector of the economy was standstill during this period of time. The civil war lasted for just three years but the devastation was so immensely as to throw the country decades backwards. Most of the early independent gains in education were almost lost, and the most important loss was trust. There was suspicion among the different nationalities and the trend has developed to a whole different level today, leading to the mismanagement of the natural resources of the country. Policy started by one administration has to be discarded by another incoming administration (especially if from a different nationality or political party), leading to policy inconsistency with the attending looting of the nation wealth. The educational sector suffered very much from this corruption and policy inconsistency because there was never enough fund left to finance infrastructure and education. This eventually lead to the eroding of standard that has cumulated into the disaster we have today in all sectors of the country (no sector is spared). The situation with education sector is more worrying because manpower base of the country relies mainly (if not solely) on it for the sustainable development of the country. The distrust created as a result of the outcome of the civil war led to the allocation of resources on the basis of territory, rather than needs of the people. Educational institutions were sited in areas that never needed them at that moment just to pacify certain nationalities, while neglecting larger population centers which needed them.

4.1. III: From 1970 till date (Ibid):

This period has seen the ups and downs in the education sector in Nigeria. The initial

purpose in this period was the restoration of normal academic activities across the nation (especially in the eastern part of the country, where there was disruption) after the civil war. While the 1960s (post- independence Nigeria) ushered in an opportunity for the transformation of the society through the development of locally responsive national and foreign policies as well as locally managed development programs, The 1970's till date envisaged quantum leap in the number of academic institutions across the country (especially in the higher education level) (Teboho, 2000). Thus, from six universities as at 1970 in Nigeria, they rose to thirteen in 1979 now we have eighty nine. The growth shows federal has 36, States 37 and private sector 45 according to National Universities Commission (NUC, 2011). The recent political changes that has ushered in democratic government since 1999 has been seen as a great opportunity for a fundamental review of policies and social programs that will help tackle the myriad of challenges being faced at different sectors, especially in the area of education in order to prepare the country to meet the challenges of a globalised world (Teboho, 2000).

New education related policies have been made recently and a number of reviews have been made on the existing ones to tame the effects of system failures in that sector. The curriculum for secondary school education has recently been reviewed, with the introduction of information and communication technology (ICT) based subjects, to enhance the learning of computer related subjects. A lot more has been going on at the secondary and tertiary level, while nothing much seems to be happening at the primary level. These changes can be presently seen at the administrative (logistics) level, like application procedures, admission, examinations and result checking that are currently possible online. But Physical changes in the government owned academic institutions are still been awaited, as there are still no computers in most public schools (with the exception of those provided by the private sector and Non Governmental Organizations), physical structures are still in their deplorable conditions and sanitary situation is still very poor, amenities like water and electricity are hard to come by. The hostels (accommodation) in most tertiary institutions are over crowded as a result of limited availability (ibid).

Chapter 5: Analyzing the Millennium Development Goals and Quality of Education

5.1: The Millennium Development Goals II

– *“Ensure that by 2015 children everywhere boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling”*. (UNITED NATIONS, MDG II)

Brief Introduction:

When it comes to the issue of academic ratings by numerous international organizations, Nigeria happens to be among the struggling countries that are always on default position in terms of low-performance. This is despite the wealth of her human and material resources. The situation could be attributed to policy inconsistencies (not necessarily policy failure) on education. Every administration abandons previous policies and inaugurates new ones, making implementation literally unachievable. With the help of programmes like millennium development goals and education for all, such shortcomings could be overcome through international policy implementation, monitoring and peer-review mechanisms. The brief review of the millennium development Goals in this thesis is actually to point out the shortcoming as regards quality. The goal number two which specifically talks about achievement of universal primary education does not mention a lot about quality. The goal seems to focus more on the quantity of pupils enrolling and completing basic education, while my main concern is the quality of education dished out in our schools. The goals are unlikely to be met by 2015 in Nigeria considering the effort being put by the government as regards funding and management. Even if the goals are met the quality of output will be far below standard when juxtaposed with those of their peers (other developing countries). Thus the achievement of quantity without quality is not healthy to the overall development of the country.

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education

In a report entitled "Towards universal primary education: investments, incentives and institutions", published in 2005 by the UN Millennium Project (which is an independent advisory body commissioned by the UN Secretary-General to propose the best strategies for meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), certain targets were set to be achieved within the stipulated period. Among these targets are as follows:

To ensure that all boys and girls complete full course of primary schooling (UN Millennium Project, 2005): This target will be impossible for Nigeria to achieve by 2015 considering the fact that huge number of children never get started in the first place. In certain parts of the country, as a result of cultural and religious peculiarities / practices, girl child education is not well encouraged even today. Certain families (especially from poor backgrounds) are made to believe that sending their children to religious schools for the sole purpose of learning religious recitations, is much better than sending them to the regular schools where religious studies are taught just as other subjects. They are meant to think by some of their religious leaders that such a practice is a task that every believer must adhere to. Though there have been efforts by the government to discourage such practice, their efforts have been hampered by the sensitive nature of the subject matter (religion). There is freedom of worship in Nigeria and the not-so well informed among them sees it as their inalienable right to practice their faith, forgetting that the future of those children is at stake.

