

THE ADVENT OF FORMAL WESTERN EDUCATION AND THE PROGRESS OF A REPUBLIC – NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper reviewed the journey of how the Federal Republic of Nigeria has come to where it is today, in the educational enterprise. The advent of formal and western styled education is credit that has to be for the missionaries who themselves came for evangelism, but eventually provided education to enable the natives (Nigerians) have the ability to read and understand the bible, and to help the missions in the spread of gospel. About a dozen of missionaries established schools at various locations in Nigeria, making schools to become the adjunct of the church. Colonial government at a time saw the need to come in and get involved through grants-in-aid. The saying that he who pays the piper calls the tune gave the colonial authority the bold step to wade in, regulating educational provision by missionaries through education ordinances and codes. The self-determination era that was ushered in by the regionalism and constitutional provision that conceded the control of education to the region was instrumental to peculiar regional educational development, with the launch of Universal Primary Education in the regions. In this study, notable government's educational inputs in the colonial Nigeria are captured, focusing on primary school, Universal Primary Education, government secondary schools – Kings and Queens Colleges, the beginning of higher education, university education and all that connects to it, including the emergence of private universities in Nigeria. Ultimately, the progress made in education, as the characteristics of the Federal Republic of Nigeria are chronicled, for what formal education has succeeded in achieving in the Nigerian federation, to show the progress made in the republic, not necessarily exploring or measuring how well education fared from the different angles of assessment or appraisal.

Keywords: Advent, Formal, Western Education, Progress, Republic.

Introduction

Objectively it must be said, when discussion or retrospective appraisal of the efforts of players in the affairs of Nigeria during the colonial era comes to the front burner, for review or reflection, the Christian missionaries deserve abundant accolades. If not for the Christian Missionaries that pioneered formal western-styled education, which is today, the licence to get involved or visible in the various sectors of the Nigerian economic, political, scientific life; the country (Nigeria) and her people (Nigerians) would not have experienced education in a formal mode. The colonial agenda did not intend education for the native Africans. The journey of formal western education is worth accounting for, to appreciate how we have come to where we are as a country.

In the journey of how Nigeria and Nigerians became the beneficiaries of western styled education, it is highly imperative, to dig from this the roots. In this regard, therefore, series of expeditions were undertaken by European voyagers and explorers, not excluding the 1472 Portuguese discovery of existence of the now Nigeria by the traders and explorers of Portuguese descent, who sailed down the south coast of the Country. The Portuguese, whose main goal was trading, had earlier contacted

the people of Lagos, Brass and Benin, even Sao Tome; long before the exploration by the British (Osokoya, 2010). To this extent, by 1515, they had established a school inside the palace of Oba of Benin to teach the children of the Oba and his chiefs. Another major European contact with Nigeria might be coming at the heels of the rivalry to the Portuguese presence in Africa, starting with the British expeditions that had Mungo Park in 1795 kick-starting the search for the meeting point of Rivers Niger and Benue to facilitate their contact with the natives in the hinterland.

Mungo Park's unfinished effort brought-in a Scottish explorer, Hugh Clapperton followed in the year 1823, also unsuccessful. However, the British explorers - the Lander Brothers – Richard Lemon Lander and John Lander, his brother embarked on this expedition in 1830 and a successful voyage. This discovery of Confluence of Rivers Niger and Benue at Lokoja paved way for trading with the whites. Throughout the 19th century, the British government often collaborating with trading companies solidified its control over the Niger Delta and the Nigerian coast. By 1900, most of present-day Nigeria had been occupied. The Niger and Benue rivers provided access to the interior, which the British exploited for commercial, military, and political purposes.

The presence and establishment of British colonial administration in Nigeria became an impetus for the British missionaries in extending evangelism to the country. With the missionaries' evangelism spirit in the country, teaching Nigerians how to read and write which was believed would aid evangelism became their concern. Therefore, the second foreign system of education Nigeria experienced is the formal Western Education. This education was brought to the country by the missionaries. In this regard, if we conclude that British Missionaries were the Nigerians' first educators in a formal way; one is not far from the truth.

