

EXPLAINING EDUCATIONAL DETERIORATION IN NIGERIA TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES ON NATIONAL SECURITY

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Abstract

Educational deterioration in Nigerian Universities, 55 years after its independence coupled with low level-of- technological and socio-economic development has nurtured graft in all its ramifications among the youths with its attendant negative implications on Nigeria's national security. This paper attempts to provide some explanations for the growing educational deterioration in Nigerian tertiary institutions with its consequent negative implications on Nigeria's National Security. The results highlight an extensive government neglect of its educational policy and objectives on tertiary institutions. The paper concludes with a range of recommendations on how Nigeria could improve its standard of education to avoid its reprisal effects on national security.

Keywords: *Crime rate, Educational deterioration, Low technological development, National Security, Nigeria.*

Introduction

Nigerian educational degeneration 55 years after its independence coupled with low level of technological development and socio-economic development has nurtured graft in all its ramifications among the youths with its attendant negative implications on Nigeria's National Security. Most of the youths turnout annually especially in the engineering related courses in Nigerian universities, lack depth in knowledge and technological applications which have resulted in an unprecedented increase in unemployment and poverty level, thus giving rise to incubation of different crimes with their devastating effects on Nigeria's national security. This paper dwells on the falling standard of education with particular reference to tertiary institutions in Nigeria, either public or private. The Nigerian High Education Institutions (NHEIs) comprise at present 122 universities (36 Federal, 36 State, 50 Private), 71 polytechnics, 47 mono-technics and 79 colleges of education with geographical distribution as shown in Figure 1.

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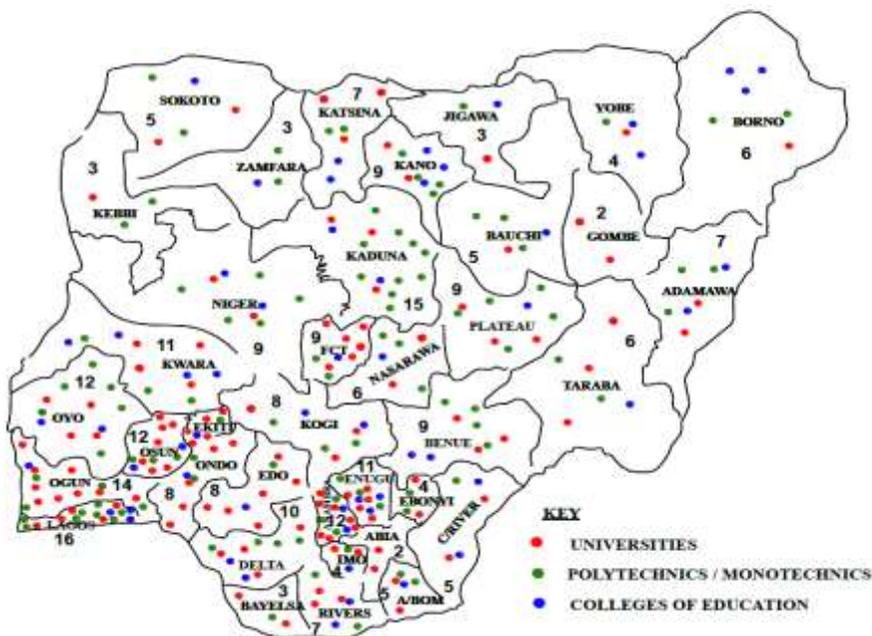


Figure 1: Geographical Distribution of HELs in Nigeria

Source: Bamiro, O. A. (2012). “Tertiary Education In Nigeria And The Challenge Of Corporate” Governance Speech at the TETFund Year 2012 Strategic Planning Workshop, held at the Idris Abdulkadir Auditorium, National Universities Commission, Maitama Abuja, 7th to 8th August.