The other targets concerns the issue of net enrolment ratio in primary education and Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach last grade of primary education (Ibid). This target can be achieved, albeit easily if the government shows sign of sincerity of purpose. Nigeria is a federation, and each federating unit is sub-divided into states, then to local governments, autonomous communities and individual villages. Even the individual villages are sub-divided into kindred and further to families. The brief details above are to show that policies can be easily be transmitted to the grassroots level if the government in

power shows some level of concern. The government run schools will have to be well funded as a sign of seriousness because this is where majority of the target group are expected to be enrolled and monitored. Just immediately after independent in 1960, most communities made contributions and built their own schools and made sure every child is enrolled, as a sign of support to the government policy of mass education. These practice lasted for a while before the reversal of fortunes in education set in, as a result of government neglect of the education sector. Thus, the facilities are partially on ground as schools are already wide spread in almost every community across the country. There is hardly any community without a school (especially in the southern part of the country), all the government of the day needs to do is to leverage on the existing infrastructure on ground with a little touch of facility upgrade, and these targets will be achieved in no time. There are local education authorities (LED) offices scattered all across the country as well. These LED's could be strengthened to serve the purpose for which they were established in the area of education policy implementation, management, monitoring and data gathering. On the target of literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds, women and men (Ibid), it is achievable depending on the time frame. The major problems that will be encountered are in the area of meeting the target for girls in Northern part of the country and for the boys in the southeastern part of the country. The issue of girl child education in the Northern part of Nigeria is very serious, while there is a growing concern for the rate of drop out among boys in the southeastern part of the country. Until the above mentioned issues are redressed, the target might be difficult to achieve in the nearest future.

According to the millennium project, ending global poverty and achieving the fundamental process of social and economic development requires better education (Ibid). To achieve the goal of universal primary education there has been rigorous set of mechanisms available to different countries depending on their peculiarities and priorities that will enable them provide access to high quality universal education to the disadvantaged and hard-to-reach groups (Ibid).

The three mechanisms that have been mapped out to achieve the goal of Universal Primary Education are - Investment, Incentives and Institutions (Ibid).

As mentioned in the introduction, the government of Nigeria seems to have neglected these basic measures when it comes to education in Nigeria. The proportion of the national budget allocated to the education section has always fallen far below UNESCO prescription. This singular shortfall of funding directly and indirectly affects the implementation of the other measures. Education is an investment that has live-long benefits, because it enhances the process of sustainable development, defeats the ill of gender inequality (especially when girl child education is encouraged) and most importantly improves the overall quality of life of the general populace. Marginalization of the female gender in most developing countries has always been blamed on religious and cultural factors, whereas the major culprit is the denial of education. This denial of education has always been the tool employed to checkmate the advancement of women. In recent past in the Southeastern part of Nigeria for example, there has never been difficulty in taking the decision of whom to sponsor to further education (especially when it involves the boy child and girl child). Then, it was a common thing to hear parents say that – ‘the woman's place is in the kitchen’. But that ill seem to have naturally corrected itself as a result of the new found ambition ravaging the entire region – ‘the quest to get rich’. This trend has resulted in the alarming rate of school dropout among the boys. Investment in education with a corresponding encouragement of the girl child education should be taken seriously, considering the contribution of women in building a healthy living. With just few years the author spent so far in Sweden, it is easy to notice that the enviable position of the country in the comity of nations in terms of the countries with the highest standard of living, is being sustained as a result of the unassailable contribution of the women. The achievement of women between 1999 till 2007 in Nigeria can not be over emphasized. the women public office holders clearly out classed their men folks during president Obasanjo's eight year administration, hence the clamour for more women in strategic positions today. The present government is actually leveraging on the achievement of the women in the immediate past, as could be seen in the new cabinet announced recently. The most strategic positions have been allocated to the women - like the ministers of aviation, petroleum, education and finance.

5.1.i: Prospects for Achieving the MDG goals 2

Going by the country statistics periodically released by the United Nations, Nigeria seems to be making huge progress some of the goals (especially goal 2).

The 2010 MDG global progress report and puts enrolment at primary schools in Nigeria at 88.8% and the primary completion rate (Percentage of children completing the last year of primary school) at between 2% - 99% (Nigeria Millennium Development Goals: Report 2010, United Nations) There is a very wide regional difference in the completion rate according to the 2010 report on Nigeria. Youth literacy rate has increased from 64% to 80% as at 2008. But the achievement of the MDG 2 will be dependent on the sustainability of the growth in enrolment (Nigeria Millennium Development Goals: Report 2010, United Nations).

Despite the progress made as at 2010, the wide regional margin is alarming, with some regions recording as low as 2% completion rate. The 2011 MDG global progress report on the other hand, places Nigeria's Primary school completion rate between 70% – 89.9% (MDG global progress report (2011), United Nations). In the 2011 reports (in contrast with 2010), the regional variation for the primary school completion rate has miraculously narrowed down from 2% - 99% to 70% - 89.9% within one year. This is an indication that while the underperforming regions has made a quantum leap from a completion rate of 2% to 70%, the best performing regions has actually dropped by as much as 9.1% within the same period. And with just approximately three years to 2015, the country is still in a dicey position to achieve the goal, except there could be much effort to make sure all the regions are carried along in the progress towards the achievement.

5.2: Quality of Education

A working paper by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) published in 2000 clearly outlines quality education to include among other things:

- Healthy, well-nourished Learners that are ready to participate and learn, and gets adequate support in learning by their families and communities (UNICEF, 2000).

Physically and psychosocially healthy children are likely to learn better (Ibid). Healthy development in the first three years of life is very important and forms the basis for successful school experience. This opinion is supported by (McCain & Mustard, 1999. cited in UNICEF, 2000).

- Safe and protective environment with adequate resources and facilities (UNICEF, 2000). Study environments according to UNICEF (2000) vary from modern well equipped buildings to open air gathering places. Researchers argue that there are inconclusive correlations (using empirical findings) between learning environment and school performance (Fuller, 1999. cited in UNICEF, 2000). However, studies carried out in India (Carron & Chau, 1996. cited in UNICEF, 2000) show that the performance of students studying in schools with well equipped buildings, availability of toilets, television sets and electricity were much better (especially in Hindi and mathematics) than those that lacked some of these facilities. Similar research in Latin America (Willms, D., 2000, cited in UNICEF, 2000) corroborates the findings in India, as it was shown that students that study in well equipped schools scored better than their peers in less equipped schools.

