

# THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

The Nigerian case



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This is a book developed for educational stakeholders in Nigeria. In a developing country, education is critical since it provides the country with the essential manpower. Education improves people's productivity and creativity, as well as encouraging entrepreneurship and technological advancements. Furthermore, it is critical for ensuring economic and social progress as well as increasing income distribution. Thus, education is the bed rock for peace, prosperity, and progress. The fourth book is Titled: **THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION: THE NIGERIAN CASE**

THE IMPORTANCE OF  
EDUCATION: THE NIGERIAN  
CASE

## The Importance of Education; The Nigerian Case

*Glory Be To the Father, To the Son and To the Spirit.*

## **The Importance of Education; The Nigerian Case**

**To my loving godmother Aunty Rose; may your gentle soul rest in perfect peace.**

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**Many thanks, deep appreciation, and acknowledgement to  
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Udom Adaeze Charlyn

**THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION: THE NIGERIAN CASE**

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## Opening

The greatest inventions emerge from men's deepest thoughts; there would be no existence without profound thinking and an elevated level of inquisitiveness and deliberate inquiries. Great replies come from a thorough comprehension of the situation. "We cannot address our problems with the same level of thought that produced them," Albert Einstein observed. It is not the same set of thinking that you used to create the problem that you will use to solve it. The most significant distinction between a great man and a nonentity is the seriousness with which the former engages in higher-order thought and intense concentration. Even so, if a guy does not understand what life means to him, he cannot be forced to think. To you, what does life imply? Is it a place to leave an impression, a place to pass through, a place for self-sacrifice, or a place to steal and spend money you won't be able to take with you when you die? I, for one, believe that life is about giving back, not just in terms of money, but also in terms of serious thought. Look around you and observe all the inventions that have already been made; they are all the result of men's thinking.

The difference between a thinking and a non-thinking man lies in his education. It is, however, not simply education in the form of theorems, but also education as a way of life from the moment one is born. The educational system in Nigeria disempowers students. Disempowerment manifests itself in a lack of ability to think, a reasonable understanding of oneself, and a failure to derive inspiration from the environment. When education fails to produce an active mind that questions and thinks, man and society begin to descend. A graduate is an analytical person, an inventor, and a creator, not a redundant who simply considers the benefits of his certification. Nigerian graduates must change their perceptions of value, recognizing that a man's mental strength and character are more important than his diploma. This scholastic decline, I believe, began during colonial rule, when our colonial overlords disturbed our own modes of existence and innovation by enslaving our ancestors. Now, rash folks sit back and claim that there is something fundamentally wrong with Black skin, that whites are vastly superior to us, that Black people were meant for servitude, and that we are the only race capable of enslavement. A Black man who thinks this way in the name of honest liberalism is demonstrating a lack of understanding and rational thought.

Through careful consideration, it has been determined that there is a reason for every effect, and that by identifying and resolving the cause, the effect may be altered. If an electric bulb continues to burn out, the problem may not be with the bulb; therefore, the voltage and socket must be checked. Changing the light bulb may not be a long-term solution.

When money becomes the primary criterion for determining who a man is, a nation's value is diminished; we must take a step back and return to the deeper principles that a community should uphold for future generations to flourish.



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Education is the cause that can effect a sustainable change in the direction of a dying nation. It is not easy to sit back and watch stagnation and redundancy disrupt the vibrant fate of a *can learn to think* nation.

I strongly believe that one of the most sustainable routes to advancing the future of Nigeria is in the overhauling capacity of the quality of education available to its populace. I open with this great quote from Henry Spencer; **“THE GREAT AIM OF EDUCATION IS NOT KNOWLEDGE BUT ACTION.”**

## Section I

### Little Impressions on Education

#### My childhood days

I would wake up with my eyes closed, smiling all over my small rosy cheeks, lying downside by side with my smaller sister, anticipating how fantastic my day would be. My family consisted of five members: three boys and two girls. I would lie in my bed, thinking about how interesting my day would be. I was a small child when the community provided me with a sense of belonging. We always returned around the Easter and Christmas holidays, and it was always an experience for which I had yearned. Aside from not having to get up early for school, I relished every other convenience. My hometown, Oguta, gave a lush green setting that made me feel like I was in 'Alice in Wonderland.' To me, Oguta, a town in Imo State, was a magical place. It was a gathering spot for the family. During the Christian holidays, I would see all my cousins, aunties, and uncles who had also returned. My grandfather, on the other hand, was someone I had always wanted to meet. Fortunately, when I was growing up, we all lived in different houses on a large complex, which was heaven compared to my cramped city apartment. In Oguta, there is a legend that if you divide Oguta into three parts, one third will go to my grandfather, Chief H.P.O Udom, who is now deceased.

Our village house, Trinity, is located on a hill. My father, aunts, and uncles would all gather extremely early in the morning for the road trip to Oguta from the city. My mother would take my siblings and me shopping days before our journey to the east to buy new dresses, shoes, and other items we would need for the trip. Following our mother's packing, we assisted by ensuring that all our favourite clothes and toys were packed in the luggage. We ate early supper after that because we had to get up early for the road trip to the village. My mother would wake the five of us up about 4 a.m. and take us to the shower while she rushed back to the kitchen to make sure the trip's lunch was ready. Obieze and Philip, my older brothers, would shower together first, followed by my sister Ngozi and me. My father would usually lend a hand by bathing us if he noticed we were not doing such an

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excellent job. When my father showered me, I was always thrilled. I did feel particularly clean, and I imagined myself shining brightly all the time. My mother would then bathe Patrick, the youngest of the five of us, because he was still an infant. At some point, we would be ready to hop in the car and drive to the location where we would pick up our aunt and uncle and their family, and begin the convoy travel to the hamlet at 5:30 a.m. This was in the early 1990s, when road travel was safer than it is now due to the absence of kidnappers and Boko Haram. We would have arrived in Benin at 12 p.m. and driven to Onitsha. I always looked forward to getting closer to Onitsha, and I would ask my mother to wake me up if I fell asleep while crossing the Onitsha Bridge. The journey was fantastic. I would be overjoyed once we were in Oguta since we would be ascending Trinity, my home. We would drive through the hill after passing my grandfather's first school, Obiako, and the second, Trinity High School, which was directly beside the hill and near to our compound's entrance.

My grandfather, who died around eight years ago, was an educationist who believed in the power of good education to help a community progress and transform. Most of today's famous persons from Nigeria's eastern region attended Trinity High School. He instilled in me a love for education and youth empowerment. I adored my grandfather. The highlight of my stay to Oguta was spending time with my grandfather, grandmother, and grandfather-in-law. My grandfather would show us around the schools, take us on a tour of his cashew plantation, and tell us true stories from his life. Though the impressions are still with me, I am unable to recall the stories because I was too young. But I recall how my grandfather would summon us and we would dash from our house to his, where he would inform us that he wanted to take a walk across the plantation and urge us to join him. Granddad was seventy years old at the time. He walked with a straight back, as if he were in his fifties. As we strolled through the webs of the cashew trees, he was a tall man with a long walking stick that he used to sense the ground. There were a lot of ripe cashew fruits being collected, and they were going to be put in sacks. I have always liked nature, and these times were the pinnacle of my youth for me. I am convinced that these experiences, rather than the televisions and electronics that today's children are engrossed in, shaped my ideals and basic principles.

After entering our compound, there is a five-kilometre drive through before reaching my father's house. The cashew plantation began on the left of this drive through, and on the right at the gate was a boys' quarters for part of the domestic staff and guards, followed by greenery and trees. My father's house had a modest front garden and a large rear yard with one plot where my brother rarely played football. My uncle's house, my father's younger sibling, was just before the existing plantation, at the right angle of the compound.

Ijeawery and Divine, my relatives, are his two sons. My Uncle Albert's house was a little further down the road. He resided in the United States and gave Ngozi, my sister, and me the best girl dolls in the world, which were not white. He never got us white dolls; instead,

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he always got us black ones. Ngozi and I thought those dolls were wonders since they could eat, poo, and wee and had wonderful hair that we could comb and braid. We also spent a lot of time in the village, boiling leaves and preparing concoctions for our dolls with our plastic cooking tools. Ngozi and I spent a lot of time together. Uncle Albert did not come to Oguta very often because he resided overseas, but whenever he did, we were blessed with bountiful gifts. A wide field with a swing is in the centre of the estate. That one was a hit with the ladies. And my grandfather's house was just in front of the field, from the house's entrance. We have various family rituals, but the Eves night tradition is one that I still miss. All my grandfather's children and grandkids will gather in the family parlour in my grandfather's house around 11 p.m., and after a few niceties, we will pray and sing praises till 12 a.m. Following that, we would go out to the front yard, just before the field, and have fireworks and "knock outs," while bottles of wine were poured, and music was played. We, the grandchildren, would have soft drinks, biscuits, and a lot of fun shouting at the loud noises of fireworks and knockouts, and then there would be a family party until around four a.m., when we retired back to our beds. It was a lovely custom that I thoroughly loved.

Another memorable event from my early childhood was the annual visit to my maternal grandfather's house. My mother is from Awa, which is also known as Oguta number two. It is a 45-minute trip from Oguta; however, the journey is usually shorter when we use the water fairy, which is locally known as "pontu." We would drive to the "pontu," and the "pontu" would cross us and our automobile through Oguta Lake to Oguta two, always an exhilarating experience for the five of us. My maternal grandfather, Chief Patrick Ottih, and I shared a similar love greeting after I approached him one day and informed him that I was his first granddaughter. As a result, every time we saw each other, he would often exclaim, "My first granddaughter!" This made me feel incredibly unique, and I adored my grandfather in inexplicable ways.

Mr. and Ms Nnamdi Udom, my parents, always made me feel rejuvenated and grateful when we returned to the city after the holidays. My father is a dark-skinned, attractive man who stands about six feet two inches tall. He was a tough, heavy man while I was growing up. Despite his frequent travels, he deeply loved and protected his family. My father was also a voracious reader, and he was a strict disciplinarian who was quick to chastise us anytime we strayed from the path. On one of his journeys back to Nigeria, dad met my mother while studying Business Administration at the University of Oklahoma. My mother was employed at AFRI bank at the time. She received an English degree from the University of Benin, even though she stated that she wished to study law but was admitted to the university for English. Her father recommended that she wait another year and try to get into law school, but she preferred to start with English. I, for one, intended to study law but instead earned a degree in Policy and Strategic Studies from Covenant University.

I followed in my mother's footsteps! My mother is tall, with light complexion, a thin figure, and a stunning appearance. Her lovely looks have beaten down her age by at least a

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decade, and her looks have sparked all kinds of speculation about when she could have married. This has led to neighbours and acquaintances guessing her age based on trial and error, since she is too young to have five tall children, three males and two girls, with the first boy standing at six feet seven inches tall and gorgeous. My father is extremely fortunate to have married and started a family with my mother. Hard work, perseverance, commitment, love, purpose, strength, and integrity are all values I learned from my family. This has been my patience throughout my brief existence on this planet. Because "teach a child the way he should go and he will never depart from it," the gift of good morality is one of the best aptitudes a child may get from his family. This must begin with the family, as the first impressions are formed before and even throughout the school years.

Handmaids International Catholic School, affiliated with Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church, was my first school. It was a short distance from our place and quite convenient for my parents. My religion was created throughout my early years of school; I went to catechism and began getting Holy Communion, and I also competed in church competitions on the bible and our beliefs. I learned about the Holy Family—Mary, Joseph, and Jesus—the power of Holy Communion, Jesus Christ's respect and adoration of his Mother Virgin Mary, as well as the Blessed Saints and the Holy Trinity. The Catholic Church has many transforming traditions for a developing child, such as catechism, the block rosary, Stations of the Cross, charismatic renewal, children's harvest, young mass servers, and much more. These traditions produce adults with strong spiritual and calming undertones, as well as reverence for both the church and society. As a Catholic child, you are exposed to all these levels of deep generosity and humanity, which gives you a greater understanding of life and its goals. The Catholic Church also has schools and homes for the blind, less privileged, sick, and afflicted of society.