However, in the 1970s, 1980s and even up to early 1990s, Nigerian universities attained handsome global ranking but so far in this 21st century, no Nigerian university has a placement even among the best 1,000 universities in the world despite being the economic giant of Africa (Ranking Web of Universities, 2015). And the worst is that, among the top 14 universities and colleges in Africa in the 2015 world university rankings released on May 1st, countries like Kenya, Uganda, Egypt etc. (African University Ranking, 2015:1-10), to mention but a few, have a placement before Nigerian universities. These are countries whose Gross Domestic Production (GDP) are two times smaller than that of Nigeria. For example in 2013, the GDP of different countries released by World Bank on 14th April 2015, Nigeria stood at US\$521,803 million, over 80 percent of it from petroleum. Compare that to Kenya, US\$55,243; Uganda US\$24,703; Egypt US\$271,973 etc. (World Bank Annual Report, 2015:1-4)

This is to show the extent of decay and neglect coupled with low economic development, which has had devastating consequences on Nigeria’s educational system and national security. Beyond the falling standard of education on Nigeria’s universities, Nigeria also belongs to the countries of E-9 group. They are those countries with a very high number of illiterates who cannot read, write or communicate in any way set up at the instance of United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Other countries in this group include Bangladesh, Indonesia, India, Egypt, Brazil, China, and Pakistan

(Abubakar, 2009). While most of the above mentioned countries have struggled through reforms to strengthen their respective educational sectors, Nigeria remains the only E-9 countries in Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA) facing serious challenges of turning around the illiteracy rate among its youths and adults by the 2015 timeline set to achieve education for all (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Now the question is, has Nigerian government been lazier-faired in its implementation of educational policy and objectives on tertiary institutions to warrant this conspicuous falling standard of education with its negative implications on Nigeria's national security?

Actually, there has been the National policy on education since 1977, (revised in 1981, 1998 & 2004). There have been the 6-5-2-3, 6-2-3-4 and 9-3-4 educational structures; Continuous Assessment Pedagogy; Universal Primary Education (UPE); and the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Schemes. These reforms initiatives have individually and collectively at one point in time or the other led to modifications in both the structure, inputs, processes, and contexts of education, but the fact remains that government neglect of its educational policy and its objectives on tertiary institutions is undisputable (Cordelia & Egboka, 2009). Lawal (2003) asserts that after two decades of operating the National Policy on Education, the educational system in Nigeria can only be said to be in crisis. The problem cannot be traced to bad policies, but simply because of neglects by the government.

In addition to the above, the polytechnics shall have as their specific goals the following: provide full-time or part-time courses of instructions and training in engineering, other technologies, applied science, business and management, leading to the production of trained manpower. In addition, provision of technical knowledge and skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic development of Nigeria. Furthermore, giving training and impact the necessary skills for the production of technicians, technologists and other skilled personnel who shall be enterprising and self-reliant, and of course, train people who can apply scientific knowledge to solve environmental problems for the convenience of man; and give exposition on professional studies in the technologies (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004)

Beyond the above factors, the monotronics which are single-subject technological institutions for specialised programmes such as: agriculture, fisheries, forestry, surveying, accountancy, nursing, mining, petroleum, etc. should be equivalent to those of polytechnics. The objectives and mode of operation of monotronics shall be the same as in the polytechnics.

These lofty well-articulated goals and objectives of Nigerian educational policy, if followed judiciously, will spur Nigerian educational system to an international standard with its spill over effects on high technological application and less threat to Nigeria's national security. However, the problem we experience here in Nigeria is an outright neglect of education by the government, which has led the ruling elites or the bureaucrats to resort to sending their children abroad for educational knowledge leaving the rot system to middle class and peasants.

In the light of these, this paper seeks to contribute to the literature on educational decadence in relation to national security in six sections: The first is the introductions, followed by the second and third sections examining the central concepts and related theoretical issues as well as the underlying reasons why other countries attain international standard and Nigeria is not. The fourth and fifth sections, respectively, explore the ramifications and causes of educational decadence with its negative implications on Nigeria's National Security. The final section concludes.

Conceptualising National Security

National security is a multidimensional concept. It is used in relation to security at the level of the individual and the state (Osumah & Ekpenyong, 2006). At the individual or non-conventional level, it refers to security from the point of view of human security, job security, social security and security against natural disaster (Chikwem, 2012:6). In fact, it denotes the protection of individual and property from any kind of threat. By contrast, at the state or conventional, it emphasises the defence and survival of the state from external aggression. For purposes of this paper, we are particularly concerned with National Security from the individual or non-conventional approach, which emphasises freedom or the absence of dangerous threat to the corporate existence of any individual within the state (Chikwem, 2012:6)

Theorising State Fragility

This study will adopt the state fragility or weakness approach as its theoretical framework. The theory of state fragility is a new theme in post 9/11 international relations, one which became a structuring notion for the OECD and the World Bank's aid policies in 2005 (Daviron & Giordano, 2008). However, states in the developing world are susceptible to internal and external strains making it more difficult for them to fulfil their core responsibilities. Ake blames this on the penetration of western capitalism into Africa and the subsequent integration of African economies into the world capitalist system. (Ake, 2005). This facilitated the dependence of their economies into world capitalist system.

