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# RESOURCES AND RESOURCE UTILIZATION IN NOMADIC EDUCATION

BY

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## Abstract

The paper opens with a conceptual analysis of nomadic education and its inception in Nigeria. A brief account of nomadic education in Nigeria shows that nomadic education is no more strange (although, a more vibrant endeavours to educate nomads was embarked upon in the 70s). There are thirty-four States and Federal Territory Capital (Abuja) participating in nomadic education. One of the remaining two states will soon be joining. The number of nomadic education schools rose from 174 in 1986 to 890 in 1997 and a total of 88,871 pupils as at 1997 had enrolled. One of the factors inhibiting nomadic education is the lack of resources that are needed for the success of the programme. The resources can be divided into four categories (financial resource, human resources, material resources, and instructional time resource). For example, some of the nomads have their lessons under trees and one wonders what happens during dry seasons when all leaves are dried. Further more, the teaching force (i.e the nomadic education teachers) are not adequate since there are 2,561 teachers in the existing 890 schools it shows that there are less than 3 teachers in each school. The study ends by recommending that since nomads are unwilling to go for nomadic education, there should be a provision of the material and financial resources to nomadic education, these will serve as bases for these pupils.

## Introduction

Nomadism has been defined by Lar (1989) as a common characteristic of human reaction against hostile or unfavourable conditions on their lives or sources of livelihood. Tahir (1996) and Bajah (1997) categorised Nigerian nomads into two distinct groups; the nomadic pastoralists and the migrant fishermen. There are over 9.3 millions nomads across the country and 3.1 million of them are children of school going age (Tahir, 1997). The migrant fishermen constitute about 3 million of the nomadic population and literacy rate among them stands at two percent as 1997. The nomadic pastoralists are over 6 millions in number and literacy level among them is 0.02 percent (NCNE, 1996).

Nigerian nomads contribute in various ways to national economy. The Fulbe, for instance, own about 95 percent of the 12 million herds of cattle in Nigeria (Aminu, 1991). The country depends on them for the provision of meat, milk, hide and skin as well as mutton. In addition, they bear a heavy burden of tax in the form of *jangali* (cattle tax).

However, nomads are the most several disadvantaged groups in terms of provision of educational

and welfare facilities due mainly to their constant migration and dispersion. There have been various reasons advanced by scholars and practitioners on the extremely low level of participation by nomadic populations in former education. Five major factors have been isolated by Ezeomah (1983); Junaid (1987); Umar (1988); and Tapir (1991) as being responsible for such poor participation, these are: their constant migration and dispersion, the irrelevance of formal school curriculum to their values, needs, interest, problems and lifestyle, the centrality of child labour in the nomadic systems, physical barriers, they (especially the pastoralists) have remained external to the system of land holding.

The implications of all these constraints are that the development of a regular and formal system of education and the provision of other forms of social services are greatly hampered. Various government and development experts, having realised the magnitude and dimensions of the problems, have been calling for the integration of the nomads into modern life. Adamu and Kirk-Greene (1986) Ezeomah (1983), and Adamu (1991) argued that integrating the nomads into modern life would go a long way in improving their productivity. They believe that the basic agent of such integration is through the provision of education to the nomads.

Attempts aimed at providing education to the nomads predated Jihad times in the Hausa States. Islamic-scholars roamed the length and breadth of Western Sudan teaching both sedentary and mobile populations. Ardo (1991) held that this situation continued to operate even after the Jihad and probably up to 1991.

The provision of western education to the nomads began during the colonial period in Nigeria when schools were established in some nomadic communities particularly in Borno (1920's) and Katshina (1950's) and the provinces (Tahir, 1997). However, the programme was soon to be abandoned largely due to the fact the peculiar life style, culture and pedagogy of the nomads were not addressed.

A more vibrant endeavour to educate the nomads was embarked upon by some state governments in the 70's. Nomadic schools were established in the North - East, Kano and North Central States to cater for the educational needs of the mobile pastoral children. These efforts were sporadic and many of the pastoralists did not avail themselves of these opportunities due to the fact the curriculum was not suitable to them both in content and in the approach (methodology) (Tahir, 1996).

Article 26 of the 1974 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that 'every one has the right to education, this shall be free at least in the elementary and primary stage'. This declaration was reinforced by the National Policy on Education which stipulates that "education is the birthright of every Nigerian child and should be brought close to the environment of the child" (FGN, 1981). These provisions and the spirit of the 1979 constitution recognised the need for and the drive to provide equal educational opportunities for all. These considerations informed the Federal government's bold intervention in the provision of education to nomadic communities across the country.

Direct Federal Government's involvement began in 1986. A legal instrument establishing the programme was enshrined in Decree 41 of 1989. Consequently, the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) was established to cater for the educational needs of the nomads. The programme has gained wide acceptance among the various governments of the country as well as the target population. The programme which started with only 12 participating States in 1986 now operates in 34 states of the country including Abuja (the Federal Capital Territory). Only Imo and Lagos States are not participating although discussions are going on between the NCNE and the Lagos State government on the State's participation in the programme, since it has the large population of migrant fishermen.

The number of such schools rose from 174 in 1986 to 890 in 1997 in nomadic pastoral communities. Of this number, 608 are owned by the state governments. 130 by Local Government and 152 by the Nomadic Communities. There were a total of 88,871 pupils enrolled in the schools out of this figure, 55,177 (62%) were boys while 33,694 (38%) were girls. There were 2,561 teachers majority of whom were teacher aids, 1,326 (51.8%) are unqualified (Bajah 1997).