My first ten years were essential in shaping who I am today, and they continue to guide me as I continue to appreciate the beauty and blessing of life. My great love for God, faith in the role of family in society, character strength, and sense of purpose all developed over the first ten years of my life on this planet. As a result, education was an action word rather than a theoretical one. In some ways, education was all-encompassing and not what it appears to have become. Education used to be the soul of a child, not just a portion of it, as it appears to be now. What makes up the remaining sides of a child if schooling is a part of them? Is it possible that there's television, television, television, as well as phone, games, and gadgets? If that is the case, one can only wonder what is going on.

*Where there was family time; there is television, internet, and games,*

*Where there was love; there is loneliness,*

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*Where there was peace from deep understanding of religion; there is confusion and little life meaning,*

*Our children not only face a cultural divergence, but they also face religious deviation, value discrepancy,*

*This is a call to families to become what they were created to be from the beginning- opium of hope, a guide to the true meaning of life,*

*This is a call to the father and mother of the beloved child,*

*But if the parents are lost, who would then guide our infants, our growing leaders?*

*The gift of high morals is the best aptitudes a child must inherit from his family.*

Education is thus more than a tool or a stage; it is a way of life. It is what we learn from our families that shapes our perceptions of life and its meaning. Growing up in a Catholic school, I learned not only academics, but more importantly, life lessons. We were expected to arrive at school at or before 8 a.m. for daily assemblies, during which latecomers were given a hefty stroke of the cane. I recall a time when I was late for school. I was flogged so badly that the cane marks on my legs were still visible two weeks later. But the teacher incurred the fury of my aunt, Aunty Christy, whose house we used to visit after church on Sundays. She exclaimed when she saw the flaming burns on my legs and questioned what I had done to deserve such cane marks. When I explained that it was because I was a few minutes late to school, she marched straight to the instructor on Monday and told him not to hit ladies on their legs like that, that he should use his left palms instead, and that he should be gentle with us because we are still tiny children. We would proceed to our courses and begin our work for the day after the morning general assembly. The bell would ring at 12 p.m., and everyone would come to a halt for the Angelus.

I learned a valuable lesson about cowardice and problem-solving. I was about six years old at the time. Despite being taller than most of my classmates, I was the shyest of them all. It was so severe that my friend Chioma and I were bullied by students who were much taller than me. Every time it happened, I would walk to the teachers' room to report, then turn around and walk straight back to my table, as if I had seen a ghost in the form of a teacher. Bullies in class would then tease me and laugh at me, knowing that I would never be able to report them. When a snack was shared or a student celebrated a birthday, those bullies became so cruel that they would grab every snack that was mine and share it amongst themselves. I felt humiliated and isolated, but I never told my parents, brothers, or even my instructor. I kept this horrific life-altering experience to myself and became a melancholy child as a result. This went on until one day I had the confidence to walk to my teacher and denounce it; after my teacher's scolding, those bullies never bothered Chioma and me again. In retrospect, I am not sure if my teacher's rebuke ended the bullying or if it was the transition, I went through in confronting my difficulties, even in the face of my biggest fear. I

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strolled back to my seat a new person as I jittered to my teacher's desk to report because I realized how misplaced my dread was. Reporting was a lot easier than dealing with the bullying and assaults from peers on a regular basis. The incident has transformed my perspective on delving into the unknown and taking the most drastic action to this day, even in the greatest fear. I continued with my new way of life up until my secondary school when I got admitted into Queens College Yaba Lagos.

## **Queens' College Days**

Thanks to my Auntie Christy's acquaintance Ms Lucas, I was accepted into Queens College, which was one of the best days of my life. Queens College was a difficult institution to gain admission to. It was in high demand, with all of Nigeria's females vying for a spot. It was also an old school; Queens College had been around for over sixty years when I was there. I distinctly recall my mother dropping me off at the boarding home entrance. I was eleven at the time, and all the thrill had evaporated! For the first time, I realized I would be separated from my parents and family. Even in that terrible moment, I did not have much time to mourn because I was then told to bring my box and all my school payment receipts to be examined. As I turned around to see my mother walk away, disappearing directly in front of my eyes into the swarm of people, I knew that was it. For me, life had finally begun, and there was no turning back. Doesn't that happen to us even now, when we yearn for an issue to be resolved and are relieved when it is, but when we learn of the sacrifices we must make, we are frozen in a moment of thanksgiving and solemnity? We start to consider who we want to be and the experiences that will become a part of our daily lives, as well as the commitments and sacrifices we will have to make to achieve our goals.

My first three months at Queens College transformed me in every way, from my demeanour to my newly acquired accent to my self-awareness. Yes, I was transitioning from a girl to a lady! This metamorphosis began around eleven o'clock. You could not speak to your seniors with a vernacular accent, as they called it! They will not only correct you, but they will also mock you for a long time. 'Ensuring that you do not repeat the same English pronunciation mistake' became the learning process. You do not want to face the ridicule more than once; 'once beaten, twice shy.' So, whether you had a Yoruba accent in the west, an Igbo accent in the east, or a Hausa accent in the north, you would be changed into a Queen's College accent in a matter of weeks. The school was extremely crowded, with approximately 7,000 kids enrolled in total. There were day students and boarding students, as well as some who could not decide whether they wanted to be boarding or day students since they switched from term to term. I grew up in a household where my father was a strict disciplinarian, thus I never dared to ask my father to make me a day student. I just knew it could not be done. I would only remember the episode at home when my older brother Obieze was sent home from the Nigerian Navy Boys School in Abeokuta due to

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illness. My mother was afraid that she might lose her kid to death at school. My brothers also told me of the terror that the senior boys had inflicted on them, which I could not believe! For example, they told me that when they got to school and the prefects checked their boxes for contrabands, they would practically take all of their belongings, including all of their provisions, saying things like "oh thanks for the milk, I forgot to buy one," or "thanks for the shoes, I actually need something like this." I was also told that they punished their subordinates without regard for human feelings. My father, on the other hand, flatly refused my mother's pleading. Obieze was accepted into college when he was nine years old, which made my mother quite concerned about his ability to survive such a high degree of lunacy. "If other people's boys can endure it, my own sons must too," my father stated definitely, "or aren't other people's children in the school too?" As a result, even though I suffered some punishment from my classmates, though not to the extent of the Navy Boys school, I knew it was where I would stay until the conclusion of college. Students in the Queens College boarding house were divided into four houses: Emotan, Obong, Obi, and Obasa. Emotan was check-green, Obong was check-orange, Obi was check-yellow, and Obasa was check-blue. Emotan House was where I belonged.

Every Saturday, there were inspections. On such Saturdays, the dormitories are thoroughly cleaned. Sanitary Prefects and the Boarding House Mistress would check the hostels on occasion. We realized as juniors that we were responsible for all the work, including scrubbing the floors and mopping them with hand towels, washing all the windows and nets, perfectly laying all the beds, and ensuring that every junior student cupboard was meticulously organized. Personal hygiene was also assessed and graded, including the cleanliness of the residence, the boarding school outfit, nails, and hair. The examination system was quite difficult. For example, the prefect swept a very small corner with a broom in the hopes of finding small dust, not necessarily sand, that would cause the house to lose some marks; the windows were examined with a white tissue, cleaning deeply into the edges, in the same hopes of finding even a small stain of dust on the window that would cause the house to lose more marks. The beds must be made from the inside out, starting with the bed cover, then the bed sheet, and finally the house-coloured bed cover. A prefect may examine any bed, and no stain, no matter how small, should be detected on the bed sheet, even if it is a permanent stain. My beloved Principal, Ms Sojirin, tallied up the results and announced them on Mondays during the assembly. "No loitering, no littering, and no noise making," I recall her saying frequently. This manner of living has shaped who I am today; being tidy and neat is a call that was instilled in our thoughts at college, along with the standards of a lady. We would head to class after the assembly. We had over a hundred students in my class, so knowledge was the survival of the fittest. Religious tolerance and understanding may also be learnt through the large population of students at the school, as well as the friends you made who were Muslim and Christian, both catholic and Pentecostal.

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On Sundays, the Priest would come to the Catholic students to celebrate mass, while the Pastor would come to the Pentecostal students to perform service. During Catholic Bazaars, pupils would stroll to the Saint Dominic Catholic Church in Yaba, Lagos, under the supervision of Catholic professors. On Fridays, Muslims had their own prayers and ceremonies. We had social nights, scruples nights, theatre days, and many other activities at Queens College. Queens College also featured a large field where sports such as field events and track races were held. Queens College's athletics were quite good. In school, I learned that I was quite good at field events, notably "Discus," where I consistently placed first and remained the best gold medallist. I have had so many wonderful experiences! My sixteenth birthday stands out in my mind. My mother bought the entire world for me. My students and I had a great time eating, eating, eating. So, on my seventeenth birthday, news went out that my birthday was approaching once more, and that everyone who wished to participate in the celebration should make sure that gifts and cards were delivered to me. This was since at Queens College at the time, we prioritized those who wished the celebrant a happy birthday with a small note or gift. As a result, everyone wanted to be on my priority list for my last birthday; I still have all the cards from that occasion, which were numerous. However, much to my dismay, my mother did not send anything over at that time, and all my classmates were slightly burned in their pockets and stomachs. I was able to keep my head down long enough to let the disappointments pass.

As Queens College was so broad, you learned a lot about people's cultures and interpersonal relationships. As I progressed through the class, new sets arrived and old sets left, and each set numbered in the thousands. Isn't it true that as a Queens College graduate, you would have been exposed to over thirteen thousand girls throughout the course of your six years in college?

Academics, culture, religion, athletics, socials, and etiquette were all covered by education, and the school was a fantastic place to be despite its overcrowding.

## **Covenant University Days**

My undergraduate years were wonderful times of incredible growth and development. When I was eighteen, I was accepted to Covenant University's Policy and Strategic Studies program. My course was fantastic. 'I know this is the school for you because the church and library are facing each other,' my mother said as I entered for the exam. Although my mother is a devout Catholic, she believes that Christ is one and that churches should work together rather than compete. When I was accepted into Covenant, I was pleased, but when I was eventually transported to the school, I felt nauseous, especially when I had to drop my phone. I was used to speaking with friends and family at my leisure, but now I had to wait in a phone booth to speak with my family. Adeola Adenihun was my first friend. We met at the new student introduction program, and we were both from the same department, which was then known as Policy and Strategic Studies, but she was studying International



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Relations. We became extremely close friends. Jennifer Okpala, Faith Oviasogie, Kate Jinadu, Michael Esong, Nkechi, and Ify Oragwue were among my other intellectual friends. Despite Covenant University's severe disciplinary system, which included a no-phone ban, no off-campus dormitories, a required home exit to leave the school grounds, and a strict administrative disciplinary system, we made the most of our time there. Covenant University has several innovative features that make it an ideal environment for developing tomorrow's world leaders. Entrepreneurial studies courses were provided from level one to level ten, dubbed EDS 101. (Entrepreneurial Development Studies). This is an entrepreneurial development program in which people are taught both theoretical and practical life skills, such as how to make a living through entrepreneurship, business and idea development, skill acquisition, and so on, based on life lessons learned from over a hundred businesses that have operated and are still operating in the United States and abroad. EDS had two components: a theoretical component and a practical component, in which a student chooses whatever group of practical life skills he or she wants to study throughout the semester, such as fishing, baking, cloth-making, water-making, and so on. As a result, most Covenant students learned how to believe in a dream and see it come true. After school, you will be hard pressed to find a Covenant student who is bored. Even before starting youth service, students are frequently preoccupied with one or more business modules, or working and learning. Covenant University students, overall, are voracious readers. Not only were we taught the value of reading, but the adage "leaders are readers" was firmly embedded in our minds as one of the ways to cultivate a sound mind for outstanding leadership.