- A gender friendly environment (UNICEF, 2000). A study environment that is welcoming does not discriminate (especially gender wise) to all is likely to create quality learning environment (Ibid). In a research carried out in Guinea between 1989 – 1997, aimed at changing the attitudes that discourages the participation of girls from education in the country, show that there was significant improvement in the overall quality of education to all the students irrespective of gender (Sutton, 1999 cited in UNICEF, 2000). There was a quantum leap from 17% to 37% on the percentage of girl's enrollment in schools. Several reforms were carried out in order to achieve these results, ranging from creating highly

effective equity committee, research aimed at understanding the needs and priorities of communities and the inclusion of more women in the teaching and administrative positions etc (Ibid).

- Updated curricula and materials necessary for the acquisition of skills in diverse areas especially literacy, numeracy and skills necessary for life, as well as knowledge in the prevention of HIV/AIDS and other health related issues, gender and peace (UNICEF, 2000).

- Producing outcomes that incorporate knowledge, skills and attitudes which enable positive participation in society (ibid).

A mere unannounced sightseeing visit to an average public school in Western Europe and another to Sub-Saharan Africa leaves lot of conflicting stories to tell. Children trained in the different school environments will definitely have positive/negative tales to tell concerning their experiences. And the outcomes will definitely differ on both sides by a great margin. This assertion does not necessarily mean that schools in sub-Saharan Africa are substandard, but considering the fact that we live in a global village, the ability to compare global standards is just a click away. Furthermore, in a review published by the Department for International Development (DFID), it was shown that the quality of education in Nigeria's Universal Primary Education (UPE) scheme from 1976 to 1986 fell short of what it was before the introduction of the programme (DFID, 2011). Though the initial result proved positive concerning the number of children that could read and write, the planners failed to map out the need for major inputs required to achieve better quality – like better learning environment, adequate qualified teachers, equipments and books, management and the most importantly the content of the educational curriculum (Ibid). According to the report, the absence of these vital inputs means the erosion of standards in the primary education in the country (Ibid). Quality education outweighs all other MDGs and is at the centre of the problems we face in this 21st century. This opinion was supported by (DFID, 2011). Every other challenge – health, environment, poverty and

even security are more or less linked to education (Ibid). Since, education is not only a human right, but also a better way to get out of poverty, there should be a renewed international drive that focuses not only in meeting the MDG 2 (which is centered on enrolment and completion), but as well as on quality of education. (Ibid)

Another assessment clearly placed Nigeria at the top of the countries that has gone off track in their efforts to achieving the goals of the EFA 2015 (Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report, 2009). This position puts the country's out-of-school children at an estimated 8 million (the highest in the world) (Ibid). Among the reasons given for such great number of out-of-school children was major income inequality (Ibid). Despite the fact that primary education is free (in government schools), parents are still made to spend over 12% of their household income on formal or informal fees on their wards, as a result of weak governance. Families that is unable to meet up with such demand ends up withdrawing their wards from school altogether, giving rise to such huge statistics of out-of-school children (Ibid). According to the report, the problem of financing also leads to other serious problems such as:

- There are as much as 145 pupils to a classroom in some schools; ratio of students to toilet of 292 to 1 in most government run public schools; significant number of teachers lacks the minimum of three years post secondary education qualification especially in the rural areas; ratio of students to core textbooks of 2.3 to 1 and only about 25% of students able to give answers to test questions in core subjects (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2009). It should be noted that statistics from Nigeria was solely based on world Bank estimates, without any mention of inputs from national offices compare to the other countries (like Tanzania, Nepal, Ethiopia etc) which also had special mention in the report.

The issue of quality was also reviewed in the EFA GMR of 2008. According to the report, it was reported that despite the (purported) huge investment in the education sector, Nigeria is still far below international minimum standard in the area of basic educational infrastructure - like classrooms, chairs, toilets, availability of water and electricity, libraries, laboratories, school administrative offices etc (David Theobald et.al., 2007,

p.19), cited in Education for All: Global Monitoring Report, 2008). Nigeria requires over \$3. Billion for the construction of over 4,000 new primary school and over 2,000 junior secondary classrooms needed to bring the country to minimum standard. With construction expenditure hovering close to 48%, it will take around forty years to make up the deficit. This assessment was made by the world Bank (Ibid). On the issue of textbooks used in the schools, it is visibly inadequate as a result of the fact that parents bear the burden of providing learning materials to their wards in schools. In addition to this inadequacies, the quality of the respective textbooks has also been criticized for lacking in content, printing and binding as well as pedagogical content (Ibid). Just like the non attention to the issue of plagiarism, textbook piracy is a common practice in Nigeria with the authorities looking the other way despite existing laws against the practice (Ibid). On the issue of assessment, Nigeria uses the continuous assessment model in determining the progress of students in schools (ibid). This method allocates certain percentage score to different activities, while a higher percentage is reserved for final examinations. This method has been criticized for not only being dubious in terms of alignment approach but also poor and non-existence in terms of moderation (ibid). Reports of findings on the area of assessment performance shows that students performs well below average on the area of numeracy, literacy and lifeskills (ibid). The mean score for numeracy was 34.74% for primary 4 pupils and 35.73% for primary 6 pupils (ibid). Mean score for literacy was 35.05% for primary 4 and 41.53% for primary 6, while those of lifeskills was 43.81% for primary 4 and 25.42% for primary 6 (ibid). The scores varies for different categories of pupils. Boys, urban with non-government schools and those with pre primary education scored comparatively better, while girls, rural and those without pre primary education scored less (ibid).

5.2.i: How Quality of education impacts quality of life.

While it might be easy to determine how education impacts quality of life, it will be extremely difficult to determine how quality education impacts quality of life. This

assertion emanates from the issue of measuring quality of education across board. Comparing quality in schooling is an elusive concept, as the content of it is determined by how we choose to define the outcomes. This opinion was supported by (Christopher, 2005). However, the assumption above does not in anyway diminish the fact that quality education clearly affects quality of life. Higher input into education in the form of adequate financing, better infrastructure and management consequently leads to better output.