Missionaries in Nigerian Education

The coming of the missionaries to the country for evangelism and eventual educational efforts can be traced to the abolition of slave trade in all the British territories in 1833 with Freetown, now in Sierra Leone was earlier acquired in 1787 as a colony in which the liberated Africans could settle. Also, there was a great revival of missionary movement in Britain. Commenting on the revival of missionary movement in Britain, Osokoya in Abdulrahman (2023) concludes that the revival led to the founding of different religious groups. A number of the missionary societies formed include - Baptist Missionary Society (1792), London Missionary Society (1795), and Church Missionary Society (1799).

The revival zeal of these Missionary Societies prompted their massive movement into the field to win souls and give education, with the Bible in one hand and slate in the other. Significantly too, the British Parliament's passage of the Emancipation Act in 1833 and eventual liberty of all slaves in the British Empire in 1838 became instrumental to the spread of evangelism to the African soil. Sierra-Leone became the convergence and starting point from where Christian Missionaries dispersed to several parts of West Africa for evangelism.

As maintained above, the change in the evangelical atmosphere in both Britain and Freetown, coupled with the new lease of life among the liberated Africans which prompted their resettlement back home, having been converted and exposed to formal education system in Freetown, the call to spread gospel heightened, especially in Abeokuta, Badagry, Onitsha and Calabar. In Kosemani & Okorosaye-Orubite (2002), the spread of evangelism has obviously been the most successful in meeting the overall formal education needs of the consumers for the present and the future.

Wesleyan Methodist

The first missionary group that came to the country was the Wesleyan Methodist. Their coming was meant to evangelize Nigerians, but the need to give education to facilitate the main purpose of coming necessitated the eventual educational provision. Wesleyan Methodist was the first in the list of Missionaries in Nigeria. Specifically, they arrived in Nigeria on the 24th of September, 1842. The team was led by Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman and accompanied by a couple, Mr and Mrs Williams De Graft. The coming of this missionary body produced the first primary school in Nigeria, named “Nursery of Infant Church” established at Badagry in 1843 under the management of Mr and Mrs Williams De Graft.

Church Missionary Society (CMS)

Second to be in Nigeria for evangelism and eventual educational works was the Church Missionary Society (now, the Anglican). By the 19th day of December, 1842; CMS arrived in Nigeria for a pre-evangelism survey and with intention to move into Abeokuta to start evangelism. This target on Abeokuta as base and starting point for evangelism was futile until 1844, but not in Abeokuta as earlier surveyed in 1842 to be their base and as the starting point. Unfortunately, the death of Egba monarch, King Sodeke threw the whole community into the mourning mood and no gospel or educational works would have been possible in such grievous mood when they visited Egba in 1844 to begin proper evangelism. They therefore returned to Badagry.

Eventually, the CMS fulfilled her initial intention of having their base and starting missionary works in Abeokuta by 1846. In the CMS team were the leader, Henry Townsend; accompanied by Rev. C. A. Gollmer and Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther (later Bishop). On settling down in Abeokuta, a church and two schools were built. The two schools comprised CMS Grammar school for boys and another one for girls.

Presbyterian Church of Scotland

Presbyterian Church of Scotland headed by Rev. Hope Masterton Waddell came to Nigeria in 1846 on the invitation of King Eyo II & King Eyamba V and this time in the Eastern region of Nigeria, where evangelism immediately commenced and the famous Hope Waddell College was later established in 1859 by Mary Mitchell Slessor in Calabar.

The Southern Baptist Convention

The Southern Baptist Convention came in 1850 with Thomas J. Bowen who opened in 1853 a school at Ijaye and another one subsequently established at Ogbomosho in 1855. The first Baptist School in Lagos according to Abiri & Jekayinfa (2010) eventually became the nucleus of the Lagos Baptist Academy was established in Lagos.

The Niger Mission

In 1857, the Niger Mission was established by Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther and Rev. J. C. Taylor. With the cooperation of Niger explorer – Mc Gregor Laird. Swiftly too, schools were founded at Gbebe and Onitsha. The school at Iddah, now in Kogi State was established in 1864, and other ones established immediately after at Bonny and Akassa.