Total Man Concept (TMC) is another course that Covenant University students must take from their first to their last year. The Total Man Concept focuses on producing a three-in-one man, with a spirit, soul/mind, and body. TMC focuses on discovering and developing each student's purpose, dream, or life goals. It touches on topics such as godliness, high morals, and leadership, as well as physical and mental awareness. Beyond its upgraded library, Covenant University includes a leadership library where students can study and borrow autobiographies of famous men, as well as literature on leadership, management, godliness, finance, and other topics. Covenant University also hosted several internal conferences and seminars where outstanding men and women spoke to students, inspiring them to be the best they can be. Thus, in addition to Covenant's illustrious academics, which included state-of-the-art engineering facilities and an up-to-date library, the university also taught disciplines related to human development. My time at Covenant taught me a lot and provided me with a greater feeling of self-worth and purpose. Despite my impressive Policy and Strategic Studies degree, I advanced thanks to Covenant University's well-rounded education. I started reading one book a day when I was in school!

The primary goal of education is to improve constructive thinking. During the industrial revolution, education was focused on producing graduates who could fill the numerous job openings that arose because of the expanding industries. Due to the information era and its

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new accessories such as the internet, computers, and smart equipment, industrialization has steadily faded away at this time. Fewer workers are required, therefore fewer jobs are available. As a result, education must return to its roots and become what it once was: an experience that causes people to think, to be interested, to be innovative, and to solve problems. Education should focus on not only job performance but also employment creation. I related a story from my school days to demonstrate that I decided to learn not only what was taught in the four walls of the classroom, but also what was taught to me through my life experiences. The brain must be able to understand data and communicate with its surroundings in unison. A new way of thinking and a new perception are required for transformation to occur.

The transformative phase of education lies deeply in the new awareness it must create. **“My people perish for lack of knowledge...in all you’re getting; get wisdom for it is the principal thing.”** Thus, knowledge and wisdom, which should be seen in education, is the right foundation for a sustainable and transformative change. This is not a call to the leaders, or a call to its citizens, but a call to a higher thought, a call to higher reasoning.

## **Section II**

**The great aim of Education is not knowledge but action; the fundamental purpose of education; the crisis in Nigeria's education and the way forward.**

### The Importance of Education; The Nigerian Case

Several scholars have characterized education in terms of its definition and comprehension. "Education is what's left after you've forgotten everything about school," one person commented. Schooling disrupted Henry David Thoreau's education, according to the American naturalist and writer. "A human being is not in any genuine sense a human being until he is educated," declared Horace Mann. "Universal suffrage without universal education would be a burden," Wayland said. The worst education that teaches self-denial is better than the finest that teaches everything else and not that, according to Edmund Burke, whereas Sterling claimed that "the worst education that teaches self-denial is better than the greatest that teaches everything else and not that." Similarly, the worst school that teaches self-control is preferable than the greatest that does not. Professor Fafunwa, an education expert, stated that he supports the definition that defines education as "any sort of training aimed at a balanced evolution of the entire personality through the cultivation of man's spirit, intellect, reasoning, self-feeling, and bodily senses." He claims that education is a man's whole development; it instils values in him and should make him honest, faithful, unselfish, dedicated, fair, just, and impartial.

A more comprehensive definition of education, broadly defined, is "all conscious and direct, incidental and indirect efforts made by a given society to achieve certain objectives that are considered desirable in terms of the individual's own needs as well as the need of the society where that education is based." Education is, without a doubt, the motor of any nation's economic, social, and political growth and development. Professor Fafunwa went on to define development as the process of growing, expanding, multiplying, and naturally developing as a means of advancing Nigeria and its 140 million residents. Nigeria should be the focus of economic, social, cultural, and political development, he said. With 140 million people, Nigeria is the world's most populous Black country. It is the world's tenth most populous country. It is also one of the world's first six major oil producing countries. Nigeria should be among the world's top ten developed countries. Even the first twenty would suffice. Oil, gas, rubber, different minerals, cocoa, and peanuts are among the numerous natural resources. Nigeria possesses more natural resources than Malaysia, South Korea, and most African and South American nations. Because Japan lacks natural resources, it must import all the raw materials required for the 10,000 or more component pieces that make up each of the products it produces. It is also the world's largest automobile producer.

Nigerians are better educated than those in most other African countries. "Nigeria has jobs but no employment," it was remarked a few years ago. In other words, we are not utilizing our personnel effectively, and we are even exporting workforce to other countries, even though we do not have reliable electricity for our homes and businesses. He went on to examine and contrast national development in industrialized and developing (or underdeveloped) countries.

*Some significant contrasts between developed and underdeveloped countries:*

Developed countries are characterised by:

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- High level economy
- High percentage of literacy 80-90%
- High percentage of technical workforce, specialist, and highly industrialised community efficiency; high per capita income
- Low mortality rate and preventive health programs
- Independence for many years
- Well organised and stable political system
- Citizenship rights and obligations recognised
- Education geared to the needs of the people and the country
- Manufactures
- Masses that are scientifically oriented, fewer superstitions, and efficient

Underdeveloped Countries are characterised by:

- Low level economy
- Low percentage of literacy, 3-50%
- Peasant and agrarian economy; inefficient and poor organisation
- Exceptionally low per capita income
- High mortality rate; disease
- Autonomous in the last few decades
- Less stable
- Inherited system from the colonial era with little relevance to the needs of the people and the country or sheer imperviousness to changing times
- Mass is superstitious, scientifically illiterate and lacking technical efficiency
- Indices of poverty

Professor Fafunwa also questioned how Nigerians are faring with our full people and natural resources, as well as \$100 million per day in oil money. Let us take a quick look at the poverty index. This refers to some basic human necessities that must be provided to every Nigerian citizen for him or her to be tolerably happy and comfortable as a human being, regardless of whether they live in an oil-rich country.

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The indexes are based on how many of Nigeria's 140 million people lack necessities despite the country's oil wealth.

1. Water: less than 40% of Nigerians have access to pipe borne water. This means that more than 80million of us draw their water from rivers, streams and taps located a few meters or several kilometres from their homes
2. Food: how many Nigerians can afford two square meals a day? certainly less than half of the population
3. Health: how many of our people have access to a good hospital or clinic? We have several specialist hospitals and university teaching hospitals, but our heads of states and top functionaries, all well-to-do Nigerians fly abroad for treatment and dedicated operations. What chance does the average citizen who needs the same services but is too poor, must contemplate on treatment? This means at least a half of our people have zero options.
4. Shelter: how many of our people live in a congenial environment? Most of our villages have not improved since independence in 1960; most of our people live under trying circumstances despite our oil wealth, with poor structures, inadequate lighting and unclean water from the stream or river.
5. Transportation: the major contribution that the military made was the construction of a network of roads in Nigeria but alas! These roads are now death traps because neither the roads themselves nor the cars and the Lorries that ply them are properly maintained.
6. Employment: the few manufacturing companies we have produce fewer than 30% of their capacity mainly because they are starved of foreign exchange to buy the raw materials not available locally. They suffer erratic power supply as well. Consequently, they must lay off staff or even close their factories.

Professor Fafunwa went on to emphasize the importance of education as a key to growth and development, claiming that education is the engine that propels any nation's development and growth. According to him, underdevelopment is not only a dreadful physical condition, but also a deplorable and disturbing mental one. As previously stated, man is the alpha and omega of economic development, and this statement applies to all men, women, and children, not just a select few. And education is the key to unlocking all development doors.

Bill Clinton stated explicitly during his inauguration as President of the United States in 1994 that the twenty-first century will be the century of education for America. "A nation that hopes to thrive in spite of its ignorant populace shall never be," wrote one prominent author. The uneducated, not the other way around, have our destiny in their hands. If we are to reach our 2020 goal as Nigerians, we must integrate education into all aspects of our economic, social, and cultural development. No big industrial revolution can take place or be no new civilization can be formed or maintained in a

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country where the masses are still primarily held down by ignorance, disease, and poverty, it seems inescapable to me. When we say that an educational system must be responsive to the needs and conditions of those it serves, we mean that it must consider the citizens' social, economic, cultural, and political needs. What good is basic or fundamental education if it does not assist the person receiving it in resolving some of his or her immediate personal difficulties, or worse, if he or she has never received any formal education? Formal education's main goal is to help children develop their natural abilities by providing an atmosphere that will stimulate, challenge, and immerse them socially, physically, cognitively, and emotionally in that type of learning. Primary education, for example, aims to develop the whole kid through a variety of creative activities such as language arts, mathematics, science investigation, manipulative activities, social studies, civics, physical activities, and creativity thinking.

Professor Fafunwa went further to talk on the national policy on education, otherwise known as the 6-3-3-4 (or 9-3-4). The system is certainly the answer to our educational problems if we execute it judiciously, efficiently and with maximum co-operation from the public, parents, ministry officials, professionals, organisations, and teachers.

The primary idea behind pre-vocational training for junior secondary schools is to build manipulative skills in our children, also known as manual dexterity, self-reliance, ingenuity, respect for the dignity of labour, and, most importantly, a good attitude toward technical things. The 6-3-3 system was created to help Nigeria transition into the twenty-first century by encouraging pre-vocational, technical, commercial, and academic courses, as well as guaranteeing that all fields of study are treated equally. A nation is built by all professionals, tradesmen, and academics in the technological, commercial, and intellectual fields. Each field is equally vital as the others, and each has its own contribution quota. There are occasional accusations that the 6-3-3-4 method, which is the same as the 9-3-4 system, is ineffective and should be abandoned. The problem lies with the system's operators, not with the system itself.

Carpentry, bricklaying, home economics, local crafts, farming, secretarial studies, technical drawing, computer training, and other skills are required by the system. It also necessitates the use of well-trained technical and commercial educators. The fact that we are reluctant or unable to offer enough trained teachers and proper equipment does not imply that the system is ineffective and should be abandoned. Do we turn off the power because NEPA or PHCN is inconsistent, or do we remove all water lines because the water is not flowing, or telephone poles because NITEL is not working well? NO! So, it is not the 6-3-3-4 system that is the problem: it is the people in charge of implementing it.

Professor Fafunwa emphasized the need of the elite appreciating the technical education system. Because plumbing is a humble occupation that does not accept shoddiness in thought, it was OHN Gardner, the former president of Carnegie Corporation, who stated my viewpoint on the subject. This is since it is a prestigious activity that will never enjoy

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excellent publicity or philosophy, and neither its pipes nor its theories will hold water. I implore to everyone to stop importing equipment for the 6-3-3-4 system's secondary sector's intro-tech program. We must produce these items locally out of self-respect, self-esteem, and self-reliance. Nigeria must be more committed and determined in its research and development efforts. Nigeria has been left behind by Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, India, and others, according to Nigerian professionals and others, because they take research and development more seriously than we do.

Fafunwa proposes the following solutions:

- Compel all non-literates of less than 60 years of age to attend evening literacy classes using existing schools, churches, mosques, town halls, village squares etc. Those who fail to attend will be denied government contracts and drivers licenses. He stated that all Nigerians should be literate and numerate and learn at least one language in five years.
- Earmark 30% of the annual federal budget to education and human capital development.
- Propose generically the Universal Basic Education (UBE) and enforce its laws. All child beggars and hawkers should be taken into custody by female welfare workers and their parents fined or jailed according to the law. UBE must be enforced, including the giving of textbooks and exercise books to pupils.
- Make teacher education courses, tuition, and books free.
- Place greater emphasis on technical education.
- Improve conditions of teachers at all levels.
- Adequately fund university and polytechnic libraries, laboratories, classroom facilities and research.
- Mount vigorous public enlightenment programmes to educate our people on the new dispensation.
- Make entrepreneurship and apprenticeship a part of curriculum.
- Eliminate bribery and corruption which have permeated the whole fabric of Nigeria.
- Inculcate discipline at school, at work and at play.
- Develop a third major national language to give our children self-confidence and a sense of self-worth as they grow in the Nigerian environment.