To demonstrate how quality of education affects quality of life, a research was carried out by group of researchers (Zaid and Popoola, 2010) in South west Nigeria concerning the quality of life of the rural dwellers in Ekiti state, Nigeria. In that research, the term quality of life was given both subjective and objective meaning (ibid). According to the researchers, the concept "Quality of Life" means a whole lots of things depending on the status, residence and level of education etc (ibid). While it means to some higher salary, extended holidays period, good and satisfying work lives, it means to others good health and long life, healthy relationship, care and support of the local community and access to good education (ibid). Adejumbi and Odumosu (1998) defined Quality of Life literarily as values. The subjective meaning focuses mainly on pleasure as a measure of quality of life, while the objective uses other indicators like access to quality education, quality healthcare, adequate housing, enough food and economic security (Zaid and Popoola, 2010). In this research, the focus will be on the objective meaning of the concept "Quality of Life", because it better captures the meaning that could be ascribed to the status of the population attending government run schools in Nigeria. This will lay credence to the fact that quality of education affects quality of life at different interceptions - economic, health, social, political etc. The interview carried out during and after the research suggest to buttress the point that with access to education among other things, the lives of rural women in Ekiti State will be much better than they are today (ibid). Though the research was centered on the role of information, it was discovered that there were actually lots of information available to rural women on how to improve the quality of their lives, but as a result of factors like information packaging, language of dissemination and most importantly high illiteracy rate among the rural dwellers they were unable to access these baskets of information (ibid).

5.2.ii: Analysis of Data

Official statistics from Nigeria and other global bodies paints a grim picture of the quality of education and quality of life in the country. In the publication of the (Nigeria Social Statistics, 2009) , the data relating to the percentage of students with at least 5 credits including English and Mathematics (considered pass for further studies in the university in Nigeria) as reported by the (West African examination Council, May/June 2003-2008 cited in Nigeria Social Statistics, 2009) shows the following:-

Figure 5.2.ii.a: West African examination Council, May/June 2003-2008 cited in Nigeria Social Statistics, 2009

National average 2003 - 19.26%

Regional variation - from 1.19% - 46.74%

National average 2004 - 18.26%

Regional variation - from 1.53% - 40.29%

National average 2005 - 18.68%

Regional variation - from 1.91% - 47.38%

National average 2006 - 9.32%

Regional variation - from 0.97% - 52.09%

National average 2007 - 7.69%

Regional variation - from 0.61% - 17.97%

National average 2008 – 9.29%
Regional variation - from 0.98% -
18.30%

(National Bureau of Statistics: “Social Statistics of Nigeria” 2009, Federal Republic of Nigeria)

The education data was among other detailed information that cuts across different sectors. This is a welcome development, considering the fact that official data are rarely published. Data relating to the amount spent on various sectors for example, are rarely published as a result of an outdated law - official secrets act. Though a freedom of information law was recently passed, it is still difficult to obtain certain information as a result of bureaucracy. In another publication by (National Literacy Survey, 2010), close to 3 million children aged 6 – 14 years had never attended any school, representing 8.1 per cent of population of children in that age group (ibid). Also about a million children aged 6 – 14 years dropped out of school representing 3.2 percent of population of children in that age group that ever attended school (ibid).

NATIONAL SUMMARY OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STATISTICS 2004-2008.

In continuation of the statistics published by (2010 National Literacy Survey), the Primary school Enrolment from 2004 and 2008 stands as follows:-

Figure 5.2.ii.b: Primary school Enrolment from 2004 and 2008

2004 – 21,395,510
2005 – 22,115,432
2006 – 23,017,124
2007 – 21,632,070
2008 – 21,294,517

(National Literacy Survey, 2010)

This data shows continuous decrease in the number of enrolled pupils from 2004 – 2006, with an improvement in 2007 and a further drop in 2008. For the attainment of the MDG goals 2, there has to be consistent growth in enrolment at the primary level.

United Nations Statistics

Figure 5.2.ii.c: Primary education enrolment Nigeria

2007
female - 9948567
All genders - 21632070
2006
female - 10369793
All genders - 22861884

Source: UIS Data Centre | UNESCO Institute for Statistics [online]: accessed December 10, 2011.

There is a difference between the 2006 data from the national database and that of the United Nations database. The National data for 2006 was– 23,017,124, while data from the United Nations database was 2006 – 22861884.

Figure 5.2.ii.d: Total net enrolment ratio in primary education, both sexes/ Nigeria

2007 - 62.8
2006 - 67.7

Source: Millennium Development Goals Database | United Nations Statistics Division [online]: accessed December 10, 2011.

**Figure 5.2.ii.e: NATIONAL SUMMARY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STATISTICS:
Secondary school Enrolment 2004-2008**

2004 – 6,279,462
2005 – 6,397,343
2006 – 6,536,038
2007 – 6,068,160
2008 – 6,625,943

(National Literacy Survey, 2010)

This data shows continuous increase in student enrolment from 2004 – 2006, with a decrease in 2007 and a further increase in 2008.

Figure 5.2.ii.f: Youth Literacy Rates

- National youth literacy rate in English Language stood at 76.3%
- Male = 81.0
- Female = 71.4
- National youth literacy rate in any language stood at 85.6%
- Male = 89.4
- Female = 81.6

(National Literacy Survey, 2010)

Figure 5.2.ii.g: Adult Literacy Rates

- National adult literacy rate in English Language stood at 57.9%
- Male = 65.1
- Female = 50.6
- National adult literacy rate in any language stood at 71.6%
- Male = 79.3
- Female = 63.7

(National Literacy Survey, 2010)

A regional breakdown of the literacy rate shows that while some regions has over 90%, there are still local areas where the rate is as low as 2%.