Missionaries Activities in Lagos

The year 1851 marked the beginning of missionary activities in Lagos, following an invitation by the then British Consul of Lagos, John Beecroft. The CMS, the Wesleyan Methodist honoured that invitation with the Roman Catholic Mission whose activities started in Lagos.

Roman Catholic Mission

Record has it that RCM was established by priests from the Society of African Missions of Lyon in 1865, beginning in Lagos, and a vicariate was established in Benin in 1870. By 1920, numerous missions had appeared throughout Igboland, eventually outnumbering the Anglican's Church Missionary Society. With the arrival of Padre Anthonio (a freed African slave who turned missionary), Roman Catholic mission started schools' establishment in Lagos by 1868.

Formal Western Education in the North

The whole issue surrounding the introduction of formal western education in the north had three major personalities of Sir Lord Lugard, Dr. W.R.S. Miller and Hans Vischer.

As earlier reported and before 1900, the CMS had extended evangelism to places like Bida and Lokoja through the Niger Mission by Samuel Ajayi Crowther and J.C. Taylor.

Apart from this initial effort, Lugard warned the missionaries of advancing into the Muslim areas beyond those under the protection of West African Frontier Force in their evangelisation drive. This directive of Lugard did not go down well with the missionaries, therefore was ignored; but the missionaries were humiliated as ordered by the Emir.

As Lugard's friend, Miller was later encouraged to pursue secular education among the Northerners, but the interest of Miller was more on evangelism. Eventually, Miller began 'Mallam school' and 'Boy's Boarding School' for sons of chiefs in Zaria by 1907. Mallam school was a failure right from inception and the boys school survived for a while until it was converted into a regular school for all. The introduction of Hausa translation of the gospels was to lay the foundation for a secular education system. This development frustrated the northerners.

Vischer on his part recorded an impressive outcome with the establishment of the first government school for training teachers in 1909 and named Nassarawa school, because of its location in Nassarawa, near Kano. This school was well attended, such that by 1913, Mallams from different parts of the north – Kano, Sokoto, Katsina, Zaria, Mubi, Bornu, Yola, Nassarawa and Ilorin were already enrolled.

Between 1842 and 1914, more than a dozen of different Christian missions had arrived and begun intensive missionary and educational works in Nigeria.

In summary, the presence of these missionaries in Nigeria and their spirit of evangelism provided the zeal and enthusiasm that made them waste no time in the establishment of mission houses, churches and schools in places like Badagry, Abeokuta, Calabar, Onitsha, Lagos, Ibadan, Ijaiye, Ogbomosho, Iseyin, Ishaga, Erunmu, Ketu, Iddah, Akassa, Bonny, Eket, Ikot Ekpene, Nassarawa, Lokoja, Bussa, and several other places in Nigeria.

List of Some Missionaries in the Colonial Nigeria

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|--|---|------|
| 1. Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society | - | 1842 |
| 2. Church Missionary Society (CMS) | - | 1842 |

3. United Presbyterian Church of Scotland	-	1846
4. Southern Baptist Convention	-	1850
5. Roman Catholic Mission	-	1865
6. Primitive Methodist Missionary Society	-	1872
7. Qua Iboe Mission of North Ireland	-	1887
8. United Native African Church (severed from the Anglican)	-	1901
9. Sudan Interior Mission (SIM)	-	1903

The Characteristics of Missionaries Education

It is clear that missionaries' main intent of getting out of Europe was fundamentally to evangelise the Africans and especially Nigeria which is the concern of this book. Spreading gospel was confronted with the challenges of personnel and the language differential. The realisation that the missionaries could not do their work effectively and surmounting the challenges with giving education would remain a mirage. Therefore, providing education then became a secondary purpose of their presence in Nigeria. No wonder the characteristics of missionaries educational practice became the concern of not only the people, but colonial government herself. As a result of the trend, Education Codes was instituted in the South, in addition to the 1926 Ordinance which Osokoya (1989) maintains was to curb the development of mushroom or hedge schools.