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Professor Aliu Babatunde Fafunwa, a former Minister of Education, presented this paper titled "How to Rejuvenate the Education Sector to Meet 21st Century Challenges" at the presidential villa's first Nigerian national merit award winners' ceremony.

## The Cores Is the Infallible Accent

Every leader is tasked with making the world a better place. A good leader in a country also moves his people and his country ahead by improving what is already in place; by implementing solutions to a problem. Inspiring individuals to change is also an important aspect of a leader's job. Is it true that change is more expensive than it appears? Are the indicators of change more difficult than they appear to be to the average person? Perhaps this is why a cause of change in educational development, progress, and reformation need both strategy and enthusiasm. It is by far a crucial strategic skill for long and short-term growth and national development. It is crucial to remember that education entails more than just listening to lectures and obtaining handouts with no opportunity for practice or self-testing.

*"Self-discovery of a man"*

The primarily result of education should be knowledge and self-discovery, as it is written "Man know himself." Man is a dynamic being with great potential that can go dormant if not tapped. "Ignite me," the spirit pleads as a youngster step into a school for the first time and enters the walls and confines of formal education. A youth who does not pass through the 6-3-3-4 system is one who eats at home, is unemployed, and is ignorant.

The operators, not the system, are the problem, according to Professor Fafunwa. Industrialization is a critical component of a country's development. The exchange rate between imports and exports determines a country's currency. The GDP of a country determines its growth. The degree of employment in a country is governed by its production capacities, as we can see from its industrialisation. Because of industrialisation, countries such as China, Korea, Malaysia, India, and Japan are rapidly developing or developing. The US is seeking to create more employment because of solely one reason; they are losing their markets to the Asians. Most of their factories are being relocated to the Asian market. Industrialisation is a growth magnet, and its development depends on electricity and education; sound education based on practice and far ahead of theories.

The history and the special role of the universities as the purveyor of new knowledge, the nursery of the intellect and character and the conscience of the nation places special burden on the Nigerian universities at the dawn of the new century. The nation expects that the education body and its leaders will lead the change in regaining our grounds already lost in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The university must rediscover its mission as the guide to the future and the conveyor of tradition and culture through the transforming essence of intellect. The genius of Benin was not only embodied in songs and dance but in technological and artistic

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exploits brought in bronze and other refined metals long before the depredations and durations that came with the western man. It is the universities' challenge to recapture the glories of the past by re-enacting an equivalent accomplishment in the currency of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The universities must return to the primacy of the intellect as the anchor of character to the nurture of those men of ideas and action whose leadership can envision and transform. The Nigerian university system should move away from the give-and-take paradigm, in which all learning is delivered in the classroom and returned in the classroom; where intellectual expression is limited to the constraints of a student who crams and gives back to the teacher or lecturer. Debates, practical, project work, idea generation- the applicability of the theorems presented to soil the country's social, cultural, and economic systems, the African education system, and ingenuity are all necessary at this time. The abandoning of Western ideals and the emergence of African talent is a timely appeal.

Stakeholders and senior citizens in Nigerian education must band together to dismantle the educational system and then reform it by accepting, developing, and re-creating kinds of knowledge that can be simply referred to as Nigerians.' We cannot limit our understanding to the western way of doing things. Education should not, in and of itself, limit the mind; rather, it should open the mind to limitless possibilities. If earning a job is the only way to move on for graduates, education has become a prison for beautiful brains rather than an expression of limitless possibilities. Man's potential should not be limited, especially if he believes that school is for acquiring knowledge for a profession; rather, it should be for acquiring knowledge for self-expression and creativity. The vast majority of people have been taught that school certifications are synonymous with a good life, and that a good life can only be obtained via work. So, who are the people who will go out and work in order to create more jobs?

The building of a credible environment for strong firms is where excellent education and government help meet. Nigeria's electricity is at the forefront of the country's industrialization. How will new factories come in if the existing ones are closing or migrating to neighbouring countries? The advent of Southeast Asian nations as key players in the global economy, resulting from the restructuring of those economies, has been a major development in global science over the previous four decades. It is now widely acknowledged that the quality of their leadership and the ideals represented in their culture were the two most important factors in their change. We can see the relevance of Michael Porter's insight that "the capital of an economy includes not only the accumulated physical, capital of machinery, structures and physical infrastructure (roads, ports, telecommunications) but also the level of education, workforce skills, attitude, managerial talent and social capital" from Taiwan to South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, and even Indonesia. It encompasses a country's legal institutions and corporate regulatory policies."

In other words, resources, processes, and values embedded in a culture driven by high-quality education are critical in the economic transformation process. As a result, under

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transformational leadership, it is the leadership that establishes the plan (education and electricity) and stimulates the public through its commitment. To create a culture of excellence, a combination of inference, experience, and instinct is used. Successful leadership thus entails a leadership style as well as parts of the correct environment that the leader has established, with leadership styles ranging from authoritative to effective to democratic pacesetting to coercive. It is critical to demonstrate flexibility in the use of each leadership style at the proper time to create the optimal environment. In this context, the leader's sense of responsibility, the standards set, the works offered and their relevance to the citizenry's interests and choices, as well as the clarity demonstrated in projecting the values and mission, as well as the level of commitment demonstrated, are all critical in establishing the right environment and ambience. In this regard, it is important to highlight that the leaders who orchestrated their countries' transformations were all individuals of great skill, intelligence, vision, and education. One can wonder if education is so crucial in the transformation process, especially in the new competitive climate created by globalisation. At both the national and situational levels, strategic thinking, innovation, technological sophistication, and entrepreneurship have become crucial. This is due to the fact that wealth is created at the microeconomic level, which is where the link between affluence and productivity is established. High productivity cannot be sustained at the national or institutional level without an intellectual infrastructure in place, which is fuelled by a creative educational system.

According to Michael Porter, a country's productivity, which is engineered through high-quality education, allows it to maintain high wages, a strong currency, and attractive returns on investment, and hence a high standard of life. He also pointed out that productivity, not export, is the goal; productivity can only improve naturally if the country expands its exports of goods and services. Countries' productivity is determined by the productivity of their businesses and institutions. As a result, whether by a nation or between nations, exports based on wages or cheap currency do not provide an appealing level of living. The twin drivers of economic growth, namely technological change and capital deepening are at the heart of economic growth, both of which are dependent on the level of sophistication or intensity of competition that drives current productivity and fosters innovation and technological growth, and thus productivity growth. None of this would be possible without a strong education. Given the current state of the world, human capital quality is critical for economic growth and competition. As a result, colleges play an important role as both a source of talent and a source of knowledge. In today's world, the types of abilities necessary for functional activities include both new skills and new technologies. It becomes clear that severe measures are required to turn the tide of Nigerian society's economic deterioration and anomie. Poverty and unemployment are two demons that must be eliminated. It is also evident that fresh initiatives are required to address the fundamental economic issues of diminishing production and productivity, as well as the maintenance of macroeconomic stability. Some of the issues have persisted for so long that "quick fixes" are no longer a

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possibility. This is especially true in the educational system and infrastructural provision. This means that, as previously said, a comprehensive re-examination of the Nigerian University's curriculum and work practices is required, both for students and teachers.

Udia Ofeimun in his seminar paper entailed "Education, democracy and development," identified five purposes of education as follows:

- Educating for civility and culture
- Education for individual empowerment
- Education for public enlightenment and democracy
- Education for labour and economic development
- Education for national power

Prof. I. E. Sagay recognizes this, and in his paper "Improved educational standard as pre-requisite for meaningful development of Nigeria in the twenty-first century," he goes on to say, "It is obvious that these various purposes of education are important for the establishment of man's total culture and civilisation." Education's important position in man's ascension and ability to conquer and rule his surroundings for his own benefit is readily apparent from definitions. Education, according to Awolowo, is "a process of physical and mental culture in which a man's personality is fully developed."

Education has also been defined as the application of knowledge rather than only the learning of knowledge. Even more pertinent is G.G.K Miller's description of education as a "process by which a society intentionally transmits its cultural history, accumulated knowledge, values, and skills from one generation to another through school and other institutions." Emu bases his explanation of this vital component of education entirely on Chief Obafemi Awolowo's book *Problems of Africa -The Need for Ideological Re-appraisal*, which demonstrates the importance of education on overall social development. He observed that if all of Africa's populations were transported to Europe and all of Europe's people were transported to Africa, the modifications that would occur in either direction after around fifty years or a century would be distinct. The traveller to Europe would discover that the Africans brought there had reduced Europe to the same level of development, if not worse, as it had been prior to the population exchange. On the other hand, Europeans, especially with the benefit of Africans' more abundant resources, would have aided the level or even would have made it better than it was. I totally agree with him.

Of course, Awolowo realized that the racist thinker on both sides of the racial divide would see inevitability in the painted scenario on the grounds that Africans are inferior in mental endowments to the European. But, not so, argues Awolowo, "when I speak of the under-development of the subjective mind of the Africans, no suggestion at all is implied of biological inferiority." Every subjective mind, he reasoned, be it the white man's, the Asians

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or the Africans is blank at birth. The difference between one subjective mind and another in later life arises wholly and solely from the extent and quality of development of the two minds that has taken place in the interval. Thus, the difference is occasioned not by any innate lack or disorder but by the absence of a generalised consciousness based on basic education. Here the questions of cultural heritage, accumulated knowledge, mental and social background become relevant. In other words, underdevelopment is a state of the mind, which is manifested physically and mentally in our environment. It is also manifested in our political, economic, and social activities. Professor Frank Okoli, the late great old boy who distinguished the concept of self-actualization from the principle of manpower in his classic book "A state university is founded," echoed this vision of education. On the other hand, the self-actualization principle is founded on a different understanding of university education. Its goal will be to sharpen students' minds, expand their capacity for analysing and testing data, familiarize them with humanity's experience, and cultivate their moral and aesthetic senses.

The focus here will be on mental attitudes and thinking styles rather than facts or themes. Because, according to Olubummo and Ferguson, the student may or may not use his tactics later in life, he will undoubtedly forget his facts, but his mental attitudes and thinking style "he will carry with him to his grave." Such students should be free to decide, as Harvard graduate John did, that "four years at Harvard was enough." I still had a lot to learn, but I'd been given the wonderful idea that I could now teach myself." "We know next to nothing about practically everything," a 1983 issue of Readers Digest remarked. It is not essential to understand the genesis of the cosmos; it is only to desire to do so." Civilisation is based on the desire for knowledge rather than any specific knowledge. Even if the educated man does not know the solution, he has been conditioned to adopt a style that is more likely to provide it. The bottom line is that, while the manpower principle encourages learning to obtain a job, the self-actualisation principle advocates learning to perform a job. According to Dore, the former fosters an employee orientation in which "would-be employees have learnt to follow orders rather than taking initiative, creativity, honesty, curiosity, and resolve to get to the bottom of things." This is what is lacking in our present philosophy of education. For it is so clear that education is not limited to mere learning of skills to enable one to acquire a job but more profoundly and fundamentally it relates to the development of an enquiring, adventurous, curious, and inventive mind. This is the type of education that leads to growth and development.

