

Brief history of education in nigeria

[History](#)



As they say Rome was not built in a day. Same applies to education system of Nigeria. In Nigeria education has been filtered and iterated than any other developing Nation around the world. Nigeria had witnessed the brief tradition of education system and was developed in its own phases with some notable revolutions.

Undeniable three important tradition followed in educational system during different timeline were, the native Indigenous education, welcoming of Islam had introduced more different strategy of education (Quran Education through Quranic schools), and recently was introduced to the western educational system that help them to make their own benchmark in this world. Though initially during each timeline, the respective phases served their purpose and also had some problems.

In this paper different education system and the phases of education development that flourished Nigeria had been discussed and also the recent introduction of Universal Basic Education (UBE) after successfully navigated by Universal Primary Education (UPE). The journey of education system in Nigeria has its own story to tell. The Early Days of Education (The Indigenous education of Stone-age Nigeria) Deeply rooted Culture and daily life routine followed by Nigerian population during early ages was followed for many centuries until influenced by outside world.

Native Indigenous education in Nigeria is had its face decorated with limited life style and much priorities were given to welfare of community and local population. The education offered was based on the necessities that are useful govern and feed local tribe. This was the pre-colonial education, where the specialized skills and enhanced abilities were passed on to

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children from father and grandfather. Sometime children's were forwarded to some other community head and mentors for advance skills and community etiquettes.

The bottom line of the education delivered was to learn and live according to Nigerian climate and occupation. These occupations were practiced according to geographical conditions of Nigeria. Some of the popular occupations practiced were Farming (according to seasonal condition), trading (barter system), and fishing (only by communities living either side of river bank), craft work (mask, cloths, color work, utensils), black-smithy (traditional & farming hunting tools, war weapons).

Most of the skills were taught in very traditional ways like listening to elder people from community for their advices and wisely saying, hunting and farming was learned from observing father and masters working in farm lands and accordingly engaging themselves in the same work. Girls and women's were expected to stay at home and undertake jobs more suited for them such as raising kids, weaving and craft-work, body decoration, farming. But this too had followed same strategy of learning from elders (from mother). This kind of education was based on ability and adaptation of skills from elders and had no written or printed records.

Such traditional education had great impact and socially developed sense for protection of community, but the same sense of protection proved to be limitation for Indigenous education system. Although traditional skills managed to travel and spread across many tribes but tribe never agreed to pass on their skills to people from other community (mostly people from other villages).

This made it almost impossible for such education system to travel ahead in timeline and had vanished, as community increased and started to spread across Nigeria. Islamic Education (Arabic Language) in Nigeria Islam was believed to be introduced to somewhere around 1080.

Islamic faith was first accepted by Umme Jilmi (1085-1097), Ruler of Kanem, followed by his successors Dunama 1st who ruled during the period 1097-1150 and also by Dunama 2nd during 1221-1259. As these people had much influence so was Islam the faith sowed into Nigerian earth. Islam made major changes in Nigerian life and educational system. Apart from just living life people were made to serve GOD (although they already did) and had to allot separate time. Islam and Islamic education was made to be inseparable duty that one must follow in this daily life.

The local priest of Mosque used to teach chapters of Quran and its verses. Quran also made people to learn new language "Arabic" which was completely unknown to Nigerian population. Arabic alphabet was taught for the first time, as a written language in printed format. This effort at primary level was widespread and greatly appreciated & absorbed in Nigerian culture. Although Arabic language was blessed by grammar, syntax, rich literature but it also had its own setbacks. First was women's were forbidden in ISLAM and took considerable time to anticipate women's participation in learning Arabic language and Quran.

Later on Islamic study was also allowed for women's of Nigeria. Abdullahi Bayero the (Ruler of Kano) strengthened the Islamic studies by building Law schools, for teaching Islam, different Islamic subjects, English and Arithmetic as well. Schooling and building of institutes helped in good educational

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progress and many institutes & schools were started in coming in year. As Arabic was neither the language in many part of Nigeria, nor followed by educational institutes other than Islamic, this proved to be failure for Arabic language.