A fragile state may be defined as a distressed state that lacks the elements necessary to function effectively. Specifically, one or more of the following factors characterise fragile states:

- i. Weak, ineffective, and unstable political institutions and bad governance, conducive to loss of state autonomy; informalisation; privatisation of state, personal and exclusionary rule; neo-patrimonialism; and prebendal politics
- ii. Inability to exercise effective jurisdiction over its territory, leading to the recent concept of ungoverned territories.
- iii. Legitimacy crisis, occasioned by problematic national cohesion, contested citizenship, violent contestation for state power, perennial challenges to the validity and viability of the state, and massive loss and exit of citizens through internal displacement, refugee flows, separatist agitation, civil war and the like.

- iv. Unstable and divided population, suffering from a torn social fabric, minimum social control and pervasive strife that encourage exit from rather than loyalty to the state.
- v. Underdeveloped institutions of conflict management and resolution, including credible judicial structures, which pave the way for recourse to conflict-ridden, violent, non-systemic and extra-constitutional ways in which to articulate grievances and seek redress.
- vi. Pervasive corruption, poverty, and low levels of economic growth and development, leading to lack of fiscal capacity to discharge basic functions of statehood, including, most importantly, obligations to citizens such as protection from disease like AIDs and guarantees of overall human security (Osaghe, 2007).

For Benn (2005), state fragility simply means, “where the government cannot or will not deliver (its) core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor”. In this respect, he stated further that fragility is identified by high mortality rate, low level of literate people, poor access to health care services, high infant mortality rate, and very weak economic growth. Aligning with the above view the World Bank, among other things, defines a fragile state “as ---a country that lacks either the will or the capacity to engage productively with their citizens to ensure security, safeguard human rights and provide the basic institutions for development”(World Bank, 2004). How then does the concept suit our studies here?

The fragile state theory in all its ramifications suits the analysis of the implications of educational deterioration on Nigeria’s national security because the state is fragile and unable to enforce its legitimate policies. Nigerian government inability to provide sufficiently the basic ingredients for functional education, most especially, in tertiary institutions, has posed a genuine threat not only to Nigerians but also to the international community. Before we proceed, let us examine Nigerian educational deterioration vis-à-vis other countries.

Nigeria’s Educational Deterioration and Other Countries

It is puzzling that why other countries of the world, especially most of the countries in the same level of development with Nigeria are consistently attaining higher standard of education and Nigeria is still lagging behind. Many reasons have been adduced, chief among these are:

Good Funding Of Formal Education

Countries like the Asian tigers (Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand etc.) which started together with Nigeria, commit a huge amount of funds to their respective educational system. This helps to boast their socio-economic development, reduction in crime rate, with its consequent positive implications on their National Security. Nevertheless, Nigeria commits little of its Gross National Product (GNP) to education, which has left its tertiary institutions in a pitiable situation, thereby increasing crime rate in Nigeria. Even small developing countries with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) are comparable to Nigeria; but commit more funds to their respective education system more than Nigeria. For example, recent

figures from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics showed countries such as Tanzania, Mozambique and Lesotho achieving 27%, 21% and 24% respectively. Sadly, there was no data on Nigeria (Bamiro, 2012:12). This is grossly at variance with the recommendation of the United Nations education, scientific and cultural organisation (UNESCO) which stipulates that 26% of the yearly total budget should go to the educational sector in developing countries (Anyaegbunam, 2007).

Also, some prominent Nigerian scholars such as Maduabum (2006), Aghauche (2007) Anyakoha (2007), Olorode (2008), Ikediugwu (2007) and Okebukola (2006) etc, in their respective research works, have identified poor funding of educational system as one of the major causes of falling standard of education in Nigeria. This shows that Nigeria's educational sector is grossly under-funded far less than other countries in the same level of development. The poor funding of Nigeria's tertiary institutions has left the universities in a crumble situation with their products constituting a great security threat to Nigeria and beyond.

Despite the poor underfunding of Nigerian institutions, the number of the institutions keeps increasing. A situation that worsens the financial crisis that characterises the institutions. Friday Okonofua, a professor of Medical Sciences, University of Benin, at a March 2011 retreat organised for governing councils of Nigerian Universities by the National Universities Commission (NUC), in Lagos attested to this fact thus: "Poor funding is the principal challenge that most Nigerian Universities currently face, which limits their ability to rate high in global ranking of Universities. While government funding is an important source of funding, there will continue to be funding gaps from this source due to the increasing number of government funded Universities in the country" (*The Guardian*, April 18, 2011).

