EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN A BLIGHTED NATION

BY

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Abstract The paper examined the problems and

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prospects of education as a tool of sustainable development in a blighted nation. A blighted nation is a country facing significant challenges such as, poverty, political instability or conflict, kidnapping, economic crises or poverty, environmental degradation or national disaster, social inequality or injustice, and poor healthcare eradication or education. The paper reveals that, education can be used to play a great and paramount role in the development of a nation as it serves as a major catalyst for laying solid foundation for a strong and virile nation. The paper points out that to overcome adversity and creates more virile and sustainable knowledge, skills, and values which can stamp out decay, decline and suffering in a nation. Our knowledge and skills should embrace direction to empower individual, to become active contribution to the sustainable development in view. The study adopts a theoretical explanation for the organization of thought in its approach. The paper recommends that education must foster on improved innovations, entrepreneurship, social justice and preservation of cultural heritage that can bring sustainable development.

Keywords:
Sustainable development, Knowledge, Values, Blighted nation, and Education.

Introduction

Education has always been an instrument for individual, society, national survival and for sustainable development. On this, *the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda now includes addressing climate change in addition to addressing extreme poverty and fighting injustices, and inequalities… significant worldwide challenges include the complex nature of poverty and enduring disparities both within and between nation (Alvaredo, Chancel & Piketty, Suez & Zucman 2017)*. This is based on the fact that it is an instrument/institution setup and by the society for its own perpetuation and continuity. Education assists in the generation of knowledge, skills, social values, competences and techniques that are significant in improving the productivity, effectiveness and efficiency of individuals to enable them to participate in different sectors of development. Oyewole (2010) states that *Nigeria as a nation cannot avoid to toy with the education of her citizenry because, the wealth of a nation is a function of availability human resources and not the abundance of nation resources*. Hence, sustainable development ensures that development meets the needs of the present without compounding the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Community on Environmental and Development 1987).

The above depicts that the principle of knowledge, values and skills that can breed the development into all aspects of education and learning is essential for national development. This is because there is a strong and powerful link or connection between education and the degree of development of any nation, view from the social, economic, political, psychological and technological prospective or points of view. If any

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nation must perpetuate the principle of sustainable development through education, it must inculcates into its policy, the provision of the suitable resources, and the wherewithal to carry out the assigned functions, when and how such resources should be annexed, this is to solidified the quality education that enhances the sustainable development as an end in view. Awe (2011) contends that *education for sustainable development (ESD) is a type of education that tries to empower the people in order to assume responsibility for enacting a sustainable future.*

One can posits that sustainable development empowers not just individual development or environmental conservation, but national, social justice, economic, physical, physiological and cultural preservation of the generality of a nation. The implication of this is that education and the wellbeing of individual citizen and the general development that breed sustainable development are inextricably linked in all aspects. Mckeaon (2002) therefore submitted that *education raises the economic state of family, it improves life conditions, lower infant mortality and improve the education attainment of the next generation thereby raising the next generation chances for economics and social wellbeing.*

One can claims that education serves as gods of libration of the people and perpetuation of the free and non-explicable society where human beings can realize their potentials in all aspects. Education for sustainable development has powerful link with libration and refine of mind for freedom in order to foster accelerated development and growth of such nation. By prioritizing education for sustainable development, in a blighted nation, one is laying foundations for a brighter and more resilient future. In line with our philosophical foundation, if our system of education is based on certain philosophical assumptions to be justified in term of the usefulness of its practices, then our educational system have failed in that objectives in which they are based have not been achieved as evidenced in the occurrences of various cases such as kidnapping, poverty, economic downtown, inflation and skyrockets prices of goods and food, something might have gone wrong somewhere either in term of the internal cohesion or maybe modes of implementation or there is a missing link within the stipulated objective. What then is the implementation procedures that are needed to yield the viable sustainable development in view? It is of our opinion in this paper that a functional universal education with emphasis on inculcation of knowledge, right attitudes, values and skills will go a long a way in solving the problem in reconstruction of people socially, economically, politically, psychologically to breed sustainable development in views. In order to effectively navigate the pathway of sustainable development on the breadth and depth of the challenges, that hinders the development, and see how education can be used as an instrument to breed sustainable development, all the above values of knowledge should be adequately inculcated. It is against this backdrop that this paper examines the known knowledge, values and skills to be transmitted through education for sustainable development in a blighted nation.