The Western Education (Missionaries schools and Culture) This was the proper time to intersect the Nigerian environment with western education system. In 1842 Wesleyan Christian Missionaries stepped in Badagry. The western missionaries and missionaries school stepping onto Nigerian land was not so welcomed, because Islamic schools and institutes already has its footmarks on Nigerian soil, specially northern Nigeria, where Islam has its wings spread wide across with almost 25, 000 Islamic schools and education centers.

Although the start was not good for missionaries' school and had to keep trying until in 1843 the first school came into existence followed by Anglican Church Missionary society in 1850. Missionaries' schools were helped by the government and they did understand the importance of western education for further development of Nigerian society. As a result of this, education department came into power to administrate and to set curricular criteria and requirements and started to giveaway grants and funds for missionary schools.

The north Nigeria had nothing to do except watch southern Nigeria grows in better lifestyle. Further in 1914 northern and southern Nigeria united and these missionaries' were strengthening to put-forward their idea about education in northern Nigeria as well. North Nigeria had to fill the growth and development gap as in 1914 there were only 1100 school kids as compared

to 36, 000 in south Nigeria, number was no less but still there was good hope for development. The main focus of examination was given on examination. More to say institute building, sufficient teaching staff, and moderate labs were inspected.

School ranking was graded and, performance was sorted according to individual performance of each institute. Results were notable and according to expected and lead the entire nation towards Jobs availability and overall development. In year 1952 a body was formed named as West African Examination Council (WAEC) and important responsibility of conducting examination was handed over to them.

The responsibility of council was to qualify number of appeared candidate for certificates which were same as that of certificates offered by examination authorities in United Kingdom. Until now much of educational program were carried by missionaries, but now Nigerian government started to feel the need to help these missionaries and in 1882 began to act by providing necessary guidelines, policies for students and staff, and development of educational authorities. Schools appointed school inspectors and started to ensure grants/funds for schools to keep the educational quality intact. To give wider perspective to the government activities the common experiment more popularly known as Universal Primary Education Program was undertaken in 1955 (East) and 1957 (West), that proved to be very helpful and genuine program.

In Nigeria, the school year currently runs from January to December, consists of about 3 quarters with a month between quarters. Primary education begins at the age of six for the majority of Nigerians. Students spend six

years in primary school and graduate with a school-leaving certificate equivalent to what is called 'elementary school' in some other countries. This runs for 6 years, and after that, students take the Common Entrance Examination to be admitted into Secondary School, which is the equivalent of 'high school' in some other countries.

It used to be that way many years ago, and then they switched to a school year that ran from September to July, and within the last decade, they've switched back to a school year that runs from January to December. Some Nigerians go to nursery school in their early years. What is basically done there is teaching kids the basics like the alphabet, etc. Subjects taught at the primary level include mathematics, English language, Islamic knowledge studies, Bible knowledge, science and one of the three main native ethnic groups (Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo).

Private schools would also offer computer, science, French, and art. Primary school students are required to take a Common Entrance Examination to qualify for admission into the Federal and State Government schools. However, around 1990 what was once known as 'secondary school' was split into 2 sections, and had a year added. So now, there is Junior Secondary School (JSS), which lasts 3 years, and then students have to take the Junior WAEC or the JSSE (Junior Secondary School Exam) to move up to Senior Secondary School (SSS).

During primary school and secondary school (both parts), students wear a school uniform that is chosen and designed by their school. During school parties or special functions, students are sometimes allowed to wear what they choose. Also, there are usually other physical standards that students

must abide too. For instance, most schools either have the girls hair cut short, or allow them to braid it neatly, sometimes depending on the grade level. Boys must have their hair short. With both boys and girls who have short hair, the hair must be neatly combed.