Governance and Management

Most of the countries of the world, especially in Africa, can boast of good governance and management of their tertiary institutions by their respective Vice-Chancellors, but most of the universities in Nigeria cannot boast of that. Undoubtedly, Nigerian university's standards have crumbled, particularly in the areas of organisation, technological development and application, thereby giving rise to increasing crime rate, which has posed a great security threat to Nigeria. In fact, Okebukola (a former Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission), for instance insisted that the crises faced by the Nigerian higher education in many instances have been attributed to ineffective governance (Okebukola, 2006)

Here in Nigeria, leadership in respect of international academic standard in majority of universities has been weak and the little improvement ushered in by National University Commission (NUC) falls short of expectations. The NUC does this through institutionalising strategic planning, holding regular workshops for top university manager; giving annual awards to Vice-Chancellors and Councils who implement jointly agreed parameters, yet most of the Vice-Chancellors are simply unable to provide the academic thrust that can produce the

needed global standards, even when the funds are provided by government (Okebukola, 2006).

In some universities, most especially private, the proprietors usurp the role of the Vice-Chancellor, reducing the latter to a servant master relationship. Under this situation, what do you expect of the performance of students and standard of education? Of course, poor in all its ramifications, implications, and qualifications. In addition, the products of these misgoverned environments undermine rather than aid the society. In fact, they constitute a source of national insecurity.

Adequate Numbers (Quantity) and Quality of Academic Staff

Most developing countries like South Africa, Ghana etc. have adequate number and quality of academic staff, which make impartation of knowledge effective with sound products. This, of course, go a long way to making most of the students to be self-employed, thereby, reducing unemployment rate with its consequent positive implications on national security. However, in Nigeria, most of the universities are grossly under-staffed and some that are well staffed, most of the time lack quality academic staff. For instance, though NUC recommended PhD possession as the standard degree by lecturers for qualification in Nigerian universities, a survey of some universities conducted recently showed a variation in the percentage of staff having PhD degree from as low as 5% to the highest of 68%. It also varies from faculty to faculty with professional faculties such as clinical sciences, dentistry and law typically lagging behind other faculties (Bamiro, 2012:8). As a result of the above, some universities especially the private sector in attempt to save money, decidedly resort to the use of associate lecturers of questionable character rather than compete for the few qualified lecturers available in the system. This fact became clear following the study by Okebukola (2006) on quality assurance. "It was found that over 74.2% of graduate teachers produced in the faculties of education for the past ten years have no visible strength". The specific weakness according to the study includes, "Shallow-subject matter knowledge, lack of practical skills, inability to communicate effectively in English ... among others".

Good Conditions of Service to Teachers in Tertiary Institutions

Some of the developing countries, most especially, Ghana, South Africa, to be precise, provide good condition of services for their teachers in tertiary institutions, which make them to give their best to their students. However, in Nigeria, the reverse is the case. In fact, it is alarming! The last agreement the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) entered with Nigerian government in 2009 about increment in salary is yet to be implemented fully. Apart from poor salaries of academic staff, they are not paid as at when due. This situation kills morale in them and makes many to abandon their countries for greener pastures outside the country. For instance, over 60% of academic staff in the Nigerian university system is in the category of lecturer 1 and below; due to inter and intra-sector brain drain (United States Embassy in Nigeria, 2012:2). These are people whose services would have boosted the development of the country. To show the

regret of Nigerians on this, the NUC instituted “the Nigerian Experts and Academics in Diaspora Scheme” (NEADS). Indeed, the short-term appointment designed and launched on 25th November 2004 gives Nigerian experts and academics abroad the opportunity of contributing their quota to the development of the Nigerian University system. The question is, how far has the NEADS objectives been achieved in Nigeria? Obviously, many things have handicapped it. The implications of all these on students and standard of education in tertiary institutions are quite simple: poor performance and falling standard of education, which constitute a source of insecurity.