Figure 5.2.ii.h: Out of school children by gender (primary school age group) Nigeria

2007
Female – 4626218
Male - 4023402
All genders - 8649620

Source: UIS Data Centre | UNESCO Institute for Statistics [online]: accessed December 10, 2011.

Statistics from the United Nations Statistics Division shows that Nigeria still has one of the highest numbers of out of school children, with approximately eight million children out of School as at 2007.

Figure 5.2.ii.i: Human Development Indicators 2011

Health – Life expectancy at birth 51.9
Income – GNI per capital income PPP (2005 International \$) 2,069
UNDP Human Development Index - 0.459
Nigeria is ranked at number 156 out of the 187 countries surveyed.
The average for sub Saharan Africa is 0.463.
This shows that Nigeria is below the average for sub-Saharan Africa index for 2011.

(United Nations Development Programme, 2011)

The report surveys three basic dimensions of human development: Health, Education and income.

Figure 5.2.ii.j: Mortality rate, under – 5 (per 1,000) / Nigeria

2007 -- 188.8
2008 -- 191.4

Source: World Development Indicators 2009 | The World Bank [online]: accessed December 10, 2011.

Figure 5.2.ii.k: Life expectancy at birth / Nigeria: UNPD_World Population Prospects_2006 (International estimate) / 2000-2005

Female - 47 Years
Male - 46 Years

Source: Gender Info | United Nations Statistics Division [online]: accessed December 10, 2011.

N:B - Recently published figure: Life expectancy at birth 51.9 (Human Development Index 2011/Nigeria).

Figure 5.2.ii.l: Maternal mortality ratio (MMR) / Nigeria

Nigeria	Total	2008	UN_WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and the World Bank	Deaths per 100,000 live births	840 ¹
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Source: The State of the World's Children | United Nations Children's Fund [online]: accessed December 10, 2011.

Method of analysis

The respective data are selected and analyzed randomly. In order to arrive at a verdict, the data from the national office of statistics is compared with that of external bodies. In the whole, there seem to be coordination between statistics from the national office and the external bodies. The selection of the above statistics is strictly to show the position of Nigeria as regards education quality and quality of life. The combination of the MDG reports, national statistics and the numerous UN data shows some similarities. These statistics shows that Nigeria as a country is making giant strides on the area of education and quality of life. However much still needs to be done in order to get the country to the enviable global standard. While the nation is making progress on the issue of primary school enrolment and gender equality in schools, she is still ranked below the sub-Sahara Africa standard going by the recent human development report. In addition, statistics for life expectancy at birth, under-five mortality and maternal mortality ratio are still nothing to cheer about. The above statistics shows Nigeria as a country with low human development in terms of education, health and income. This also supports the argument that there is interplay between quality of education and quality of life, as the data on shown on education mirrors those of quality of life. To further buttress the argument centered on quality of education and quality of life, UNICEF NIGERIA states that there are enormous benefits derived from education (especially girls education) (UNICEF NIGERIA, 2007). Education does not only empower the girls but it is the best investment for the development of any country, but also helps the girls develop the needed life-skills to participate actively and effectively in the society, boost their self confidence and avoid sexual exploitation, making it possible to protect themselves against the ravaging scourge of HIV/AIDS (UNICEF NIGERIA, 2007).

Chapter 6

6.1: The major factors affecting the development of the educational sector in Nigeria and the possible solutions.

Despite the dismal performance of the education sector till date, the government has strived to make progress in several ways. This argument was supported by David Theobald, Abdurrahman Umar, Sarah Ocheke, Kayode Sanni (2007). The numerous draft policies commissioned by successive administrations is a testimony to that assertion, and in order to achieve six major goals of the EFA initiative, the Nigerian government laid solid foundations. This is according to the country profile commissioned for EFA (ibid).

Among these goals include the;

- Free and compulsory tuition for the basic nine years of primary and junior secondary education (ibid) ;
- Stronger role of government in the area of provision of better infrastructure, monitoring and administration and addressing the problem of teacher shortages (ibid);
- More monetary allocation to the education sector (ibid);
- Transparency and accountability in development of policy and monitoring of infrastructural effectiveness (ibid);
- Improved data collection, monitoring and reporting (ibid).

These goals were set to be achieved by the three tiers of government (federal, state and local councils) in conjunction with international partners like the DFID and the World Bank (ibid). The policy framework was so drafted with lots of hope for the revival of the education sector in Nigeria, in the face of collapsed standard. But till the present day there has not been any visible changes in the area of public educational institutions because no well-to-do family considers sending their wards to any of them any more (with the exception of a few selected schools in the primary and secondary). The public higher institutions are still relevant more as a result of limited access than for their academic

quality. This could be as a result of the one major problem plaguing the entire country - corruption. This problem seem to manifest in different forms prominent among them - policy inconsistency. It is worthy to note that since the year 2000 when these EFA goals foundations were laid, the country has had three different administrations, with each of them abandoning the implementation of the policies of the successor and proposing new ones for political reasons. These factors will be indepthly treated in the preceeding paragraphs. This particular problem has been the major cause of the collapse of the educational as a result of the mere neglect of the implementation of numerous goal oriented policies commisioned over the years by different administrations.

6.2: Identified problems

The education sector in Nigeria is jointly provided at various levels by both the three tiers of government (federal, state and local councils) according to the constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria (ibid, p3). However, in this research, the term government will appear more often and it literarily refers to any of the three tiers. Though inadequate funding has been mentioned repeatedly in the preceeding chapters of this thesis, there are other major factors affecting the development of education in Nigeria. Funds per se is not such a problem in Nigeria as the country happens to be endowed with ernomous oil wealth which earns her high revenue. Among the major factors hampering the development of the education sector are:

6.2.i: Corruption: Corruption is the misuse of public power for individual gains (Transparency International corruption perceptions index, 2011). Nigeria is still ranked as one of the most corrupt countries in the world going by statistics from (ibid). In the 2011 corruption perceptions index, Nigeria is placed at number 143, with an index of 2.4/10, out of the 183 countries measured (ibid). The effects of corruption in Nigeria is far fetched as it manifest visibly in all sectors of the economy (with education as the major culprit).