As at the beginning of the 1998/97 school session, there were 135 primary schools meant to cater for the children of the migrant fishermen. 9,246 pupils were enrolled with 4,555 boys and 4,691 girls and a total of 352 teachers (Tahir, 1997). Since the commencement of the programme, a total of 14,833 pupils have graduated from these schools. This is made up of 10,090 (68%) boys and 4,743 (38%) girls. A number of them successfully transitioned to the JSS while majority of them dropped out. However, some of the products of these schools have recorded excellent results which placed them in the Suleja Academy and the Unity Secondary schools (Tahir, 1997).

However, the programme is facing some problems which relate to resources. Resources according to Farombi (1998) can be categorised into four, these are: financial resources, human resources, material resources, instructional time resources.

### **Financial Resource**

Financial resource is taken to mean the cost of education. Cost in education is usually in terms of real resource used up in the production of a given unit output. There is the social cost as well as the private cost. The former is the cost borne by the society, that is, the government while the latter is the cost borne by individuals.

(a) **Social cost:** This is sub-divided into two categories viz: capital and recurrent expenditure. Money expended on building of physical structure like a lecture room, examination hall, library provision of furniture, machines, provision of textbooks, instructional media and so on, others come under capital cost. Money expended on the payment of salary provision of consumable items, maintenance of physical structure (building), instructional media and other facilities come under recurrent cost.

(b) **Private cost:** This includes financial contributions by families and individuals for education. It is made up of tuition fees, cost of learners' textbooks and notebooks, transportation cost, postage and other sundry expenses by the learners.

### **Human Resource**

Human resource is expressed in terms of learners enrolments, number of staff members like, Nomadic Education Co-ordinator and teachers.

### **Material Resource**

This includes number of school buildings in form of number of classrooms provided and number of furniture, books, writing materials like biros, notebooks, pencils, rulers, erasers, sharpeners and other instructional materials.

### **3.4 Instructional Time Resource**

Time resource in this paper is the number of hours education is opened to learners per school day. Instructional time resource is the total time allocated by the Nomadic Education system, for each cur-

riculum and the extent to which this time is being used for the prescribed curriculum over a week and over a school year.

### Why Resources in Nomadic Education?

Scholars are in agreement that resources are very important for the success of any worthwhile education (both the conventional face-to-face and Nomadic Education) endeavours (Vartzey; 1968, Taiwo; 1969, Bowels; 1974, Fields; 1974 and Adaralegbe 1983). These scholars pointed out that the availability of funds, human (students, teaching and non-teaching staff), materials and time resources are necessary for the attainment of any educational objectives.

This study is relevant and important to Nomadic Education because teaching and learning processes are carried out by the availability and use of the resources earlier mentioned. In this wise, it is important to note that:

*i) if the resources are inadequate or poor in terms of their quantity and quality, not only will the use of the resources be defective, but the learning process will also be defective.*

*ii) if the resources are adequate in terms of their quantity and quality, but they are not used, that is, the resources are kept in the store and not used (Bajah, 1979), the learning process will be adversely affected.*

*(iii) if on the hand, the resources are available, relevant and reasonably adequate and in addition, prudently utilized, there is the likelihood that the learning will be assured.*

### Resource Utilization in Nomadic Education

The level of use of all the resources mentioned earlier is referred to as resource utilization. Financial resource has been recognised as a major factor in the development of any educational system. A study conducted by Pitts (1977) in selected Texas school Districts investigated the relationships between the use of finance and school success in terms of students' performance. He found out that there exist a significant relationship between that portion of the school Districts budget allocated to instructional salaries with students' academic achievement.

Teachers have been recognised as indispensable human resource, and in fact, the single most important elements in the Nomadic Educational system, more important than the quality and quantity of equipment and materials or the level of financing (Bowels; 1970). The teachers and his roles are perceived so important that a provost of a College of Education, who was justifying the hiring of a particular lecturer in Chemistry who was known to be useless in the department said that "...I had to recruit just anybody. I would not have minded having a dummy standing in front of the students to assure the students that the quality of any Nomadic Educational system depends on the teachers' quality and the success of the educational system" Manson (1981). He pointed out that quality teacher is an important input in effective learning, since quality output demands quality input. Taiwo (1980) has equally pointed out that teachers are very vital in any educational system as they are the ones who interpret the aims, goals and plans of education and ensure that the learners educated in the direction of those aims and objective. Babalola (1979) said that majority of the studies on students' academic achievement have generally

taken the form of finding out that human variables correlate highly with learners' achievement and can be used as predictor of students' achievement Akinwumiju and Orimoloye (1987) stated in support of material resource for educational system that

*Educational institutions from nursery to university require building for their effective operations. Classrooms, assembly halls, laboratories, and staff - quarters are needed. Within the buildings there should be fixtures and fittings to make them useable, the infra structural facilities included here are important items like furniture for staff and learners, books, science equipment, game and sport equipment, and other items. These facilities have to be adequate in number and they should be in good condition for schools to function properly*

Hallak (1990) identified facilities as major factors contributing to academic achievement in the school system. These include the school buildings, classroom accommodation, libraries, laboratories, furniture, recreational equipment, apparatus and other instructional materials.

### Conclusion

It is no doubt that if these resources are available and they are wisely used, most of the Nomads who dropped out of school may be successful in their academic endeavours. To this effect the government at both levels (Federal, State and Local) should provide all the necessary resource needed for nomadic education in Nigeria.

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