Level of Examination Malpractice

Examination malpractice can happen in any part of the world, but the degree and intensity varies from country to country. While countries like South Africa, Kenya, Egypt etc. experience low level of examination malpractice which is among the yardstick for ranking universities in the world, as exemplified in the 2015 world university ranking, Nigerian universities experience high level of examination malpractice. That was the challenge that Akpan Ekpo, Prof and Immediate past Vice chancellor of University of Uyo, UNIUYO, Akwam Ibom State of Nigeria, took upon himself when he confronted a syndicate head on. Ekpo smashed an examination fraud syndicate in 2002. Reckoned as the “UK Pana syndicate”, the group was selling UNIUYO degrees and question papers to ready buyers (Agbo, 2005).

Ramifications of Falling Standard of Education on Nigeria’s National Security

The inability of the state to provide functional education and the corollary consequences of falling standard of education on Nigeria’s national security are too multifaceted and multi-dimensional to be exhausted in a paper like this. However, let us bring out some of them here for consideration and assimilation. Educational deterioration undermines self-reliance and reinforces external technological dependence, which adversely affects national security. Technological dependence is a security risk and serves as an easy weapon for sanctions from one country or organisation to another. That explains why Nigeria’s high external dependence for military technology was successfully exploited by the West and refused arms supply when Nigeria needed it most for counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency operations in the Northeastern Nigeria. Nigerian Ambassador to United States, Prof Ade Adefuye, brought this to spotlight on November 10, 2014 while addressing members of the Council on Foreign Relations in the United States. Hear him:

I am sad to inform you that the Nigerian leaders: military and political, and even the general populace are not satisfied with the scope, nature and content of the United States’ support for us in our struggle against terrorists. We find it difficult to understand how and why in spite of the U.S. presence in Nigeria with their sophisticated military technology, Boko Haram should be

expanding and becoming more deadly. The US government has up till today refused to grant Nigeria's request to purchase lethal equipment that would have brought down the terrorists within a short-time on the basis of the allegations that Nigeria's defence forces have been violating human rights of Boko-Haram suspects when captured or arrested. A stable and secure Nigeria is an invaluable asset to America (Adefuye, 2014:1).

Obviously, this arms refusal exacerbated security situation in Nigeria and gave an edge to Boko Haram against Nigeria Military before March 2015. On this date, the Joint Multinational Forces (JMF) comprising of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger scored a resounding victory and liberated the two states of Yobe and Adamawa remaining three (3) local governments out of 27 of Borno State. On this, the Chief of Army Staff Lt. General Kenneth Minimah, attested and stated thus:

You know Yobe and Adamawa States have been liberated completely and we look forward to the reinstatement of structures of government and governance. I am also sure you know that in Borno State, out of the 27 local governments, we have three local governments remaining: Abadam, Kala-Balge and Gwoza and we are optimistic that with time, we will liberate those local government areas (Adetayo, 2015:1).

Also, Nigeria's high external oil technological dependence on the up and down stream oil and gas sectors with its negative consequences on Nigeria's national security has been attributed to the decay in educational standard. In fact, Nigeria's government underfunding of education sector has led to the absence of the needed instructional facilities and qualified lecturers. The poorly trained students are then unleashed on the job market. Owing to their deficiency in the necessary skills, they find it difficult to be employed. More so, Prof Mosto Onuoha, former technology adviser to Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) attested the facts and stated that:

The position of oil companies operating in Nigeria is that graduates from Nigerian universities, especially those that read oil and gas related courses are not employable. Therefore, after graduation, they are subjected to one form of intensive training or the other before they are considered fit for the job. ... it was not always so. In the 1970s and 1980s; even up to the early 1990s, our graduates had no problems. They fit into their roles in the companies, once they were employed. But the decay in the Nigerian educational system finally caught up with the universities. First, you had a large explosion in the number of students in a class and there were no facilities; teachers were not retrained and you know that things change very fast in the oil and gas industry (Onuoha, 2010).

This Nigeria's crude oil export-dependent economy, because of low technological development, became available for exploits by US and its allies who, in July 2014, cut off to zero the crude oil export of Nigeria without corresponding cut to other countries they import crude oil (US Energy Information Administration, 2015). This obviously crashed Nigeria's currency, affected negatively, the 2014 and 2015 budgets and finally limited Nigeria's financial strength, in practically every sector of her economy, including security.

Similarly, educational deterioration leads to unemployable graduates, which invariably lead to rising crime rate that exacerbates security situation in Nigeria. Confirming the above fact, the current Nigerian President, Goodluck Jonathan, at the combined 21st and 22nd Convocation Ceremony of the Federal University of Technology Akure,

expressed concern over the quality of graduates being produced in the nation's tertiary institutions and blamed rising youth unemployment in the country on the problem. I want to believe, he said that many graduates who managed to secure employment in industries are sometimes considered unfit because of the quality of value they are adding to their responsibilities, due to the poor education they acquired from their schools. All these facts undoubtedly increase the unemployment rate of youths in Nigeria (Dayo, 2010).