6.2.ii: Policy inconsistency: Another major factor affection the education sector in Nigeria is policy inconsistency. In a recent article by Muhammad Aja, published in Nigriaplus (an online news publisher), the current minister for education, Professor

Ruquayyatu Rufa'i, was reported as confirming inconsistencies in Nigeria's educational policies as responsible for destabilizing the education system in Nigeria (Muhammad Aja, 2011). This is just one of the numerous comments made by different critics on the issue of policy inconsistency in the Nigerian education system, but coming from a serving minister of education clearly shows the depth of the problem. Every successive administration jettisons the policies of the past administration which are already in progress, thereby allocating new funds for the implementation of fresh policies. This factor has made almost every Nigerian government-managed academic institution look like an abandoned project. There are incomplete construction projects littered across the institutions in the country. As a result, students in Nigerian public schools study the hard way, when compared to what obtains in the developed world and even in other developing countries.

6.2.iii: Non-existence / inadequate infrastructure: A visit to even the best run government owned educational institutions in Nigeria will reveal the rot in the sector (infrastructure wise). Majority of government-run schools in Nigeria lacks basic amenities like - running water, constant electricity supply, well equipped laboratories and libraries and to cap it up good sanitary condition conducive for learning (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2009). It is a common sight in parts of the country (especially in the rural areas) to see pupils learning under the trees in the open fields as a result of inadequate classrooms and chairs.

6.2.iv: Inadequate and Poorly trained academic staff: It might be difficult to believe considering the exploit of Nigerian academicians in the United Kingdom, United States of America and other countries across the globe, but the reality on ground in Nigeria is very pathetic. Most schools (especially in the rural areas) lack teachers in relevant science subjects. It is common to find university, politechnic and college of education lecturers with basic bachelors degree as their highest level of qualification across the country. Among these lectures are those employed without any form of teaching experience even in high schools, making them unqualified for the task they handle. The quality of graduates these teachers turn out each year can only be imagined.

Figure 6.2.iv: QUALITY OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF TEACHERS.

National Average 2005 – 59%
Regional variation – from 24% - 82%
National Average 2006 – 58%
Regional variation – from 22% - 90%

(National Bureau of Statistics, 2010).

6.2.v: Poor remuneration of workers: Academic and non academic staff in most public educational institutions are paid wages that cannot meet their basic necessities. In a research (Adelabu, 2005) it was shown that average monthly pay for government school teachers ranges from N9404 (Naira) to N23129 (Naira), depending on qualification (Adelabu, 2005, cited in DFID, 2005). In current dollar equivalent, this amount ranges from US\$58 – US\$143 per month. With the steady rise in the cost of essential commodities, one wonders how an average teacher could survive on such a paltry sum. These teachers are supposed to rent an apartment, send their children to school, pay medical bills and make all other sundry expenses from their salaries. This is because all those services are not paid for by the government. This particular factor has led to the entrenchment of corrupt practices within the sector, as the academic staff (teachers) now engage in extra curricular activities to enable them earn more to supplement their inadequate wages (Wohlgemuth, 1996). Some of the activities are carried out with the consent of the school authorities (especially those done within the school premises), while others are done without the permission of the school authority. These activities range from organising extramural classes for students that can afford the exorbitant fees, preparing food for sale within the school premises, imposition of all kinds of fees to the students (usually comes with penalties) and engaging in other forms of commercial ventures outside the school premises etc. These activities constitute professional misconduct and according to

Adelabu, they are usually not reported as a result of weak teacher management and inadequate mechanism for the punishment of such conducts (DFID, 2005).

The non academic staff involved in administering the day - to - day activities of the various schools are not left out in this situation. Among the illegal money spinning ventures engaged into by these set of staff is admission racketeering. Getting admission into any of the special secondary schools and higher institutions in Nigeria is an elusive venture to most people. This problem has given rise to racketeers that collect huge sums of money from thousands of applicants in order to secure them admission (with the connivance of the admission officers in various schools). The fees involved ranges from a few hundreds of Dollars to thousands of dollars per candidate, depending on the particular school and course of study. The process sometimes begins even before the admission examinations are written and continues till the admission is secured, while certain arrangements continues till the students graduates from the respective schools. In a reported case (published in The Nation Newspapers), University authorities of the state University of Ado Ekiti dismissed about 500 students from the Business Administration department in 2010 for admission racketeering (Nation, March, 2010). Upon investigation it was discovered that some top lecturers were involved in the admission racket (ibid). In a recent publication in the Vanguard May 2011, Aribiyi reported that Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) (the body responsible for the conduct of examination and admission into tertiary institutions) has sacked six of their staff for admission examination racketeering in (Aribiyi, 2011 reported in Vanguard May, 2011).

6.2.vi: Use of quota system for admission rather than merit: One major problem that is sticking to the development of education in Nigeria like a cancer, is the use of quota system for admission rather than merit. For the purpose of admission into tertiary institutions, states are classified into different categories - Educationally developed states and Educationally less developed states. Among the 36 states in Nigeria, only 12 of them are classified as being educationally developed when it comes to admission to the higher

institutions. How the quota system plays out - The quota system is meant to address the imbalance (as the government calls it) in the educational development and give access to admission to every applicant irrespective of the location of the institution. The criteria gives access to applicants based on their belonging to the following categories:

1. Merit - Denotes the number of students that get admission on the basis of academic excellence
2. Locality - Denotes the number of students that get admission on the basis of either being indigenes of the locality where the institution is located, as well as by government classification.
3. Educationally less developed states (ELDS)

Rather than give access, this criteria limits access to certain applicants to higher institutions in Nigeria. This argument was supported in a review published by (Ukertor, 2010). Only applicants from the Educationally less developed states have better opportunities of gaining admission to higher institutions. This criteria does not take into consideration that children living in a particular area with equal access to education from pre-school till high school level, needs to be given the same access to admission into higher institutions, without recourse to ethnicity or state of origin. The admission policy by the Federal government discourages a whole lot of the best and brightest students from furthering their education after continuous trials to gain admission, thereby negatively impacting the development of education in Nigeria.