It must be said too that some of these ills that characterised the missionaries' education were not directly from the missionaries, but the negligence of the colonial administrators. These characteristics can therefore be summarised as follows:

a. Standards, Rules and Regulations Related Problems

- i. There were no regulations to guide the movement of teachers, as well as pupils, thus both teachers and pupils left schools during the school hours at will. Samuel Crowther for example once complained about irregular attendance in the school at Onitsha where the boys preferred to go about hunting birds, rats and lizards.
- ii. There were no central school laws, as a result, there were no standards for running the school

b. Funding/Finance Problem

- i. There was inadequate finance. Many of the schools were maintained by the Local Mission with occasional donations from abroad. Lack of adequate funds also affected the availability of adequate qualified personnel. Some schools were maintained from the Sunday collections.

c. Curriculum, Method and Strategies Academic/administration Issues

- i. In the early schools, there were no common syllabus to follow and there were lack of standard textbooks. Many of the text books used were imported and were not relevant to the environment of the pupils.
- ii. Varying administrative techniques were adopted for schools' management
- iii. The method of teaching was inadequate for rote-learning was paramount at the period

d. Religiousity Problem

- i. The intense missionary rivalry in the southern part of Nigeria led to uneven distribution of schools in Nigeria

- ii. In all the schools, emphasis was on conversion into Christianity and religious instructions remained the basic core of the school curriculum during the period. The education imparted was not meant to transmit the Nigerian culture, neither did it suit the need and aspirations of the society.

e. Problem of Personnel and Qualification

- i. There were no standard qualifications for teachers
- ii. Most of the schools because of lack of teachers, used the monitorial system, a system in which the older pupils were made to teach the young ones
- iii. There were no trained teachers and no training colleges. The lack of funds according to Osokoya (2010), coupled with the shortage of teachers led to the closure of some schools. For example, the Methodist were compelled to close down their Girls Grammar School in 1892, only to be reopened in 1912
- iv. There was the problem of uniformity in the condition of service of teachers. Teachers could be employed and dismissed at will whilst salary depended on the wish of the head of mission.

f. Supervision and Examinations

- i. There was a lack of adequate supervision of schools including building, teachers and subjects taught
- ii. There were no central examination system and every mission school had her own standards.

The Colonial Government's Educational Participation - Dual Involvement

From the foregoing, educational effort was for many years exclusively preserved by the missionaries in Nigeria. No government intervention. The purpose for which the colonial administration was instituted in the country could be said for commercial, military, and political purposes; not for educational engagement. At some points, the impact of missionaries' efforts was being felt by the colonial administration, because a handful of missionary-educated Nigerians became useful to the colonial officers as clerks, interpreters, messengers, stewards etc. Even with the realisation of the importance of educating the Nigerians, the colonial administration still did not assume responsibilities for this.

In the history, Lagos became a British colony in 1861 following a crisis of dynasty between Kosoko and Akintoye which the British exploited to declare Lagos a colony. Around this time, evangelism and the missionaries' activities, including education; later became a competition and rivalry started brewing. This resulted in manifestation of one thing or the other, to criticize about the provision of education by the missionaries.

The Beginning of Colonial Involvement

The very first time the colonial government became inclined about education was precisely in 1872, when £30 was provided as educational support for the three (3) Lagos missionary societies of Church Missionary Society (CMS), Wesleyan Methodist and the Catholic Mission. This grant to the 3 missionary societies marked the beginning of educational finance as *grants-in-aid* policy on education (Fafunwa, 1974).

By the year 1877, the grant was renewed and increased to £200 per year for each of these missions. This amount was maintained till the year 1882 when the colonial government saw the need to dish

out instructions and guidelines to the missionaries. They realised that he who pays the piper calls the tune, so the 1882 ordinance came to effect.

Education Ordinance – 1882

The Education Ordinance of 1882 was the colonial government's first formal document aimed at controlling education. Between 1874 and 1886, both the Gold Coast and the Lagos Colony were administered politically under the same colonial administration (Abdulrahman, 2018). Then, Accra was the headquarters. The 1882 Ordinance therefore, applied to both Lagos and Accra. The control of education by the colonial government was the major aim of this ordinance.