Prof. I. E. Sagay then moved on to analyse development, stating that Walter Rodney's definition of development is, in his perspective, timeless. "What, therefore, is economic development?" he asks. A society's economic development is based on its members' collective ability to deal with the environment. The extent to which individuals comprehend the rules of nature (science), the extent to which they put that understanding into effect by creating instruments (technology), and the method in which work is organized all contribute to their ability to interact with the environment. Eventually, it can be claimed that human

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society has been in steady economic development since the beginning of time, because man has multiplied his capacity to earn a living from nature significantly. The magnitude of man's achievement is best understood by reflecting on human and society's early history and noting the following: first, the progress from crude stone tools to the use of metals; second, the shift from hunting and gathering wild fruit to domestication of animals and the cultivation of food crops; and third, the improvement in work organization from an individualistic activity to one that assumes a social clout. In his piece "Issues in Development Nigeria," Nkem Onyekpe comes down to reality what makes development. For this purpose, development is defined as a progression from lower to higher stages and levels of growth and well-being. It can be compared to insect metamorphosis, which involves changes from eggs to larva, larva to pupa, and pupa to a fully-fledged insect. Individuals, firms, states, and other entities all go through development. Development is a generic term which encompasses the transformation of the economy, state, and society through the achievement of greater capacity to deal with the challenges of:

- Production and its expansion.
- Organizing the civil society as a community of people.

Development is continuous as no nation, not even the so-called developed countries, can be said to have attained the highest stage or level. Development must be viewed therefore as a process. Thus, no nation has ever said or can say with confidence that development is finished, for in the process of meeting old and current needs and dealing with different challenges in the economy, political administration, government, and organising the civil society, new needs arise, and new challenges are thrown up. Consequently, no nation can really afford to say as Jesus said, "It is finished." The point must be emphasised that the possibilities for furthering development, for moving society forward are inexhaustible." In a lay man's term development involves greater affluence, higher income per capita, better infrastructure, and social services and so on.

## Purpose, Culture of Excellence, and the Talent Class

*"See as a man diligent in his work, he shall stand before great men"*

Excellence is a talent or ability that is exceptional and hence exceeds conventional expectations. It is also used as a performance benchmark. The ancient Greeks had a concept of 'create,' which denoted exceptional suitability for a certain purpose. This happened in Aristotle's and Homer's works. "We are what we repeatedly do," Aristotle famously stated. Then excellence is a habit, not an act. Eudemonia, another related term, was his contentment as a result of a life well-lived, prosperous, and satisfied.

**Practice makes Perfect!**

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Studies have shown that the most important way to achieve excellent performance is to practice. Achievement of excellence in such fields commonly requires approximately 10 years of dedication, comprising about 10,000 hours of effort, (Wikipedia 2013). This is exactly what Malcolm Gladwell preached about in his book titled *Outliers*.

Excellence is a habit formed over time, but starts at the moment of resolution, decision or dedication towards a given purpose with a reasonable level of passion. Passion as defined by Wikipedia is an intense emotion, compelling feeling, enthusiasm, or desire for something. It is gotten from the ancient Greek verb “paskho” meaning to suffer. The culture of excellence and passion has a meeting point. Excellence is a way of life, but you cannot be exceptional at everything. It is a phrase that refers to a specific area. Excellence is a talent or ability that is exceptional and hence exceeds conventional expectations. Excellence inspires passion, which elevates the level of talent's quality or standard. Passion derives from the Greek verb "paskho," which means "to suffer," but suffering becomes a steppingstone in the pursuit of excellence. If you ask Bill Gates about his hours of studying and practicing, or Steve Jobs about his sleepless nights, you will learn that they did not see it as suffering, but as a sort of joy of fulfilment that can only be fully appreciated if one has placed himself in such conditions of deep pursuit and vision. Excellence stokes passion, which elevates talent's quality and standard. Let us return to Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers* and consider his thoughts on talent evolving into excellence through a 10,000-hour journey of practice, devotion, and discipline, as summarized by Wikipedia.

Apart from their intelligence, objectives, and personality qualities, Malcolm Gladwell discusses numerous essential elements in success in his book. Successful people, he claims, are impacted by their surroundings, the amount of time they spend learning and honing their skills, their hobbies, and talents, and so on. I concur with his findings and viewpoint. Success has a lot to do with a person's character, personality, intelligence, and talent, but it also goes much beyond. Successful people have found themselves in the right environment for a variety of reasons, which has either sparked their passion, talent, or ambition, or has provided them with the environment, materials, and capacities required to develop the level of excellence required for specific professions and career successes. Bill Joy was fortunate enough to attend the correct universities, which provided him with the necessary exposure to let him and other professional computer geniuses succeed. They would not have been anything like what they are today if they had not been exposed to those materials.

This is what a university is for: it is a place where talents are born and developed. Each classroom contains a group of raw talents that require the proper environment for their full expression and development—by habit, by the appropriate technology, instruction, and operators. The institution must be forward-thinking and technologically savvy, and its faculty members must be educated and updated through trainings, travels, and exposure to current events throughout the world. Bill Joy might not have had the opportunity he did if

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the University of Michigan had not prioritized technology development and advancement, and there goes the value of a functionally oriented learning environment. Nigerian universities and its stakeholders must make a firm choice to modernize their libraries, technology, lecturers, and other institution operators every year. This is the age of the internet. However, we appear to be stuck with handwritten assignments, lectures, and notes. If we want to compete with world powers and one day become one of the century's economic giants, we must make the necessary reforms. The Nigerian universities and stakeholders must realise the need for an efficient and good system of education. This can no longer be taken for granted, especially at this time.

Beyond this crucial issue, there is also the need to develop a culture of excellence across all educational institutions in this magnificent country of ours, which is firmly rooted in the strong arms of hard work. Youths must be instilled with a sense of dignity in the workplace. Corruption in schools is the simplest and most contagious way to spread the country's already high degree of corruption. As a result, bribery in any form must be prohibited in schools. Every instructor or student who is caught in the act should be fired right away. Excellence is the breeding environment for effective leadership and innovation, and it must be taught. Passion and talent are overshadowed by sluggish hands. Successful people spend almost 10,000 hours of their lives believing in and cultivating their aspirations, therefore the ability to sacrifice today's pleasure for tomorrow's glory is a fundamental character trait. Among successful people, purpose has been a decisive factor in igniting discipline. This indicates that successful people who have a metal or steel grasp of who they are and what they aspire to be have always felt a sense of purpose. And, in order to build a culture of excellence, this has always been an easy bait to swallow.

Education should be developed in and of itself. Such growth can be evident not only in ideas and skills, but also in self-awareness and a clear concept of what one wants to pursue and become after high school. There is a difference between the amount of passion and excellence that comes with a frivolous mind and the level of passion and excellence that comes with a focused mind. If there is one more skill that Nigerian adolescents should be taught within the four walls of the institution, it should be in the room of purpose and concentration raising and talent development. It is not that there are not enough jobs in Nigeria to take in graduates, but rather that Nigerian youths do not want to be underemployed, or underpaid in any way, as a great man once stated of the country. The lack of purpose among Nigerian youths is the cause of this attitude because purpose and focus would motivate you to work in your deepest passion even if it paid nothing, knowing full well and without a doubt that in time, you would see the light of financial breakthrough through what you love the most. Universities that continue to engage in re-creation, development, and innovation are the best. It is no surprise that the world's best colleges are headquartered in the world's best countries; after all, the link between a country's education and its economy is undeniable. Michigan University, where Bill Joy first saw and played with a computer, is one of the top universities in the world.



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Education must reclaim its place among Nigerian adolescents and elders as a method of self-actualization and healthy living. Nigeria's educational level is falling, which only contributes to the system's disintegration.

The curriculum must be evaluated in connection to Nigeria, to see if it satisfies the aspirations of Nigerians. Education has not had the impact on the country that it should have. Because there is little or no correlation between their education and the realities of the country, it appears that the more educated people are, the more irresponsible they become. The majority of the courses are geared toward a western perspective. Until the recent effort by the Nigerian Educational Research and Developmental Council (NERDC) to tailor the basic school curriculum to the needs of the country (which is still not fully realized), the primary and secondary school curricula in use were those handed over to the nation by the former colonial masters. Some teachers have also played a significant role in the decrease in educational standards. Even now, when service conditions have improved marginally, many teachers do not devote time to professional development. They keep repeating what they have already taught, oblivious to the fact that knowledge is dynamic, and teachers must seek out new information to stay current, as a result, there is no novelty in the teaching. Most of the time, the instruction is outdated, which means that the pupils are unable to compete with their peers throughout the world. Some parents have also played a significant role in the country's declining educational standards. Many parents are unable to review their children's schoolwork due to financial constraints. They delegate their (parents') work to the teachers. Furthermore, many parents do not purchase books for their children. They are unconcerned about whether or not the youngsters attend school. When it comes time for their children's exams, however, the same parents will not hesitate to purchase question papers for them. During one of the university's matriculation exams, a mother provided her daughter a phone SMS giving answers to problems on a certain paper. If a parent encourages a child to cheat on a test, who can then counsel the child against such unwholesome behaviour?

Some pupils have also grown exceedingly lethargic and interested in anything other than their schoolwork and learning. They would rather spend hours watching television shows or movies, but they find it difficult to devote an hour to studying. The majority of students have lost faith in their ability to challenge themselves and pay the price for achievement. Instead, they generate opinions such as "there are ways around it." This is the logic and mindset that promotes cultism on college campuses. Students who do not prepare will intimidate their teachers, resulting in unjustified grades. Promiscuity on college campuses is fuelled by the same attitude toward study. Unlike in the golden past, when students participated in debates and other literary events, today's students are interested in fashion and other non-essentials. 'How did it get this bad?' is not the proper question. Rather, the question is, "What can be done to eradicate the cultural sin among the majority of students?" A rebirth of culture, as posed to us by our forefathers who fought so valiantly for our independence, is required—a culture of creativity and excellence defined by hard

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labour, tenacity, and deliberate focus. This is the value that is required within the nation's community of universities, colleges, and schools: discipline, respect, recognition of cultural relativity principles and the impact of cultural ethnocentrism, respect for other people's rights, and inclusion of social competency and citizenship education.

The government of Nigeria made efforts to implement these policies through the school subjects and to accomplish these goals. The subjects include social studies, moral education, physical education, etc. Social studies is specifically included in the school curriculum. This is to make Nigerians achieve the goal of becoming outstanding citizens that will achieve the country's national goals and objectives. Moral education was introduced into the school system at the elementary stage. This was in order to inculcate moral uprightness in small children so that by the time they grow up they would not become a menace to the society. Such factors that militate against the achievement of the goals set for these subjects include poor teaching methods, lackadaisical attitudes of the learners to learning (because of the social influences such as attitude of the masses, especially in regard to looking for money or wealth at all costs), competition by law enforcement agents and politicians and the inconsistency of government policies as regards education (Adeshina, 2010). There must be a way to instil the worth of our education's precepts. Teachers of these subjects must be trained and retrained so that they can teach students to set goals, develop good character, and strive for excellence, as opposed to traditional teaching and learning processes that emphasize the acquisition of knowledge alone (cognitive domain) and place less emphasis on the affective domain. The use of teaching and learning tools such as film trips, visual and auditory aids, and others must be prioritized. These will pique the learner's interest in learning and acquiring information.

## **Inventions in technology and industrialisation; developing a healthy sustainable economy**

The United States of America is by far the number one world power because of its advanced economy which is heavily indebted to its science and technological development in medicine, mechanical, electrical, and chemical engineering, among others. Inventions, innovations, and the adoption of new ideas have become second nature to those in the West, Europe, and Asia. The scientists and students who turned this idea into a practical science are just like any other student in the globe. Many young Nigerians have been required to compete in worldwide innovation competitions with other world institutions, and while they have won, their creations have never seen the light of day, this is because Nigeria's system is not only incompatible with the long-term viability, support, and development of ideas and inventors, but it also threatens to extinguish the few inventors who have emerged despite the hostile environment. Nonetheless, these are the champions of a healthy, globally competitive environment.