Education for Sustainable Development: Rosy Promise of a Greater Tomorrow in a Blighted Nation

Education for sustainable development aims at addressing the present and future social, economic, philosophical, and environmental challenges for proper growth of a nation. *Education for sustainable development must work in line with the National Philosophy of Education. Education has to be tailored towards the philosophy of self-realization, better human relationship*

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and individual and national efficiency, effective citizenship, national consciousness, national unity as we as towards social cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress, (NTI. 2018). This is based on the fact that man acquires knowledge everyday for the purpose of reformation of individual and the society to breed sustainable development. One may opines that such concepts of knowledge should contain the followings or stages as shown below:

i. certain kinds of experience/values which would enrich the people's mind, life and leads to improvement or enjoyments of life and for the attainments of sustainable development.
ii. certain kinds of knowledge/skills which would helps or assists individual to understand the world and participate effectively within it for rapid sustainable development.
iii. the characters/attitudes which can stimulates people to conform and develop into a good citizen or member of the society, and which can breeds rapid promotion of human relations for sustainable development.

One can easily affirm from above that the facilitators of development can be categorized as:

i. value education for sustainable development
ii. current knowledge and skills for sustainable development
iii. good attitudes, characters and refined mind for sustainable development

Knowledge/Skills for Sustainable Development in a Blighted Nation

Education as scientifically practice implants knowledge, skills and experience through teaching and learning for sustainable development. The intellects help in the understanding of concepts/issues regardless of its kinds, while choice is seen as an activity of man utilizing the power of the intellect and the will. All are preludes to actions of man for the betterment of the societies of human beings. The process of teaching and learning for sustainable development may be possible because the knowing power of individual learners and the teacher or nature as teacher, vitally reacts to the impression received and entertained it in consciousness that we have the intentional union which is the art of knowing. As a rejoinder, one can asserts that knowledge can be regarded as familiarity with someone or something in relative to individual mind. In the process of familiarization, experiences or problems and progress are used in the reading of meaning to every idea collected through the senses, to plan for the better programmes of sustainable development in view, as the mind interprets it to be. Stanley (2002) states that *knowledge involves complex cognitive process, perception, communication, association and reasoning... knowledge is related to the capacity of acknowledgment in human beings.*

One can comments that; in the process of planning for sustainable development using education as tools, the essence of the knowledge through the activation of thoughts is considered as cognitive process which begin in the mind when a vision of the plans acts on any of the sense to become a stimulus through the activation of the particular sense faculty. In the making of the sensory nature of knowledge and skills to be implanted for sustainable development to be intelligible and meaningful to the planner through his/her, perception is immediate and automatic in its acts, and therefore, the same meaning, the same reasoning is giving to the same issues of knowledge and skills with the same ideas in the minds. This is to say that there can be no general

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mindset towards the issues of sustainable development without the abilities of sensation and perception because; they are the root fundamental forms of conscious life. This elementary unit of mental experience is regarded as the primary sources or root sources of knowledge by which individual stakeholders become aware of the problems, prospects and solution to the element of the development in view in all societies of a notion. All these can breed progressive adjustment using different skills of developments. In this wise, reasoning and association that promote knowledge for better tomorrow may be through the process of conscious, systematic and coherent analysis of the present situation in all societies that make up a nation. Education can act as a catalyst for peaceful sustainable growth and development naturally. Ukor & Ebor (2024) states that *education is about teaching of knowing, skills and attitude needed to live effectively in a world characterized by ethnic diversity, political ideologies, cultural pluralism and increasing interdependence… it involves learning about problems and issues which cut across national boundaries and the inter connectedness of the system which may be cultural, ecological, economic, religion, political and technological.*

In a bid to address the problem of education in a blighted nation characterized by poverty, political instability, conflict, inequalities and diversities, religious crises, kidnapping ethnicity, cultural ideality and the likes, that can lead to tension, violence, and generates when many are exploited by the political actors for their personal gain. Application of positive knowledge through education can encourage critical thinking that can analyse the complex social issues to arrive at positive solution. This may happens when people understand the root causes of these challenges and how to limit them. This lend credence to the view that the knowledge acquires through education should enhance complete overhauling, guidance, and commitment towards greater sustainable development to spelt out the values of education. On this note, educational theories must be based on the assumption about the nature of knowledge to be acquired or transferred to the generality of the learners. One may opines that the teaching of knowledge, skills, values attitudes needed to live effectively in a world with limited resources, characterized by different political ideologies, cultural diversity can be used as instrument of intervention for the reduction of global challenges to breed sustainable development in a blighted nation.