6.3: Solutions

Having access to quality education gives an individual the capacity to development and the responsibility for providing that access should be the responsibility of every nation. This does not mean that the government should be the sole provider of quality access to education, but the framework for devolving the provision of quality education should be

the major priority of government. In order to raise the human resources capabilities of the general populace (Wolgemuth, 1996) and give them the ability to raise their quality of life, proper attention should be given to the education sector. This attention should not be limited to financing alone. Wolgemuth (1996) - in his article – “a perspective for the future of africa - competence building in focus”, enumerated certain criteria that needs to be put in place in order to achieve sustainable development especially in the educational sector. These criteria includes:

6.3.i: Matching quality with quantity in the educational sector (ibid). In most of the declarations on education signed by majority of the countries of the world (especially those geared towards the developing nations), the focus has always been on quantity. the major concern seems to be on the number of school age children enrolled in schools, with little or no mention of the quality of education these children will receive. In order to shift focus from quantity alone and balance it with quality, teachers need to be paid regularly and the income should be sufficient for them to sustain a living (ibid). This will dissuade the teachers from engaging in other activities distracting them from concentrating on their major task (which is adequate teaching) (ibid).

6.3.ii: Convenient learning environment and access to educational materials (ibid). In order to achieve quality in education the above mentioned issues has to be properly put in place. a casual visit to over 80% of government run primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in Nigeria will actually tell a different story. It will be very obvious that such institutions will be far from delivering quality at the end of a learning period. The very few government owned schools spared of the neglect are those with high standing old boys/girls (a common terminology in nigeria), most especially the very few established and administered by the colonial administration, and has produced the crop of leaders in charge of the country today. Admission into these schools are for the “who is who's” in the society and the number of students in such schools are infinitesimal when compared to the number of school age children. The government seems to have washed her hands off the public school system by licencing numerous private schools to fill the relatively quality vacuum that are obviously lacking in the government run schools. the licencing cuts across primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. These are private businesses

which are sadly established for profit making, and caters for the educational needs of the privileged in the society. In the eastern part of the country (with a considerable higher level of education), secondary school students still take their own chairs to school. As bizarre as this may sound, it is a common practice. Upon admission, every student has to make provision for his/her own chair, table and locker, and must transport it to the school at the beginning of every term, take it home during holidays and return it to the school when classes resumes. Even in the so called few privileged secondary schools run by the government, among those offering boarding facilities, the students upon admission must make provision for their mattresses, beddings and utensils.

6.3.iii: Another important issue is that dealing with relevance of education (Ibid, 1996). In Nigeria, the essence of education (to majority of the students) is to pass an exam. the syllabus or curricula is actually designed to capture both the theoretical and practical areas of learning, but due to the unavailability of facilities for practical teachings (especially in government owned schools), the only thing left to teach is theories. Before the year 2000, most computer science graduates of some of our universities obtains their degree certificates with minimal contact with a computer. In extreme cases some of them graduate without touching a computer at all. It is very common then to meet with computer science graduates who are well equipped with theoretical knowledge of all the components of a computer, but at the same time not being able to switch on/off a computer when they come across one. The same scenario plays out in other science related areas like chemistry, physics and biology. The mention of the university level education should be underlined, because the situation in the primary and secondary schools is nothing to write home about - because laboratories are practically non existent in majority of the government run schools. The subjects taught in schools most of the times does not reflect the competence and abilities of the students, thereby making it difficult or impossible for majority of them to cope with the world outside school. The issue of quest for further education at the university level is a major issue that requires urgent attention. The aspiration of acquiring university certificate at all costs has brought life to a standstill to most people in Nigeria. Most people after graduating from high school, abandon their natural given talents, competencies and abilities to pursue programmes that are totally irrelevant in their course of survival in the harsh Nigerian environment. The very few

privileged ones actually go back to the non formal training centers for retraining after acquiring a degree in a university, because they are sometimes simply unemployable with the degrees they parade. It is very common to meet with university graduates that cannot write simple job application letters. Others cannot explain the relationship of their degree certificates to the job they intend to apply.

6.3.iv: The need for vocational education should be seriously considered in order salvage the damage already caused by the quest for university education. Vocational training arms the individual with the necessary skills required to survive in both the formal and informal economic environment in Nigeria. Consultations should be made with countries like Sweden or Germany where there have been recorded successes in the area of vocational training. The criteria for further education in Nigeria is credit passes in five high school subjects, so this makes the live of every student to revolve around getting five credit passes, instead of striving to be equipped with relevant technical knowledge needed for employment.

6.3.v: Alternative forms of education: The need to encourage alternative education will greatly improve the performance of a considerably larger chunk of the population. There are well established informal forms of training already in existence across the country which requires well defined government assistance. There is the traditional retail trade apprenticeship scheme practiced by the people of the southeastern Nigeria. This scheme became more entrenched in that part of the society after the civil war as a result of the great loss they incurred during the war. In order to ameliorate the hardship and catastrophe brought about by the war, the age-old practice popularly called “boyboy” became the saviour of the region at that period. In this informal scheme, the master (usually a well established trader) solicits the help of a young male with the consent of his family for a fixed term, after which he graduates and begins his own business. The number of years are dependent on both by the line of trade in which the master is engaged as well as the age of the boy. Some trades take a shorter time to learn while others are longer, but is usually between five to ten years depending on the trade. The agreement involves complete training, because the boy has to live with the master just like his parent for the whole period of apprenticeship. There are also the traditional cattle rearing nomads concentrated in the

northern part of the country. These people account for most (if not all) the beef consumed within the country. But as nomads they are meant to move from place to place in search of good pastures for their cattles. Though, government has established a lot of nomadic schools, but like other government run schools there has not been adequate attention given to enable it achieve the intended goals.