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A report on science and technology and economic development efforts in Nigeria was written by Dr. Felix N. C. Oragwu, FSAN, a technology development consultant. He focused on why Nigeria's science and technology (S&T) efforts have failed to develop the country into a competitive industrial economy. Science and technology activities, according to Mr. Oragwu, are the result of human effort and ingenuity. Physical education, biology, agriculture, engineering, medical science, scientific research, research and development, scientific knowledge and or inventions into prototype products, prototype technical production process, engineering design, product fabrication, technical processes, ecology development, production, and technology innovation are some of the disciplines included (that is modification, upgrading or improving the existing technologies). He went on to characterize an industrial economy as one in which production and services are primarily based on current science-based technologies (technologies), as opposed to the conventional and/or traditional economy of manpower and horsepower of human heritage, which lacks a manufacturing sector. The instruments utilized in human society to shift the fortunes of the economy, including the manufacturing sector, are the human capability and or capacity for S&T activities, as mentioned above. An industrial economy generates significantly more wealth by allowing far more employment outside the bounds of human heritage's conventional and/or traditional economies, in addition, he stated that, in contrast to a traditional economy based on human heritage, an industrial economy is sustained by the use of modern science-based technology, such as modern production and service technologies, equipment, machines, and instruments, all of which are primarily created by scientists, particularly physical scientists, engineers, technologists, technicians, and craftsmen.

He went on to say that the universities for scientists and engineers at the senior level, polytechnics, and colleges of technology at the middle level, and technical colleges and crafts schools at the lower level provide the institutional framework for scientific and technological personnel training. Mechanists, welders, fitters, mould-makers, and material caterers make up the majority of the lowest level. He asserted, scientists and technologists are the primary drivers of the nations' industrial economies. For example, in 1957, Great Britain, a leading industrial economy, had only fifteen universities, nine in England, four in Scotland, one in Wales, and one in Northern Ireland, but hundreds of Colleges of Technologies, Polytechnics, Technological Colleges, and crafts schools to train the scientific, engineering, and technical manpower needed to maintain her industrial economy's competitiveness and the nation's prosperity. He looked at the major reason for Nigeria's failure to develop itself into a self-sustaining competitive industrial economy through science and technology. "We in Nigeria produce crude petroleum oil, we have no refineries (and even the ones built for us are not working because we cannot repair them), we produce gas, we have no gas processing plants," he agreed with Mr. Sanusi Lamido, a very senior functionary of the Nigerian government and the current Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria. We grow cotton, but the textile plants (which were imported and erected

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for us) are broken and we are unable to repair them. We manufacture and export hides and skins, but we have no leather or leather-related enterprises. We have iron ore storage facilities, but we do not manufacture steel (the prime metals of all or many parts of a machine). We produce a variety of major agricultural commodities such as tomatoes, cassava, maize, and so on, but we lack tomato processing factories and industries to create yeast starch and other products. We have a lot of natural minerals, but no chemical industries to make industrial chemicals and other things.

All of these technology and industrial commodities must be imported into Nigeria's economy in order to support the Nigerian economy, especially the manufacturing sector. Without these industries, the manufacturing sector of the economy will be unable to produce jobs and thrive. Since we lack our own industrial production base, our market of over 150 million people is a market for fast-growing economies like China, India, and South Korea, as well as highly industrialized countries like Europe, North America, and Japan. As a result, Nigeria is no longer able to participate in the very profitable global market for industrial goods and services, and it has become a battleground or market for the industrial goods and services of developed countries." He also stated that Nigeria has the best scientific and engineering experts in the world, who are well-trained and informed. Other emerging countries who were once in similar situations to Nigeria now use various forms of scientific, engineering, and technical manpower.

To overcome underdevelopment and poverty, they leapfrogged into a self-sustaining and competitive industrial economy. Nigeria also has vast reserves of agricultural and mineral primary raw materials (solid, liquid, and gaseous), not to mention major investments in science and technology by several Nigerian government administrations since 1899. It is therefore in the public interest to learn why S&T operations have so far failed to improve Nigeria's economic fortunes and what should be done to rectify the issue. Nigeria's addiction to everything foreign, as well as her lack of political will and vision, he believes, should be reformed so that she becomes less dependent on other countries and more self-sufficient. Mr. Oragwu delved into history to hypothesize and provide useful insight into how science and technology (S&T) activities arose and how Nigeria became involved in S&T activities. He went on to say that modern science originated in Europe in the 17th century AD as a result of discoveries in "Ancient Science" of Greece antiquity dating back to 600 B.C. that spanned over 23 centuries.

The use of mythology in the acquisition of modern scientific knowledge and the application of scientific knowledge itself in Europe's economy resulted in the development of new technologies (now referred to as modern technologies) of production and services in Europe's economy, as well as the 18th and 19th century AD industrial revolution, which transformed Europe into a formidable modern technology and industrial economy.

The developments in science and technology in Europe economy are the results of the following activities, namely:

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Conversion of heat energy based on the use of coal as a source of energy in the form of steam into work in the 18th century AD, and electrical energy in the form of electricity into work in the 19th century AD, to usher in the development of the steam engine and electrically powered institutions and devices for use in railway and steamship transportation, as well as telegraphs and telephone communications, all in Europe, and with later discoveries of other forms of energy. The scope and complexity of technologies and industrialisation have expanded beyond human imagination. For the first time in every economy, new ways of production and services (modern science-based techniques or simply technologies for short) were pushed, as opposed to the conventional and or traditional techniques (manpower and horsepower) of human heritage. Building and developing domestic endogenous capability and or a capacity in Europe for S&T activities through the taking of effort, sweat, and blood in Europe in order to produce the encouraging new modern techniques (technologies) of production has ushered in what has now come to be referred to as industrial economy, building and developing domestic endogenous capability and or a capacity in Europe for S&T activities has ushered in what has now come to be referred to as industrial economy.

This led to the ushering in the 18th -19th century AD industrial revolution, which changed the scope and complexity of the economy and industrialisation and set up a new culture of economic growth and development in Europe that transformed Europe and military power, which unfortunately Europe used to subdue and colonise Africa. He proceeded on to capitalisation after mentioning the indices. He argued that a master game of hard effort, perseverance, and a steel vision is required for a nation's capacity building, for the manufacture of modern technology and competitive industrial goods in any economy. According to him, as a result of the developments in Europe, the then (white European) colonies of North America, now the United States and Canada, quickly followed Europe's lead and developed their own capabilities and capacities to use S&T activities in their own socio-economic growth and development, successfully leapfrogging into an industrial economy in competition with Europe. He made a comparison between Japan and Nigeria and noted that Japan did not experience first-hand the developments that led to modern science and technology in Europe. It went into the building of her indigenous capability and capacity of S&T through a strategy referred to as reverse engineering and copy technologies, fabrication, creativity, and technology innovation. They used the technologies, related capital goods, blueprints and technical designs obtained from Europe, together with their own inventions, without going through the long and rigorous process of scientific research undertaken in Europe. This they did to replicate these technologies in their own economies and ripple into the industrial economy in competition with Europe. He claimed that Japan's plan was to forego scientific research, development, and teaching in favour of innovating and building on the edges of Europe's scientific platform, which had been regenerated over generations. After becoming fully established, Japan built a large number of polytechnics, colleges of technology, technical colleges, and crafts schools to train

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technologists, technicians, and craftsmen in the skills and competence required for the production of copied modern equipment, machines, scientific technological, and industrial tasks in the Japanese economy. He went on to say that Nigerian authorities and S&T development planners should take note of what made it simpler for Japan since industrial property rights on patents and trademarks were not as crystallized and hardened as they are now in the early twentieth century AD. Other countries, such as China, India, and South Korea, have since found a means to overcome their industrial issues and become competitive industrial economies. He also suggested that a historical sketch of S&T activities be taught as a foundation course at all levels of education in Nigeria in order to dispel misunderstandings about science and technology among Nigerians.

Dr. Felix N. C. Oragwu went even farther, identifying the lack of passion for science and technology activities among Nigerians as a foundational problem in the country's early years, even before it obtained independence from Britain. He stated that it began in 1899, when the British Cotton Growing Association (BCGA), commanded by one Mr Moor, founded an agricultural scientific research facility in Ibadan, Nigeria, known as Moor Plantation. The purpose of the station was to experiment with cotton cultivation in the southern region of Nigeria in order to make it easier to carry primary cotton to Lagos for shipment to the then-famous British textiles industry. He claimed that, despite the fact that cotton was abundantly farmed in Kano, northern Nigeria, there was no railway transportation system or roads connecting Kano and Lagos to carry the crop to Britain. This begs the question, "Why didn't Britain bring in its machinery and manufacture textiles in Nigeria instead of sending cotton to Britain?" It is not necessary to go any farther to realize that the British at the time realized that doing so would ensure Nigeria's long-term prosperity, and thus they preferred to incur the higher expense of exporting out of Nigeria.

He went ahead to state that S&T activities in research and development (R&D) that is required to develop the output of scientific research and or patented inventions into prototype products and technical production processes, engineering design and fabrication of prototype of the products and technical process, technology development/production and technology innovation were all excluded as part of S&T activities in Nigeria during colonial rule. Dr. Oragwu mentioned in a book titled *The Dual Mandate of Europe in Tropical Africa* that Lord Frederic Lugard, the first Governor General of Nigeria, 1914-18, stated categorically:

"The exclusion principle of R&D and technology production in Nigeria was to ensure that S&T activities in Nigeria did not grow to become a threat then or hurt in any form to the British home export industry and economy." He went on to say that the exclusion principle is the root of Nigeria's continued use of foreign-produced technologies, foreign industrial goods, including industrial materials, and foreign professional consultants and contractors, even after the British colonial rule ended, to keep the commanding tasks of science and technology alive in the Nigerian economy. He further stated that these basic delinquencies

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are the cause of the culture of foreign preference in industrial goods, hospital treatments, sports, and entertainment, and so on. According to his interpretation of Fredrick Lugard's ideas, the British arrived in Nigeria not for a "charitable cause," but for the sole goal of advancing the British economy industrially and sustainably. Without the hinges of economic development, education, as previously stated, means sustainable development of a nation, and without them, the negative vices of modern capitalism, such as unemployment, poverty, and religiosity as a form of concealment at the expense of spirituality as a means to true godliness, are loose and easily resurgent. He then went on to talk about Nigeria's educational system during the British colonial period. We see universities, polytechnics, colleges of technology, technical colleges, and crafts training schools on the one hand, and scientific research, R&D, and technology development centres on the other, in contrast to the observation that industrial nations are always characterised by tertiary and post tertiary education.

During colonial control in Nigeria, there was just one university college, University College of Ibadan, Nigeria, which was founded and run by the colonial master from 1948 to 1960. He stated that it was because of this situation that Tai Solarin, a renowned Nigerian educationist, noted in one of his writings that the University College, Ibadan, had a faculty of divinity with only students taught by five academic staff members, including one professor and one associate professor, but no faculty of engineering or applied sciences to help improve the design and fabrication of the hoes and cutlasses used by Nigeria's self-sufficient peasant farming. By 1960, Ibadan's total student enrolment in all courses in technical education for the training of technologists and technicians required to manage an industrial economy was less than 2000. During British colonial administration in Nigeria, five technical colleges were created, one in Lagos, the then capital of Nigeria, one in Ibadan, the western regional capital, and one in Enugu, the eastern regional capital. All three technical institutes prepare maintenance technicians and artisans to repair and maintain the British colonial civil service's installed capital assets. There was a higher college of technology in Yaba, Lagos, to train post-secondary school students for routine services, assistant scientific officers of agriculture, mineral surveys, and geological surveys, among other things, that were required for British colonial civil service and agricultural and natural mineral export to British industry and economy. He expressed his delight that this type of technical workforce development persisted after colonial rule ended.