The Inculcation of the right types of attitudes/characters for Sustainable Development

As spelt out in the national policy on education, *education in Nigeria should be a broad type which aims at developing the attitudes, abilities and behaviour considered desirable in Nigeria society* (FGN 2014). One can make a rejoinder that education can be used to change people's attitudes, abilities, and behaviour in an expected dimension to breed development. This is to contends that education for sustainable development can be sought for or promoted through education because, education can equally be conceived as the aggregate of all processes by means of which a person develop abilities, attitudes, and other forms of behaviour positive value in the society in which he have and these are the attributes of sustainable development.

There are two issues relating to the applications of knowledge in the national policy on education. These are the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of individuals in the Nigeria society. The values, attitudes are explainable in the following expressions: Teacher's attitudes to work, students

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attitudes towards learning, president's attitudes towards people welfare, and may more. All these may determine the efficiency, progress, peaceful living and relation in any organization to breed good development in a blighted nation.

On the other hands, the term "characters" reveals behavioural connotation or moral uprightness or an action of certain behaviour and it is majorly used among human beings for human beings. Ayeni (2003) states that *character is usually concerned within a developmental perspective so that certain characteristics structures are held to more mature than others*. One may contends that to measure maturity of character presumes or presupposes that there is existence of acceptable standard and on which judgment are based to enhanced sustainable development as claims after application of knowledge in which certain skills or attributes are imparted through education. This shows that the essence of education is to implant, impart, preserve the value that can lead to the promotion of progressive and sustainable development through the uplifting of suitable characters and propagation of reliable attitudes in all society through character education. Olatunde, A., Adebayo A., & Obaoye, F. A. (2016) states that *character education is an umbrella term mostly used to describe the teaching of individual and group in a manner that will help develop civic, good mannered, behaviour, non bullying, or socially acceptable being to a relatively settled general disposition of a person to do what is normally good, where the general disposition can be analyse into traits or virtues that hang together in certain ways.*

One can make a rejoinder that, character education/attitudes of individuals promotes mutual relations amongst different peoples. It breeds the spirit of togetherness, oneness and willingness to do good irrespective any differences for the promotion of the spirit of commitment which breeds sustainable development.

Value Education and Sustainable Development

Values is a disposition and it can be considered as foundation of character that lead to progressive development. In the context of human behaviour, values includes both cognitive and affective components. Value may be categorized as social, political, economical, religious values, all of which are relative to comities, worms, belief, custom, and tradition. Value education is necessary for the sustainable development in view. Value education reflects these behaviour that promote good moral relations as well as realization of self on every needs that can contributes positively to breed sustainable development in all aspects of life. Dike (2016) considered value education to involve educating for character and moral value.

One may opines that value education composes of the teaching of respects, hard work, humility and responsibility for characters, health, human relations as well as for human dignity and cooperations to breed sustainable development. it may includes the teaching of custom, worms, teamwork and cooperative training. In the program of value education, formal, non formal, and informal means are employed naturally and in physical, because value education can be in taught outside the school, through associations, organization, committees, and social media. Cyril (2014) considered moral education and value education as the major ways of achieving overall development of citizen who are expected to be the drummer of changes and transformation of human society.

One may affirm that people develops sense of wisdom enticement and awe as they aware to the realities of life if the value of things are properly

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facilitated and propagated. In propagating values, one needs to consider the issue of freedom equality, inequality, cooperations, respects for the dignity of individual to energise the attainment of the progressive sustainable development in views.

Education as an Instrument of Sustainable Development in a blighted nation can be pursued through:

i. educational diversifications as agent of sustainable development.
ii. mass education for sustainable development.
iii. agrarian education for sustainable development.
iv. entrepreneurship education for sustainable development
v. human resources and character education for sustainable development

Educational diversification

Education for human and materials development and sustainable development in a blighted nation may be properly channeled toward the diversification in all aspects. Human beings are having different endowment or talents as well as having diverse society with diverse cultures and orientation. Hence, different degree of intellectual capabilities, aptitudes, abilities, to tap the natural resources, the education for the sustainable need to tackle all aspects of man because everything is fragmented, every the human body. This is for complete and progressive annexation of all potentialities in human mind materials resources.