For instance, unemployment rate in Nigeria from 2005–2013 serves as a revelation. In 2005 (11.9%), 2006 (12.3%), 2007 (12.1%), 2008 (14.9%), 2009 (19.7%), 2010 (21.1%), 2011 (23.9%), 2012 (24.3%), 2013 (29.5%) – was largely responsible for the current security challenges in the country (Adesina, 2013).

However, in order to survive, these unemployed graduates resort to various crime, such as drug trafficking, kidnapping, terrorists and other criminal activities, thereby exacerbating the security situation of Nigeria. For instances, a quick glance at NBS documentation of crime rate in terms of prison admission from Nigerian prison service, obviously shows that the ages of graduates (though some of them may not be graduates) constitute the highest: in 2001, we have 67, 400; 2002, 84,098; 2003, 84,593; 2004, 63,100; 2005, 65,140 etc. (Nigerian National Bureau of Statistic, 2010).

Furthermore, following the capture of the state by powerful elite tagged 'criminalisation of the state', educated but jobless youths have been forced to work as political thugs for patrons (godfathers) who utilise them to intimidate political rivals and opponents. These godfathers are too strong for the Nigerian corrupt and weak security apparatus to bring to justice (Tunde & Kunle, 2010). These youths obviously fall into the hands of the godfathers because of unemployment.

In addition, in an increasingly interdependent world, the ramifications of educational deterioration for national security could be interpreted from two principal dimensions: internal and external. In terms of the internal dimension, the sources of the challenges posed by educational deterioration is the increasing

crime rates that are occurring in such a state and their impacts are limited to the state. In terms of the external dimension, the threat may result to cross-border migration. The source of security threat posed by educational degeneration emanates from economic migrants whose impacts are unsettling for other countries outside Nigerian borders. For example, the Nigerian Foreign Affairs Ministry reports that as at 2008, not less than 59,000 Nigerian without legal traveling documents, were stranded in transition in North Africa countries in their bid to cross the Mediterranean Sea into Western Europe. Figures available to the ministry showed that 8,000 of the illegal immigrants were in Morocco, 16,000 in Algeria, 20,000 in Libya and about 15,000 in Mauritania (Amalu, 2008). More so, cases of dugout canoes ferrying illegal African migrants capsizing off the coast of Spain, Italy and France abound these days. In most of the incidents, many occupants of these rickety boats were drowned. In this context, the national security challenges emerge when the capacity of the receiving countries are stretched to a tipping point where interactions and relations become conflictual rather than cooperative. This almost strained the relationship between Libya and Nigeria. Moreover, this has to do with the carrying capacity of the recipient countries or states to accommodate high influxes of people for any given period. In this case, the impacts of educational deterioration for national security in Nigeria are external and were made possible due to cross-border migration arising from the belief by unemployed Nigerian youths that they could get greener pastures abroad.

Beyond threat to national security posed by cross-border migration, the growing interdependency of the global economy and the ripple effects of educational deterioration generated can also undermine national security by exacerbating strategic fragility. Strategic fragility refers to the vulnerability of a state to threat or a shock resulting from the state is growing reliance on infrastructure, services and goods that come from outside its economy (Miller & Lachow, 2008). For example, a threat to Nigeria from foreign countries on petroleum technology service can unsettle security situation in Nigeria because of over dependence of Nigeria on foreign technological petroleum services. Adiele (2009), subscribing to the above view in his well-researched analysis of Nigeria's technological application observed that Nigerian has a low-level of-technological application of about 12% in petroleum. This implies that 88% are under the hand of expatriates.

Actually, petroleum products are strategic resources for national security of any given country. It was even among the reasons why Germany lost the Second World War largely because the Allied forces completely cut off her supply of petroleum to Germany, which rendered her armaments especially tanks, planes, guns and very highly disciplined soldiers immobile. Thus, the dreaded Germany 'war machines' was reduced to a sitting duck. No wonder, Adiele (2009) observed that low level of technological development is largely responsible for the inability of Nigeria National Petroleum Cooperation (NNPC) and companies in Nigeria, to deliver the expected benefits to the economy or be competitive internationally.