This means that practically no R&D, technology development and technology innovation activities took place in Nigeria's economy during the British colonial rule of Nigeria. He later explained that he was not particularly criticising Britain as Lord Lugard wrote in his book, that Britain was not in Nigeria for charitable or peace purposes but was here fully for the British industrial economy and safeguarding its competitive edge.

Dr. Oragwu shed more light on the organisations that were set up by several administrative governments in Nigeria since after the emancipation of the Nation in 1960:

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- FIIRO (Federal Institute of Industrial Research): Its mandate was to develop indigenous technical capability for processing agricultural related industrial materials and industrial food commodities and to transfer these technologies and capacities to domestic products in the bid to reduce the importation of such technologies.
- RMRDC (Raw Materials Research and Development Council): Its mandate was to develop domestic indigenous capability and to process and produce industrial materials from Nigeria's abundant primary raw materials, including industrial chemicals such as organic, inorganic, and special chemical including fertilizers, explosives, and much more.
- NOTAP (National Office for Technology Acquisition and Promotion): Its mandate was to take an in-depth study of technologies mostly imported. And in the Nigerian industry, in particular the SMEs have a market survey of technologies needed. The need to liaise for advice in the making of selected number of technologies through reverse engineering design and copy technology, fabrication, and creativity, to build the domestic capacity to produce them in Nigeria and sell or transfer them at costs to SMEs to reduce their going to buy such technologies from outside Nigeria.
- The same was true for NASENI (National Agency for Science and Technology Infrastructure) and PRODA (Projects Development Institute).

He later stated that part of the problems of these institutions is that they operate as scientific research institutions rather than technology development institutions, and still see themselves as such. They still see themselves as scientific research institutions in competition with University Academic Research Institutions

For example, Daewoo of South Korea in a noticeably short period with little foreign support was able to set up by maximum self-reliance, a globally competitive South Korean automobile industry (KIA) whose products now dominate the landscape of Nigeria. By early 1980s no such industry existed in South Korea, He believes that the only way out is to construct a powerful national technology strategy that will force them to produce production equipment and/or industrial chemicals based on Nigeria's enormous mineral deposits, notwithstanding the interests of their international suppliers. He believes that maximal self-sufficiency is the way to go, and that Nigeria need not only political will but also the ability to make difficult sacrifices. He also stated that Nigeria should avoid following the pattern of British colonial rule, which is to place an excessive amount of prestige and status on university degrees and diplomas as a means to an end, as opposed to the very low status accorded to the diplomas and certificates of institutions that train technologists, technicians, craftsmen, and technology, as well as alert entrepreneurs and businessmen, whom he described as the economy's primary movers. He suggested that the attempt to establish SEIMI in Nigeria through the establishment of NASENI is making little or no progress and that the organization's staffing and operational infrastructure be seriously reviewed so that NASENI can return to its original mandate of using reverse engineering and copy technology creativity for its technology and capital goods production tasks in the



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economy. He also stated that Nigeria still has a long way to go in terms of creating a political environment that prioritizes the quality of other citizens' lives, equity and human rights for all citizens, merit, honesty, hard work, and healthy competition as a foundation for reward and fame, all of which must be addressed in order to promote true economic growth and development.

In order to promote creativity and address the unhealthy culture of cutting corners- "man know man," self-serving opportunities, etc., all shrouded in corruption, ethnicity, and religion politics as the basis of wealth acquisition and face in Nigerian society, the country must develop a sustainable culture that encourages hard work, maximum self-reliance, creativity, innovation, and effort, rather than chance.

Dr. Oragwu concluded that Nigeria has what it takes to improve its development indices and become developed, but it need selfless leaders who will inspire human endeavour and innovation rather than embracing materialism at all costs.

## **As the curtain closes**

Nigeria has come a long way, yet education continues to fall short of its promise of refining and enhancing the individual so that he can better society. Poor quality teachers, inadequate facilities, a lack of educational materials, negative student values, poor school organization and management, and inadequate monitoring are only a few of the causes of this malfunction, because a country's economic, social, and political well-being is dependent on the quality of education its citizens get, it is critical that we continue to strive for excellence, particularly in education. "Plan for a year, plant rice; plan for ten years, plant trees; plan for a hundred years, educate a person," according to an adage. No one can deny the importance of education in any community. Education has long been linked to a country's socioeconomic, cultural, political, democratic, technological, and medicolegal development.

"Education has long been acknowledged to be the remedy to poverty and ignorance, as well as the key to unlocking natural resources," said Ms Chinwe Nora Obaji, a former Minister of Education. Indeed, no nation seeking accelerated development does so without first developing its educational system; without first cultivating its own crop of professionals, technologists, and scientists, on whose shoulders the nation's collective vision for socioeconomic and political development is articulated and implemented. The correct education allows the environment to produce the kind of manpower that is sensitive and relevant to our country's development needs. There is widespread agreement that education is the most important factor in moving a society toward sustainable development and boosting people's abilities to turn their dreams into reality. There is a strong link

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between educational progress and economic, political, and social trends, as well as national development. Schools and educational systems, it is frequently said, are not separate institutions in the context of national growth. As a result, educational reforms must be considered in the context of economic, political, and social dynamics.

Education delivers more than only scientific and technical knowledge. It also gives the desire, reason, and social support needed to pursue and put them into practice. Education enables a community to promote attitudes, behaviours, and lifestyles that are conducive to a long-term future. Education for sustainable development is viewed as a learning process that has the potential to improve the capability of the forces that determine socioeconomic growth in the future. Education is a process of lifelong learning that is not constrained by the location of a school.

The education system reform aims to improve lifelong learning by enabling citizens to develop their individuality and promote their sense of creativity, empathy, equity, justice, and internationality through a dynamic and progressive citizen engagement process.

The level of educational and scientific recognitions determines the social and economic well-being of individuals and the international ranking of modern societies, and Nobel prizes are symbolic symbols of international recognition of the role of education in world progress. Nigeria faces numerous challenges that make the provision of high-quality services challenging. Inadequate funding by federal, state, and local governments, to the extent that funding has been in response to conditionality imposed by International Financial Institutions, is one of the most serious difficulties facing education (IFIs). Between 1997 and 2000, federal education spending was less than ten percent of total spending, according to statistics. The current administration has grabbed the bull by the horns, attempting to improve the educational sector, particularly through its current budget allocation; this will be covered further below.

Second, there is the issue of access, which has received a great deal of attention in recent years. The reasons why people do not go to school; the people who are generally excluded, have been studied. The cost of schooling, the opportunity cost, illness and hunger, the limited and affordable cost of books, stationery and basic equipment, uniforms, admission fees, registration and examination fees, contribution to the building and maintenance fund, construction fees, transportation, mid-day meals, parents/teachers, and extra-tuition fees are all reasons why children do not attend primary schools. The opportunity cost for parents who send their children to school is the time that the children could have spent doing something useful for the family, such as earning money or helping the household's functioning. Children may be unable to attend school due to illness or famine in the home. Limited economic benefits, such as the fact that those who have completed their education have no work, are used to discourage people from attending school.

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Finally, poor schooling quality, particularly in terms of poor physical infrastructures, a lack of motivated staff, poor resource utilization, curriculum content, teaching methods, and the school's and teachers' relationships with the wider community, can have a negative impact on the desire to go to school. Dilapidated infrastructure, uninterested teaching staff, poor academic content, and a complete lack of technical resources at all levels of our institutions have all harmed Nigerian students. Many people do not attend school because their parents are illiterate and hence have no desire to educate their children. The second level of ignorance is experienced by parents who have an excessive number of children and are unable to feed, shelter, clothe, or educate them.

In Nigeria, educational reform is an overrated necessity. During the 1990s, a country like Chile had the goals of enhancing quality and minimizing class disparities. Several interventions within the overall reforms, such as the school evaluation and reward system, the elimination of double shifts to increase the number of hours and activities in the school day, and improvements in teachers, salaries, and working conditions, all had a significant impact on quality over time. India's district primary education programme (1995-1999), Botswana's primary education improvement project, Namibia's basic education teacher diploma, and India's Rajasthan Training Programme (which involved teachers directly in the design and delivery of their on-going training) are all examples of educational reforms. In Brazil, the focus was on remote education via television, with the main goal of increasing educational access. Goal setting, targeting, consultation, strategizing, intervention execution, and assessment were all used in each of these situations, but they were all phased out over time.

It is important to remember that education is not, first and foremost, a means to an end. Within the tradition of human capacity theory, it is a necessary component for the full realization of human potential. Natural resources are no longer a competitive advantage for nation-states. They have never done so before. There is no economic model that demonstrates a nation's ability to compete with others based on oil and gas or other types of natural resources. It has always been based on a person's ability to apply information to outperform others. Education must be at the centre of our society if it is to be cohesive and peaceful because education also personifies values.

Dr. Ezekwesili a former Minister of Education spoke about the product of graduates in Nigeria today and I quote:

“There is no nation today that builds a wall around its education sector.” The sector is viewed through the eyes of a cradle-to-grave perspective. It means you do not talk about what is going on at the time you are handing out the certificate; instead, you talk about what is going on when that child is highly productive after school and active in society, the marketplace, and the economy. Our own, on the other hand, has become disjointed, and as a result, even parents would agree that the quality of production has deteriorated. You should realize that in the education sector, production refers to teaching, curriculum

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quality, and knowledge quality. When you send a youngster to a sector, he thinks you have given him a blank slate and told him to "write on this clean slate," but that is not what they see, so they conclude that the education sector's product isn't of the quality that society requires, which is known as the "reject or product syndrome." Because they claim that our children are no longer being taught well in school. There is a story about a company that established a test for 2000 graduates and could not choose between two candidates. That makes me want to cry all over again.

Every time I think about it, I get depressed, but I do not have the luxury of depression right now, so I snap out of it and tell myself, "This is a crisis point where we must act." As a result, product rejection is a significant challenge. What this means is that there are a lot of things we need to check (the substance of our processing work) because the students or learners are the raw material at any level of education. If they emerge out of our processing work (teaching, learning environment) and do not mirror what they gained at the end of that stage of education, then something is wrong with our processing. It means that we must investigate factors such as teacher quality and the relevance of curricular at the various levels to which these goods are subjected. To put it another way, is the information we are disseminating relevant to the environment? If a Nigerian child declares, "I am an economist," but is unable to communicate basic competition market analysis, something is wrong.

Getting all of the important players in the education sector to move in the same direction is one of the most difficult issues. As a result, states and federal education ministries have yet to find a common vision, and without it, we will have a problem. This is because there are some things that can be done better, but the Federal Ministry of Education would be wasting its time if it tried to do them any other way. There are concerns with regulatory oversight. This sector is about providing high-quality education, which means that quality assurance and controlled activities are critical. However, we discovered a federal inspectorate service that has been completely overwhelmed by the scope of the problem. Education has been a highly opaque area in terms of how it has been governed. We saw the opacity mirrored in the fact that if you ask a principal of a FGC or a university administration how much independently produced revenue they had, they might say anything since there is no clear sense of accountability and transparency for those kinds of resources. Now it creates a major governance issue: a lack of accountability and transparency procedures that people rely on, allowing them to operate without fear of accusations and counteraccusations. So, it is like a closed-door operation, and it does not help because education is fundamentally about academic freedom, intellectual freedom, and precision in every sense of the word, and if it is turned into a closed-circuit activity, it will almost certainly result in a lot of disagreements and other issues. So, all of these things that I've spent time thinking about are to show you what we've come across—a sector of disequilibrium." She went on to argue that reforms should focus on minimizing and eliminating disequilibrium, which she defined as a state in which one is not in balance, there

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is a skewed situation, and the goal of the reform should be to bring this sector back into equilibrium. This would result in efficiency gains, which she refers to as efficiency gains. Kareem Airede also promotes another alternative in his paper "Higher Education in Nigeria: The Way Forward." He described education as the ability to read, write, count, and communicate in society, and he linked it to a nation's socioeconomic, cultural, political, democratic, technological, and legal development, he went on to highlight examples of basic education socio-economic connections that exist in Asia, where rapid utilization of global market opportunities for poverty reduction is common.