Also, shoes, jewelry, and other accessories usually have guidelines attached. For primary and secondary schools, some schools do have buses to transport their students from certain areas to the school, and of course, in boarding schools, transportation is not an issue. For day school students though, for the most part, transportation to and from school is left to the family. Some parents drop their kids off at school on their way to work. Prof. Fafunwa Contribution towards education Education system in Nigeria is one of the greatest achievements of Prof.

Fafunwa especially at the primary and secondary school levels. He sustained efforts and struggle culminated in the adoption of the mother tongue education policy by the national policy on education (1977). He rightly observed that, developing countries are known mainly as consumer of knowledge rather than as producers. However the acceptance of some of the Fafunwa's idea internationally proved to be an exception. One of the great ideas that won international recognition is the Each-one-Teach-one approach in the promotion of the education for all (EFA) global program and campaign.

The second is the Mother Tongue mode of educational instruction, which has received some international acceptance through the efforts of UNESCO. At the national level also, the recommendation of the Fafunwa Study Group on funding of education at all levels in 1984 brought two notable institutions into existence. The first was the establishment of the National Commission for <https://assignbuster.com/brief-history-of-education-in-nigeria/>

the College of Education (NCCE) in 1986 while the second was the establishment of Federal Ministry of Science and Technology. One of the measures he took was the establishment of the national Institute for the Language in Aba in 1992.

By these achievements, Fafunwa's name will always be written in gold in any history on the promotion of mother tongue education in Nigeria. It would also be recalled that in addition to these, he established the Nigeria French Language village, in Badagry in 1991, and the National Arabic Language Village in 1992 in Gamboru, Borno State when he minister of education. The success of the mother tongue project led to the production of teaching material in Yoruba language in the primary schools. And following its success too, other linguistic area translated the Ife materials on science and mathematics into their spurred Prof.

Fafunwa to work harder the promotional of the teaching of, and research on, Nigeria language, when he becomes minister of education. With all these, Fafunwa gained recognition at both the national and international levels. In 1973 he received a medal for distinguished service in Education, Teachers college, Columbia University, New York city.

In 1976 he got the Franklin Book Award for Outstanding Contribution to Educational Development, New York City. In 1983, he was appointed a Distinguished Fellow, International Council on Education for Teaching, Washington D. C and then in 1986, this ' prophet' was rightly honored in his own country, with Hon. LL. D by the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, where he started his academic career.

He was later also honored by fellowship of Science Teachers Association of Nigeria in 1990; and Fellow, Nigeria Academy of Education in 1990. In 1955, he earned a Ph. D. in Education, becoming the first Nigerian recipient of a doctoral degree in Education. He started his University teaching career in 1961 at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. During the Nigerian civil war, he left the east and moved to Ife, and taught at the Obafemi Awolowo University.

Universal Primary Education (UPN) in Nigeria In 1970 the new term was introduced into the world of education in Nigeria and Universal Primary Education (UPN) was accepted as policy for educational system, just because it had all necessary guidelines and regulatory work flow, most important it was designed in a way to have each person to complete it as primary need. This was again non-welcomed, but still had impressive accomplishment. According to small survey it was seen that Nigeria had an impressive population of 50 million and among that population 22 percent of population was school going (Primary schools).

UPN gained its importance in coming year 1985-86; during time period approximate estimated considerable population of 24 million (age group between five -fourteen) and 46 percent of the entire age group had attended school. This was a remarkable change in education system of Nigeria and they believed that more number would be achieved in coming years. Special Education in Nigeria As seen till now Nigeria's efforts of educational program has been tremendous, was well noted and these efforts were reviewed by Ministry of Information and Culture, 1986.

This revolution in the field of education had deep impact on special education reform. Special educations are firmly established under the roof of overall education policies set by Ministry of Education. The need had arisen because of exceptionalities and special skill amongst sons/daughters of Nigeria. The special section has been set aside for pupils with extraordinary special skills. This is known as Section 8 of policy created by ministry of education in 1977.