Education diversification seems to provides individuals with wide range of skills and knowledge that would enable them to adapt to the changing and dynamic world. It enhances sustainable development through universal promotions and inbuilt of innovation, promotes literacy, its emerged or promotes vocation training, and employment. All of which can be attained through the knowledge, skills and values by designed to be implanted through education.

Agrarian Education for Sustainable Development

Education must be structure towards the establishment of farm settlements centre on all communities to tackle food storage and parenting. There should be training centres where all the exports on the field of agriculture can assists in the training of the training of the interested people.

The use of technologies in all aspects such as application of artificial intelligence should be adopted. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a type of conceptual creativity that has highlighted interest in teaching and learning. Artificial intelligence can play the process of teaching and learning a language, or activities that enabling learners to accelerate their study of a specific language in any field of study (Kite – Powell 2017).

Agrarian education focuses on the empowerment of rural area or communities with skills and knowledge on entrepreneurship, business, and cooperation system. This can be enhance or promote freely practices, more agricultural productivity, rural development and poverty alleviation or reduction. In this age of artificial intelligence, much knowledge on the nutrition and food storage system can be self required with the helps or assistance of the government.

Entrepreneurship Education for Sustainable Development

Entrepreneurship education can be an effective instrument for sustainable development only if it alleviates societal or nations problems and promotes the satisfaction engendered by the skills acquisition. As generally believes, the concept of entrepreneurship means someone who is willing to bear the result of a new business ventures. Though it is an

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essential element for economics progress by identifying, assessing and exploiting business opportunities, as well as making them more dynamic and drawing the economic formed through innovation, competence, job creation. It therefore, improving the wellbeing of society and drawing towards progressive sustainable development.

Human resources and character education for Sustainable Development

Human resources education refers to the planting and transferring of suitable skills, knowledge, capacities in individual or organization for the programs of sustainable development in mind. It impersonate capacity building, various aspects such as human, leadership, institution, social, economics as well as environmental conservation and management. The major areas of concerns for education of sustainable development are – social justice, Human Right, economic development, to reduce poverty, education management and conservation including national resources, all these can be boosted using the skill of gender and cultural sensitivity communication and inculcation of artificial intelligence to fast tract the development, adaptability and collaboration of partnership, converse strategies planning evaluation, research and analysis, ministered evaluation, we in the management and conducting the development projects.

The sustainable development can be early attained through character education. this is an approach that focuses on the development of valued knowledge, skills and attitude to built individuals and turn them into normal beings, it empower the individual in the making of good or informed choice in the discharge of their duty and responsibility. The key principles are responsibility and proper accountability in their of duty, acceptability of collaborated and team work, recognition of cultural and national diversities of individual. All these principle skills be incorporated into education to promotes more sustainable life in all societies of nation.

Mass education for sustainable development

Mass education is an essential strategy for sustainable development, it involves build capacity into a large number of people mind and empowering them for the sustainable development. this education can be given through formal education, non formal education, mass/ social media, through artificial intelligence, creation of public awareness and special orientation in market gathering or community by National Orientation Agency in every Local Government Area. The focus of the education should be geared toward social justice, Human right, environmental conservation, and entrepreneurship orientation programmes. All three can promotes positive changes that may lead to sustainable development.

Conclusion

One can submits that education can be modified to implants knowledge of critical thinking, skills, and attitudes necessary to comprehend the complexicities of challenges of sustainable development, education as we knows can equally be used to evaluate great and multiple perspective and contribution to breed just society through inform comparative involvement of the quality education in the society. Moreover, education raises awareness about the issue related to the economic, political, morality, stability as well as abilities to rationalize and analyze various points of view needed for active participation in resolving for positive and peaceful efforts to plan and enhances sustainable development in a blighted nation.

Recommendation

It is recommended that education for sustainable development in a blighted nation, our system of education at all level should embraces the philosophy of

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agrarian education, mass education or literary education, entrepreneurial education, citizenship education, human resources and character education in diversified ways and in line with the current technological development to inculcate new global challenges in this age of artificial intelligence All these will enable the perennial sustainable development.

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