Important mention should be made of farmers all across nigeria. Agriculture happens to be the largest employer of labour in the country, and majority are into subsistence farming with the use of crude implements. Agriculture requires considerable amount of physical labour because modern machineries are only available to a minute number of farmers due to the cost. There is the need need to encourage graduates of Agricultural studies from several higher institutions to engage in farming, rather than looking for jobs in the banks. The government could provide incentives to enable these graduates establish ther own farms.

The informal transport sector is another sector that cannot be ignore because there does not exist reliable government run transportation system in Nigeria. the populace relies on the individual transporters for their daily commuting to and from work, as well as for interstate and international travel. Transportation is not only capital intensive but also requires safety which is really lacking across the country. It is very easy to procure a driving licence even before learning to drive in nigeria, while learning to drive for commercial prupose is actually done on trial and error basis hence the extremely high rate of fatal accidents across the country.

The role of the government in the above mentioned informal sectors (and more) is to design a framework for the formal training of those involved and also look into the clamour for the presentation of special certificates to those under the retail trade apprenticeship scheme as a form of recognised training. This can be achieved by making sure the masters and boys enter into formal (written) agreement before the commencement of the apprenticeship scheme as well as monitoring the progress of the scheme. This recognition could also be extended to several other informal apprenticeship schemes - like those involved in auto mechanic, dress making, hairdressing and architecture etc. It should be noted that the people involved in these informal sector abandon formal

education especially at the primary level, in order to engage in such training. Though a small proportion attend secondary schools. A scheme was introduced some years ago by the government to give those in the scheme formal education on a part time basis (during their lunch breaks) , but the implementation has not been very effective. Those involved in the transport sector needs government support to get proper training before they are licenced to go into operation in order to reduce the rate of accidents on our roads. Those in the farming sector will increase their output with proper implementation of agricultural extension services that will train them on how to apply modern farming methods for better yields.

Chapter7: Conclusion

“The bottom line

Nigeria is making real progress. Whilst no goal is certain to be achieved, there is good news on each. If the supportive environment continues to improve, as it has over the last ten years, the nation has a real chance of achieving the MDGs.”

(NIGERIA MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS) REPORT 2010)

The research above was aimed at studying the relation between the problems in achieving of the Millennium Development Goals and in particular the one relating to education for all (MDG 2) and its effect on quality of life in Nigeria. This particular area has not been looked into carefully in previous research. My aim is thus to contribute to the research on this particular issue. Previous research mainly discusses the effects of SAPs and other economic programmes on the developments in education. Here I have tried to add other parameters to understand the reasons for the problems in achieving the objectives within the sector.

The primary goals set-out in this research were successfully reached. The first main research question of what effect the neglect of public educational institutions have on achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG 2) by 2015 was answered using the respective data provided. Despite the inconsistency between the 2006 data from National Literacy Survey (2010) on Primary school Enrolment and that of UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Centre on Primary education enrolment for Nigeria, the data for the other years presented in the analysis corresponds with each other. Coupled with the report by EFA (2009), that there are 8 million children still out of school, and data from United Nations “MDG global progress report”, the overall interpretation of these data shows that the possibility of Nigeria meeting the MDG2 target in 2015 is presently very remote.

Concerning the answer to the second main question of what effect the neglect of public education could have on the quality of life of the majority of the populace which relies on the public school system, the various data and research findings analyzed in the thesis

proved adequate. The data from the National Bureau of Statistics on the learning achievement outcomes as shown by the results of national examinations and quality of primary school teacher, as well as the problem of inadequate salaries and incentives of teachers and other well-educated staff (Wohlgemuth (1996) corroborated by (Adelabu, 2005) is an indication that the quality of education needs a lot of improvement. When juxtaposed with the data on health indicators presented in this research, it clearly show that the quality of education correspond with the poor quality of health, as a result looks conclusive when viewed from such a narrow gauge. However, considering the fact that there could be a million other reasons that could influence the health of a people in a given society (apart from quality of education) renders the finding inconclusive.

Analyzing the sub questions allowed for a more holistic understanding of the main research problems, and thus was instrumental to reaching a logical conclusion. . The first question dealt with how application of neo-liberal theory in form of SAP affects the quality of education in Nigeria. The study concludes that implementation of neo-liberal policies is not suitable to the provision of education in a developing country like Nigeria. The other sub question relates to the discourse on indicators for quality education and how it affects quality of life based on the statistics presented in the thesis. There is a correlation between the quality of education and quality of health. It should be noted that this research focused solely on the indicators of quality education as it affects quality of life, without looking into others factors. These other factors need to be looked into in future research. The thesis also outlined problems inhibiting the achievement of MDG2 and also proposed various solutions. It should be noted that there might be other problems militating against the development of the education sector as well as other approaches to solving the problems. These other problems and solutions need to be uncovered in future research.

The media in Nigeria is awash with news of the problems with the education sector and there are so many commentators on the same issue (including public office holders). However most of these reports rarely link their comments to any published data. My main contribution to this topical issue of education in Nigeria is to show how these numerous commentaries corroborate published (official) reports.

7.i: Further research

Based on the conclusions reached on this study, there needs to be further research done firstly on the link between quality of education and quality of health, to ascertain the level of effects the two phenomena could have on each other. Furthermore, the issues raised in this research (especially the problems and solutions) need separate in-depth research, due to the effects they may have on the achievement of the MDG2 as well as the quality of education and life. Finally, an important note to take when doing further research on the issues that are raised in this thesis, is to treat the different levels of education (primary, secondary and tertiary) individually for better results.

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