According to section:

1. Materialize the meaning of equal education for all pupils.
2. Provide sufficient education for all disabled students and citizens so as to overcome their disability and let them help for their contribution in development of nation.
3. To provide opportunities and resources for those pupils who possess special skills and abilities for nations technological and economical development.

This was not just to provide the platform for students with good academic and talent but also the solid groundwork for those who have knowledge must have the freedom to go for the education they want.

This also had put more focus on those are handicapped and physically challenged, and had given them the right of equality of education along with other normal pupils. To anticipate section 6 government had to move ahead in some research and had to collect data that clearly depict the number of all children's, separation through age, sex, disabilities and locality, standard of living and their requirement about education.

Categories of Special Education

1. Blind and partially sighted or different sight problems.
2. Deaf and partially hearing or different hearing problems.
3. Disabled or physically challenge or handicapped.
4. Mentally retarded (Partially/Completely).
5. Hospitalized children.

For any special education program the direction must be towards ability of anticipation of program that increases the inner potential of extraordinary individuals. But this was again hampered by some special education systems and institutes program were imposed on admitted pupils instead of exposing and providing platform for those students. Inclusion International Perspective (Salamanca Meet) United Nations Salamanca Statements were major and good exposure to international level by United Nation.

UNESCO had arranged a world meet in Salamanca, Spain was held from 7th June 1994 till 10th June 1994. This meet was attended by 300 participants those representing 92 governments and 25 international organisations. Salamanca statements were built on 1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights(1948) 2. Conclusions from “ The World Conference on Education for All” (1990) 3. United Nations “ Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities” (1993).

Recognition of Salamanca Statement

1. Every child has a fundamental right to education.
2. Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs.

3. Education systems should be designed and educational programmes implemented to meet these diversities among children.
4. Students with special needs must have access to regular schools with adapted education.
5. Regular schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating and preventing discriminative attitudes and building up an inclusive society

Role of National Authorities and Government

1. Improve the education system so it can include all students.
2. Adopt the principle of inclusive education in the legislation system to enrol all children.
3. Develop demonstration project.
4. Establish decentralized systems and user participation in planning, monitoring and evaluation.
5. Encourage the participation of parents and relevant user organisation.
6. Pay attention to early identification of special needs and Early Intervention.
7. Give relevant education, further education, training and support to teachers and other relevant professionals.
8. Emphasise the international cooperation within programs of education for all.
9. Emphasise the importance of Special Needs Education as an integrated part of teacher education and training programs.
10. Involve the NGO's

New Perspective on Special (excellent students) needs education

1. Inclusion and participation assume that students with disabilities attend ordinary kindergartens and schools on the local environment.
2. The fundamental principle is that all children are together as much as possible.
3. Inclusive education of high quality should focus on:
 - Curriculum
 - organizational arrangements
 - teaching strategies
 - resource use
 - Partnership with the communities
1. Inclusive education demands a focus on peers. This implies that special units, special classes and schools should be used to a limited extent, and as exception from ordinary education
2. Special needs education varies enormously from country to country. If a country has to have special schools they should function as resource centres for regular schools.
3. Countries with a limited number of special schools should be advised to establish mainstream-inclusive schools.
4. The governmental planning of education should concentrate on all persons, in all regions of the country and in all economic conditions.
5. Special needs education policy represent a new approach. That's why adults with disabilities should have special attention.
6. Girls and women are often discriminated. Women and men should have equal influence and opportunities.

7. To make EFA effective it should be plans on the local, regional and national plan

Inclusive Education and Amendment of Salamanca Statements in United Kingdom

Special Education Needs and Disability Act (2001)

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) impose certain specific duties on the respective educational institute in respect of students with disabilities. The following guidelines attempt to establish good practice for access to teaching and learning for students with disabilities in the light of these requirements under the Act.