The Ordinance had the following provision:

- a. The constitution of a General Board of education at such places as they may consider desirable;
- b. The constitution, powers and duties of the Local Board of Education;
- c. Classification of schools into:
 - i. Government schools which were maintained entirely through public funds.
 - ii. Assisted schools established by private persons and aided from public funds.
- d. Freedom of parents as to religious instruction of their children;
- e. Grants to be used for school buildings and teachers' salaries;
- f. Conditions of grants-in-aid to private schools-based on managerial control, attendance of children and examination results in specified subjects;
- g. Appointment of an Inspector of Schools for all the British West Africa. When appointed the Inspector would spend most of his time in the Gold Coast. While Lagos would contribute one-third of the inspector's fixed annual salary of £400;
- h. Special grants to be made to industrial schools;
- i. Admission of pauper children into government and assisted schools;
- j. Defining school curriculum to include Reading, Writing, English Language, Arithmetic and Needlework for girls. (Osokoya in Abdulrahman, 2023);
- k. Grants to training colleges and institutions for teachers.

Basic Importance of the 1882 Ordinance

The 1882 ordinance was important in the history of education in Nigeria for some obvious reasons:

- i. It was the first colonial government formal pronouncement on education in Nigeria;
- ii. It brought out a regulatory body to monitor and control the excesses of the various Christian mission schools;
- iii. It encouraged expansion of schools as well as government establishment of schools;
- iv. It encouraged the admission and education of helpless children;
- v. It gave opportunity for the establishment of industrial or technical school and teacher training institutions.

Problems of the 1882 Ordinance

One of the problems of the ordinance was that it was not purely a Nigerian ordinance. It cut across Lagos and Accra (Nigeria and Ghana). Other serious limitations of the 1882 ordinance were:

- i. The ordinance was almost identical with the English Elementary Education Act of 1870 that was targeted to satisfy the needs of England at that time;

- ii. Both the Board of Education and the local Board was a direct importation of English Board of Education and the school Boards. These carbonized arrangements or importation were not suitable for Nigeria. For instance, in England then, there were different administrative units which made it suitable for school Boards to function. But it was not so in Nigeria. Hence, the Board system was unsuitable for the schools;
- iii. The clause on religious instruction inserted into the 1882 ordinance was copied from the Cowper-Temple Clause of English Education Act of 1878, which was aimed at resolving the religious controversy among the English people. There was no such need in Nigeria then, for there was no religious tension and no denominational controversy among the various mission schools;
- iv. The curriculum, the medium of communication (English) and the method were too foreign to the Nigeria child;
- v. The proposed system of grants-in-aid was not well spelt out and so was found unworkable and ridiculously complicated by the man, Metcalfe Netcalfe Sunter, (the Inspector) who was appointed to administer the system;
- vi. The ordinance ignored the genuine aspiration and demands of the local people (Nigerians) to develop their local language as a vehicle to education (Osokoya in Amaele, 2003).

Rev. Metcalfe Sunter, who was the former principal Fourah Bay College and a product of Christian Missionary School was appointed the first Inspector of Schools for the British West African colonies. Unfortunately, due to the cumbersome nature of the Ordinance, the General Board did not perform and the Local Boards were never constituted. Few schools qualified for government's financial aid, while the inspector of schools had much to do, that at the end he did nothing. It was obvious that, at the end, the 1882 Education ordinance failed to achieve its purpose.

Education Ordinance – 1887

As earlier mentioned, the 1882 ordinance applied to Lagos and Gold Coast. The 1887 ordinance therefore is what could be regarded as the first indigenous ordinance applied only to the Lagos Colony of Nigeria (. The Ordinance of 1887 marked the beginning of formulating education policy or laws for Nigeria.

The Need for the 1887 Education Ordinance

In the preceding Ordinance - 1882, there were some major limitations of the ordinance and these lapses which the 1887 Ordinance was meant to take correct. Again, there was the growing agitative influence of the nationalists with demand on the British colonial government to give more attention to education in Nigeria.