The growing interdependence of the global economy suggests the intricate relationship that exists between educational degeneration and security.

Understanding Educational Deterioration in the National Security Context

Several explanations can be adduced for educational deterioration in Nigeria. Specific reasons abound, but they are all embedded in state neglect. Good focused government makes standard education its top priority because of its positive and negative effects on the socio-economic and political development of a country. However, here in Nigeria, there is no encouragement to education. This is exemplified in a national survey conducted by Nigerian Federal Ministry of Science and Technology (FMST) in conjunction with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on the nature of tertiary institutions equipment and machinery. The survey covered 209 institutions, 31 federal and state universities, 27 federal and state polytechnics, 30 research institutions and technology development centres etc. They identified “a staggering list of non-functional, ill-maintained essential equipment and machinery. In many institutions; an extremely limited national capacity for development and production of spare parts and components of existing equipment. Poor engineering infrastructure and glaring deficiency in human resources skills development, and training for equipment design, fabrication and manufacture locally, and a near total dependence on foreign inputs, including scarce foreign exchange for any meaningful equipment maintenance rehabilitation, manufacture and technological services in Nigeria” (Momah, 1999).

Following closely the above reason, is the inability of government to fully implement the vocational and technical aspects of its policy by making graduates of these specialised subjects to be self-reliant. This failure of government makes the subjects that are supposed to be practically oriented to be theoretical. This has not only reflected today on the socio-economic development of Nigeria, but has also left most of the graduates half-baked and unable to be employed, thereby exacerbating the security situation in Nigeria and beyond. Even the much advertised Nigerian programme to boast science and technology (PTDF) has ended up assisting Nigerians to acquire knowledge instead of assisting them to apply knowledge (Adiele, 2009).

In addition, the 6-3-3-4 system of education is not working here in Nigeria. Nigeria simply borrowed that system of education from the western country without properly taken Nigerian cultural peculiarities into consideration. This has not only contributed greatly to the falling standard of education in Nigeria, but has also increased crime rate in Nigerian universities with its spill over effects on the national security of Nigeria. This has necessitated the calls by some scholars for a total overhauling of Nigeria’s educational system. Confirming the above pieces of information, Isaac Adebayo Adeyemi posited that the Nigerian government has been talking about scrapping 6-3-3-4 system for some time now may be to give room for another one (Adebayo, 2010). That explains why the

failure of any educational system to fulfil the objective for which it was established is often the precondition for calls to its reform.

In addition, Nigeria's educational system is yet to recover from its 1986 greatest shock on public expenditure leading to the withdrawal of subsidies following the activities of IMF, World Bank and U.S treasury department. Woodward aligns with this view by insisting that the current and growing problems affecting all developing countries is the attack on public expenditures. The concept of what is a public good itself and neoclassical growth theorists and their concept of the proper state defined explicitly in conditions for aid and access to capital markets, and simultaneously, the growing economic inequality within countries open to trade and foreign investment, as demanded by these same actors (Woodward, 2004). Following the above reasons, data indicate decline in funding of formal education from 1986 when the Nigerian government adopted the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) leading to the withdrawal of subsidies from social services such as education, health and public welfare (Abiola, 2006). Kayode (1987) and Phillips (1987) subscribed to the above view by insisting that the poor funding as earlier discussed of formal education at the federal government level became more noticeable with the adoption of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The negative effects of this on education are uncountable, inadequate and obsolete infrastructure and equipment; sub-living environment and poor conditions of students; libraries are inadequately equipped and there are no up to date laboratories and workshops. In fact, basic equipment is either lacking, obsolete or in a state of decay in Nigeria universities. Lacking requisite skills, students who graduate from these institutions, resort to crime in order to survive.

Closely related to the above is the phenomenon of privatisation and commercialisation of universities in Nigeria. The commercialisation aspect could be witnessed on how the universities admit students with impunity despite admission quotas usually given by NUC to avoid over-enrolment and consequent overcrowding so that universities do not exceed their capacities in terms of resources (Human and material). Yet most of the universities annually witness overcrowding of classrooms, laboratories, workshops and hostels owing to increasing demand. In some tertiary institutions, students listen to lectures standing, sometimes, on corridors and peeping through the windows of overcrowded lecture halls (Okolo, 2004). These poor learning environments engendered by the failure of the state to provide appropriate instructional materials breed insecurity when the graduates of the system cannot get jobs.