These guidelines are directed towards individual lecturers and tutors, to provide a descriptive outlook of the main elements of planning for SENDA (2001). The Act requires the University not only to make adequate provision for existing students with disabilities but to be prepared for the probable needs of future students and candidates, so as to be able to respond adequately and promptly when required. It does not require Schools or individual tutors to make wholesale changes to teaching materials, teaching practice, curricula, timetables, etc.

(though it is a common experience that the refinement of teaching practice to meet the needs of students with disabilities is of benefit to students in general). It does involve the identification of aspects of teaching and learning which can be expected to create barriers for students with disabilities, and a concerted planning initiative on the part of the University to establish how these might be adjusted to allow the full participation of students with

disabilities. The Act makes it unlawful for bodies responsible for the provision of education to discriminate against disabled students.

Discrimination consists of failing to make reasonable adjustments which would permit students with disabilities to participate fully in Higher Education, or giving them less favorable treatment at any point in the educational process. The definition of disability includes a wide range of long-term physical and mental conditions. This Act SENDA imposes a pressurized direct responsibility on educational institutions for their own admitted students. This would include elements such as field place used in fieldwork and study tour, or foreign educational institutes/universities where students go for under students exchange program.

Special Educational Needs (England and Wales)

The legislation relating to SEN is contained in Part 4 of the EA (ss. 312 - 349, Schedules 26 and 27). This has been amended by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA) to amend the references to the categories of schools. There is a statutory code of practice (the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs) to which LEAs, governing bodies, health and social services and the SENT must have regard when exercising their functions under Part 4 of the Act.

There was a consultation on a revised draft of this Code from 7 July to 13 October 2000. The aim is to publish the final version of this Code to come into force from September 2001. A child has SEN if he has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him. A child, for the purposes of the SEN provisions, includes any person under the

age of 19 who is a registered pupil at a school. About 20% of children will have some form of SEN at some time.

Most of these children will have their needs met by their school, but around 3% of children will have severe or complex needs which will require the LEA to determine and arrange for the special educational provision for the child by means of a statutory statement of SEN. It has always been intended that as many children with SEN as possible can be included within mainstream rather than special schools, whilst recognizing the importance of the specialist sector. There is a duty in section 316 of the EA to secure that a child is educated in a mainstream school, unless that is incompatible with the wishes of the parent.

Provided that three conditions are satisfied: that this is compatible with 1. His receiving the special educational provision his learning difficulty calls for; 2. The provision of efficient education for the children with whom he will be educated. 3. The efficient use of resources. School governing bodies have a duty to use their best endeavors to see that pupils with SEN at their schools receive the special educational provision their learning difficulties call for.

The LEA must keep their arrangements for special educational provision under review They have a duty to secure that they identify children within their area who have SEN and the LEA need to determine the special educational provision for which their learning difficulty calls. Where an LEA are of the opinion that a child has SEN and that it is necessary for the authority to determine the special educational provision which any learning difficulty he may have calls for, the LEA will make an assessment of the child, to decide whether a statement of SEN should be made for the child.

Once the assessment of the child's needs has been completed, the LEA will decide whether it is necessary for them to make and maintain a statement of the child's SEN. If the LEA decide to make a statement, the statement must be in the form prescribed by the Schedule to the Education (Special Educational Needs) Regulations 1994 (revised regulations are planned to come into force at the same time as the revised SEN Code of Practice). Any statement made by the LEA must give details of the assessment of SEN and specify the special educational provision to be made.

The special educational provision must include the type of school, or other institution, which the LEA considers would be appropriate, the name of the school preferred by the parents if this has to be named in accordance with Schedule 27 or, if none, the name of any school the LEA considers should be specified, and any provision for which arrangements are made otherwise than in a school, e. g. : occupational therapy. The SENT considers parents' appeals against the decisions of LEAs in England and Wales about their children's SEN, if parents cannot agree with the LEA.