In Japan, the fundamental code of education, which was adopted in 1872, stated that "no community with an illiterate family or a family with an illiterate person" shall exist. Japan's amazing history of rapid socioeconomic expansion began with the breaking down of educational barriers. Japan was nearly entirely literate by 1910, at least for the young, and by 1913, it was publishing more books and twice as many volumes as the United Kingdom and the United States of America, although being much poorer. He went on to say that the focus on education affected the nature and speed of Japan's economic and social success to a greater extent. In the second half of the twentieth century, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, and other Asian economies followed a similar path, with their views firmly fixated on general education expansion. Nigeria, in my opinion, can follow the Asian educational development trend and aspire to greater heights through the benefits of higher education. We may certainly learn from past and then stay motivated and focused for the times ahead.

He advocated the strategies listed below as the needed capacities for moving the educational sector forward. He notes:

"To ensure an efficient higher education system that would deliver an effective educational service, eight strategic and symbiotic plans/objectives are considered central and must be diligently pursued. This eight-point strategy should enable the nation to achieve an overall goal of transformation of the higher education sector.

The eight-point strategies are:

1. To provide increased access to higher education and to provide well-equipped graduates.
2. To promote equity of access and to redress past inequalities through ensuring that student and staff profiles progressively reflect the demographic realities of the Nigerian society.
3. To build new institutional and organisational identities through local, regional, and international collaboration between different institutions.
4. To build high-level research and teaching capacities to address research and knowledge needs.
5. To create and facilitate global information networking within each campus or adjoining campuses.

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6. To promote and sustain self-sufficiency in funding via the fostering of a triple helix of "University-Industry-Government" relations. This strategy would create more collateral partnerships and linkages with the 'middle' of the heretical structure as important stakeholders, that is, industries, businesses, and communities, who benefit immensely from the university. The universities should, therefore, derive benefits from them, which could be inclusive of funding of research relevant to their practices or specialties.
7. To promote peace and security in the campus as to ensure an enabling "education-friendly-environment" for easy learning and teaching.
8. To promote an active and vibrant parent-teacher association (PTA)."

He stated that these strategic points, if successfully implemented, should be able to assist in the lines of improved discipline, excellent cultural stability, and awareness of negative effects of cultism, participatory funding, or networking. Why shouldn't the PTA (Parents Teachers Association) promote or fund an excellent research project or a post-graduate scholarship, for example? All of these elements are important for enhancing university teaching and research excellence. Universities should prepare to offer greater funding to encourage teaching excellence, implement new national professional teaching standards, and provide better information on teaching standards to aid students' decision-making and raise educational quality. 'It is a reality that there is a pandemic problem with funding in all of our universities,' Kareem Airede continued. This should not, however, detract from our efforts to improve the quality of higher education. Naturally, a son's dependence on his father diminishes over time.

The son should be able to provide for his own wants and livelihood at this stage in his life, as well as fine-tune his spending requirements.' The sixth of the eight strategic points, the triple helix of "University-Industry-Government," can help to alleviate the pervasive problem of funding. Because the government is beset by a slew of national issues, universities should be less reliant on the government. Each higher institution can pursue self-funding by promoting partnerships and linkages with all stakeholders locally, regionally, and internationally; ensuring the provision of functional advisory, extension, and consultancy services on issues that are relevant to the university's and nation's socio-economic advancement; and government-funded higher education funding of Nigeria (HEFON). The formation of HEFON should be done in collaboration with the oil industry and other corporate entities. The funding from such a group should be used to help establish and strengthen connections, as well as to develop a more strategic and non-prescriptive approach to the use of finances. The line of funding utilisation should be decided by the universities themselves, based on their own policies and assessments of local needs. HEFON should be concerned with fostering relationships between higher education and industry in order to facilitate knowledge transfer and the development of job skills. Along with teaching, research, and community service, I feel that this should be a fourth key activity for colleges. The program should be designed to achieve the following goals: more rapid and

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effective transfer of innovative ideas, products, and procedures developed in higher education to business and industry; and improved relationships between people in higher education and industry/business. The success of such a program was reported in the Brazilian embassy's June 2003 report following its first years of operation. That report indicated that academics from the United Kingdom and Brazil benefited much from the possibilities to collaborate more closely in international partnerships and collaborations, and that they had planned additional activities in the future. Higher education activities should include both basic and applied research that is responsive to Nigeria's perceived needs and expectations. He also accepts, among other things, that colleges all across the world have a long history of information sharing that extends back hundreds of years. Before the term "globalisation" was created, the academic world was a global phenomenon in this regard. It allows for free flow of research and expertise, ensuring that the most up-to-date information is available in Port Elizabeth, Samoa, Sokoto, Nigeria, and Los Angeles, California.

He concluded by stating that in view of the constant and continuing developments in IT and new knowledge, a global electronic link-serve should be established in each university, solely for campus use. This aims as a tool for networking, collaborative research studies amongst students, graduates, and teachers. In his paper Education in Nigeria, Tony Okorafor argues that among the many impediments to the development of education in Nigeria, one that is often overlooked but plays a significant role in delinquency is the poor reading and writing culture among Nigerian students.

Education is the most powerful tool for bringing about change. It is also the most significant investment a country can make in order to accelerate the growth of its economic, sociological, and human resources. It is critical that Nigerian youngsters fully embrace the reading culture of education; else, education will lose its most fundamental values. Students and teachers should oppose the pour-back system, in which only what was taught in class is returned to the lecturer during exams, rather than additional investigation and development of the course's main concepts. "I think really when we consider the issue of the rot in the educational system, it can be ascribed to the various stakeholders," says Prof. Mac. Ade Ararumi, former Director of Education at the University of Ibadan, of the cause of the rot in the educational system and what to do to reverse the trend. According to societal ideals, people place a high value on paper qualifications and are willing to go to any length to attain their goals." Prof. Dibu Ujemde further points out that educational failure is due to a lack of money, facilities that are no longer available in schools, and libraries that lack the necessary books and journals. The professors take advantage of the scarcity of books and periodicals by making handouts that students can purchase. As a result, inept people become graduates and then go on to cause societal problems. On the topic 'Management of Higher Education in Nigeria in the Twenty-First Century: Issues and Challenges,' Akintunde Opatola of the Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ibadan, says that human resources are the most important aspect in a nation's progress. Education is the foundation

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upon which a nation's human resources are built. It helps a country's social, economic, technological, and even cultural development. Higher education contributes to the development of human resources in a variety of ways. Proper investment and management of this educational sub-sector can be a key remedy for a country's economic and technical growth. The main thrust of the National Policy on education in Nigeria is hinged largely on the five principal objectives of national development, which are the building of:

1. A free and democratic society
2. A just and egalitarian society
3. A united, strong, and self-reliant nation
4. A great and dynamic economy and
5. A Land bright and full opportunities for all citizens (FGN, 1981)

In Nigeria, higher education is centred on teaching and research with the goal of acquiring, developing, and instilling proper value orientation for individual survival, understanding, and appreciating their environment, and gaining an objective view of the local and external world (FGN, 1981). A higher institution of learning is a place where those who perceive truth can work to make others see it; a place where seekers and learners are bound together in their pursuit of knowledge; a place that will honour thoughts in all of their finer forms; a place that will welcome thinkers in distress or exile; and a place that will uphold the dignity of thought and learning, as well as exact standards in these areas (Ryder, 1968).

UNESCO (1993), views higher education as all organised learning and training activities at tertiary level which includes conventional universities, specialised universities, conventional post-secondary institutions such as polytechnics, colleges of education and other professional institutions, this will be beneficial. However, he goes on to say that higher education in Nigeria's institutional and academic autonomy may be hampered due to its reliance on government funding, and therefore, it is critical that colleges identify new sources of funding, which will enable the education industry's sub-sector not just diversify knowledge but also breakthrough in new fields of research.

Apart from the government, all level of service rendered to tertiary institutions should carry a certain amount of cost even if it will not amount to making profit not only the quality of education but also the process of imparting knowledge. The students will be more focused, knowing full well that education at this level is not free. In addition, in the process of raising more funds for the degree of business, the general concept is that some academic service functions can be run on a quasi-commercial basis, as it is relatively easy to define income and expenditure flows of such services, and then to charge both internal and external users for access to the service. He also claims that one of the solutions for assisting universities is to use any of the intermediary bodies that function as buffers between the government and higher education, such as the National University Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), and National Board for Colleges of Education



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(NCCE). They should play a key role in directing activities such as tertiary education planning, coordination, and finance. If it needs more assistance from the government and wider society, the higher education sub-sector must be accountable to them. This accountability should stem from the provision of relevant quality high-level manpower for the nation's development, as well as advise to the public on its operations and advances in the frontiers of knowledge.

A management information system should be installed as soon as possible to improve financial and human management. This might be done by adapting an existing manual system, and support workers should be sufficient to conduct the diversification. Management and financial challenges will endure without a speedy implementation of such a system in the higher education sub-sector at the turn of the twenty-first century. Cultism is a problem that requires a multidisciplinary approach to solve. The school authorities should completely take over the hostel lodging, which has been identified as a main conduit for helping cultism thrive. To regulate student activities, strict regulations must be implemented. Furthermore, admissions policies must be based on merit rather than "who can pay the bill." This would ensure that only the best get admitted to higher education institutions, which will benefit all stakeholders. Students who are deemed to be unworthy in both learning and character should not be forced to leave the system, and if no changes are evident after two additional sessions, they should be expelled. There should be a proper network across all tertiary schools in order to identify students who have been expelled from one university due to cult activities, so that such students are not re-admitted to another. Furthermore, cult groups' "myth of secrecy" should be debunked by unbanning and registering all of them.

Many students join cults because they want to know why they are prohibited. Like private institutions, all government-owned educational institutions should be examined and re-enacted to fulfil daily, monthly, and quarterly targets. Newspapers should be used to publicize the use of public funds by schools by the federal and state governments. It is impossible to overstate the importance of education to national growth. All aspects of the education business are important in influencing a country's socioeconomic development. The higher education sub-sector, on the other hand, supplies the elements for workforce growth. This sub-sector supplies the raw materials for workforce growth. However, it is under strain in Nigeria due to an increase in the number of students, an increase in administrative costs, organized crime, cult activities, and frequent industrial actions by academic and non-academic employees. The centralization of higher education management and funding in Nigeria has been the bane of the sector's growth and progress. As a result, at the turn of the twenty-first century, all stakeholders in the higher education industry will need to take decisive steps to improve efficiency, establish a proper accounting system, find new sources of funding, and reduce student unrest and frequent strikes by tertiary institution employees.

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Elder Dr. Uma Eleazu, a retired professor and consultant was educated at Fourth Bay College, Sierra Leone, Kings College, New Castle (Now university of California, Los Angeles). He holds a combined honorary degree in Politics and Economics (1962), Master's Degree in Applied Economics (1964), Master's Degree in Public Administration (1967) and a PhD in Political Science (1969). He specialises in public finance and Public Policy analysis. He has taught at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and California State University among so many others.

Dr. Eleazu stated that Nigeria in its decisive actions and decisions about the future requires that the private and public institutions work together in the development of the policies in view of a more sustainable future and that whatever policies emerge from their interaction should have the following components:

- A business future
- An agricultural future
- An industrial future
- An educational future
- Science and technology
- The human condition in the future
- The power structure (politics)
- A world view

I strongly believe that one of the most sustainable routes to advancing the future of Nigeria is in the overhauling capacity of its educational future. I close with this great quote from Henry Spencer; **“THE GREAT AIM OF EDUCATION IS NOT KNOWLEDGE BUT ACTION.”**

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