In addition, the privatisation aspects of Nigerian universities, though with some advantages of decongesting universities, have helped in compounding the problem in tertiary institutions. How? The government simply concentrated on granting licenses to private universities without any attempt at reformative prognostic dimension to the sub-system. Evidently, the new private universities have failed in the short term to meet policy objectives due partly to profit making through excessive school fees, lack of quality staff, and poor academic leadership.

Therefore, commercialisation and privatisation of universities without proper policy objectives that cannot be enforced by Nigerians government have immensely contributed to the falling standard of education in Nigeria with its negative implications on national security.

The lack of objectivity by NUC, which is the body given the powers in Nigerians tertiary sector to lay down minimum academic standard and accredit the academic awards of all universities in Nigeria, has led to serious consequences, not only to the educational sector but also to Nigeria socio-economic development and national security (National Universities Commission, 2010). While some of them try to be objective, others resort to criminal act, which has affected completely the educational system. The Editorial of Nigeria National *Guardian* Newspaper of March 24, 2010, corroborated the above view by saying: “Meanwhile the NUC, the watchdog of standards is compromised in its accreditation process as its members fail to be objective in their different rounds in the universities. No wonder immorality of various dimensions has become the order of the day in the campuses, as students graduate into a jobless market in part because they have no depth and relevance”. The forgoing discussion has shown that the NUC and the state have been weak and unable to provide the academic thrust that can produce the needed global standard for Nigeria’s educational system and reduction in crime rate.

Finally, military intervention in Nigerian politics (1966-1979; 1983-1999) left the educational sector in shambles, especially the federal Ministry of Science and Technology (FMST) and the Federal Ministry of Education. The military promulgated different decrees, which ran, counter to educational principles. For example, Sam Momah, who is the former minister of FMST documented, thus:

The Federal Ministry of Science and Technology has had a chequered history of being established in 1970, and then became an Agency in 1976 and full-fledged Ministry of Science and Technology in 1980. It then was merged with the Ministry of Education in 1984, to form the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. In 1985, the unholy wedlock with the ministry of Education was rendered asunder and the Ministry of Science and Technology was once again established as a separate entity in 1986. The ministry was consolidating its newly won lease of life when it was scrapped in January 1992 and with that, all its prized assets in human and material resources were lost in the scramble that ensued. However, in August 1993, it was re-established, but until date, most of its assets including some original R&D organs are yet to be returned by other ministries and government agencies (The Guardian, March 24, 2010).

Conclusions

The phenomenon of educational deterioration and the role of the state as the basic institution for drastic reformation on the part of relevance and driving other socio-economic development of a nation is an undisputable fact. The Nigeria National Policy on Education published in 1976 and revised in 2002, among other things, adopted education as an instrument par excellence for affecting national development. However, the conspicuous inability of Nigerian state to discharge its basic functions of statehood, with particular reference to the educational sector, has left the educational dimension of Nigeria in chaos. Thereby, aggravating Nigeria's development problems, resulting in graduates massive unemployment, cross-border migration, high poverty level etc. This, of course, leads to grounds to breeding terrorists, drug traffickers, kidnapping, armed robberies and other spiralling social instability, which constitutes a great security threat to Nigerian and beyond.

Although, educational deterioration does not fit into traditional threat to national security such as war, terrorism, insurgency, espionage or sabotage, yet, its deep effect on the socio-economic and political development of a country serves to impinge on peace and stability of a country. Therefore, urgent steps are needed to tackle the menace. Here, we recommend the following measures to deal with the problem: first, Nigerian government should increase funding of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. They should understand that it is practically impossible to operate universities without fund. Second, there should be a granting of greater autonomy to the state and federal universities by Nigerian government. This administrative and financial autonomy will make them to be more accountable to their students and the community at large. Third, a better condition of service is required to boost the morale of these teachers in tertiary institutions. This would reduce drastically their unprecedented emigration to other countries of the world in search of greener pastures. Fourth, NUC should be reformed under a new paradigm, focusing on objectivity and high international academic standard to boost the quality of education and reduction in crime rate with its positive implications on Nigeria's National Security. Without any attempt to cast any aspersion on this institution called the NUC, the current situation in Nigeria universities could be attributed to lack of their objectivity and government neglect occasioned by incessant strikes of university teachers.

Nevertheless, these strong remedial measures proffered under a new paradigm, will re-focus the Nigerian university system on the part of relevance, high international academic competence, with global standard and best practices, which will boost socio-economic development and consequently have a positive effect on its national security.

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