The SENT considers appeals about refusals to assess, refusals to make statements, the contents of statements and decisions to cease to maintain statements. The constitution of the SENT is provided for in section 333 of the EA. There is a President and a chairmen's panel appointed by the Lord Chancellor and a lay panel appointed by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment or (as appropriate) the NAW. Each Tribunal consists of a chairman and two lay members. The procedure of the Tribunal is set out in the Special Educational Needs Tribunal Regulations 1995 made under section 336 of the EA.

The Special Educational Needs Tribunal Regulations 2001 have been laid before Parliament and will, unless annulled, come into force on 1 September 2001. Where does Nigeria Stand in Inclusive Education? Education is not only a right of every child as advocated for by the United Nations (UN), it is a Constitutional enactment in Nigeria through 'The Compulsory, Free, Universal Basic Education Act, 2004 and other Related Matters' leading to the setting aside of two percent (2%) of the consolidated revenue for its implementation.

It is also a punishable offence for anyone to deny a Nigerian child the opportunity to get at least the basic nine year compulsory and free education. Worthy of note is that the UBE Act not only stipulates that it is an offence for anyone to deny a Nigerian child the opportunity for free basic education but clearly pointed out Part 1 section 1, 2 and 3 of the Act that " Every Government in Nigeria shall provide free, compulsory and universal basic education for every child of primary and junior secondary school age. Every parent shall ensure that his child or ward attends and completes his:

(a) Primary school education.

(b) Junior secondary school education by endeavoring to send the child to primary and junior secondary schools.

" The stakeholders in education in a Local Government Area, shall ensure that every parent or person who has the care and custody of a child performs the duty imposed on him under section 2(2) of this Act" The above are wonderful as far as the quest towards achieving the goals of the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) as well as the targets of the

Education For All (EFA) remain a cardinal objective of the present leadership in the education sector.

It would be pertinent to point out that Nigeria in April 2000 joined over 170 other countries that met in Dakar, the capital of Senegal to re-affirm national commitment towards ensuring that they deliver the goals of EFA by 2015. Given the importance of UBE and need to ensure that it succeeds, stakeholders in the sector especially those that have held sway at the helm of affairs of the Federal Ministry of Education had for some time taken steps deemed necessary to ensure that the country not exit the status of being one of the countries not likely meet the target for EFAQ nor the goals of MDGs.

" From a regional perspective, South and West Asia reported the greatest progress. This was mainly due to changes in India, where the number of children out of school fell by over 12 million as participation in primary education significantly improved for girls (accounting for more than 75% of the decrease). " Sub-Saharan Africa also made important strides, with a reduction of 10 million.

This was largely the result of progress reported by the Governments of Ethiopia and the United Republic of Tanzania" the report added. For a country like Nigeria, the importance of the report comes in various forms but the most touching ones will be the positive aspect which noted that the Sub-Saharan African made important strides towards the global achievement accounting for about 10million out of the 28million that was recorded within the period.

But unfortunately for the country, while the names of countries like United Republic of Tanzania and Ethiopia were clearly mentioned while others were listed on the detailed report, Nigeria appeared on the list with dots in this form (****) which simply means that there was no information available on the various performances and efforts of government and other stakeholders in the area of improving enrolment.

It should be on record that Nigeria is not a country to be pushed aside when the issue of rolling out policies, bright and wonderful policies at that aimed at achieving enviable feat that can stand its own anywhere in the world. Though the country for the umpteenth time has failed to blow its trumpet, stakeholders would not disagree if this write-up notes that over 80% of government efforts are not well coordinated leading to non-availability of credible, scientific and acceptable data that can be presented to relevant bodies.

It is however gratifying to note that the leadership at the Federal Ministry of Education presently is doing a lot to change all that and when one takes a look at the latest decision to integrate the Madrasah Education into the mainstream of at least the basic education, it shows that Nigeria is serious about meeting the set goals and targets.

At this juncture, it will be pertinent to note that just about two-years ago during the celebration of the 2008 Education For All (EFA) week celebration, the then Minister of Education, Dr. Igwe Aja-Nwachuku said that at least about 11million Nigerian children are still without access to basic education in the country.