In addition to these points, was the desire of the colonial government to extend the British influence into the hinterland. Based on these, Lagos was separated from Gold Coast colony in 1886. This separation required the enactment of another education ordinance; in 1887.

The 1887 education ordinance was seen as the first effective effort made by the government to promote education and control the rapid expansion of education by the missions, and was specifically meant for the colony of Lagos covering Lagos Island, Ebute-meta, Yaba, Badagry. This was a cautious but practical and articulated ordinance that laid down certain basic principles which have become the foundation of educational policies of Nigeria. (Osokoya, 1995 & Taiwo, 1980:17).

The Provisions of the 1887 Education Ordinance

The provisions of the Ordinance therefore include as follows:

1. The constitution of a Board of Education which would be composed of similar members as in the 1882 ordinance. This Central Board of Education was made up of the governor as the chairman, members of the legislative council, four nominees of the governor, and the inspector of schools;
2. The appointment of an inspector of schools (as in the former ordinance) and also this time, a sub-inspector of schools and other education officers;
3. Grants-in-aid to schools and teacher training institutions;
4. Power of the Board to make, alter and revoke rules for regulating the procedure of grants-in-aid;
5. Empowering the governor to open and maintain Government schools;
6. Rates and conditions of grants-in-aid to infant schools, primary schools, secondary schools and industrial schools based, partly, on subjects taught and partly on degree of excellence in the schools;
7. Safeguards as to religious and racial freedom;
8. Certificate of teachers;
9. Admission into an assisted school of pauper and alien children assigned to it by the governor;
10. Establishment of scholarships for secondary and technical education. (Taiwo, 1982 & Osokoya, 2010).

Major Advantages of the Ordinance

1. The ordinance marked the beginning of dual system of education, whereby the government encouraged the missions, voluntary agencies and private individuals to establish schools. Equally, at same time government became involved in establishing government owned schools;
2. The composition of Boards was so balanced that it removed the cumbersomeness that made the earlier Board unworkable. The new Board was efficient and effective that it produced healthy and balanced deliberations;
3. The provision which kicked against racial discrimination was welcomed by nationalists who demanded for schools to be opened to children without distinction of religion or race;
4. The Ordinance also encouraged manual and technical skills by approving special grants to industrial schools;
5. In addition, the government accepted more responsibility for secondary and primary education by providing grants-in-aid and scholarships for deserving primary schools leavers;
6. The importance of teachers was stressed in the ordinance. Consequently, teachers were trained, examined, awarded certificate and paid stipulated salaries. The ordinance, indeed aimed at making teaching a profession;
7. It also encouraged a gradual expansion of mission schools, extending beyond the Lagos area.

Post 1887 Ordinance

Henry Carr was the only son of Mr. Amuwo Carr. His father Mr. Amuwo Carr was an ex-slave of Egba origin. Dr. Carr was born in 1863. He studied in Lagos and Sierra-Leone. In 1882 he graduated from Fourah Bay College, Sierra-Leone in physics and mathematics. He later obtained a Masters of

Art Degree and Bachelor of Civil law from Durham University in 1906. In 1934 he was awarded an honorary Doctoral Degree of civil law by the Durham University.

After graduation from Fourah Bay College in 1882, he taught in the college till 1885. In 1885 he was appointed to teach as an assistant master in C.M.S. Grammar School Lagos, where he rose to the position of senior master in 1889.

Henry Carr was appointed the sub-inspector of schools for the colony and protectorate of Lagos in 1889. By 1891, he became Deputy Inspector. He was appointed Her Majesty's Inspector of schools for the colony of Lagos in 1892. Dr. Henry Carr brought in some useful ideas which enhanced the growth of education in Nigeria. For instance, he advocated for government control of schools, as well as for greater government financial support for schools for easy control of the schools. It was also in his time that the first government school was established in Lagos (1899). This school was in response to the agitation by some Muslims residents in Lagos for a secular school, to enable their children.

Education Ordinance – 1916

The previous ordinances according to Abdulrahman (2023), did not reflect the nationwide policy on Nigerian education because Nigeria had existed as protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria. By the year 1914, the two protectorates were amalgamated as a country in 1914 by Sir Fredrick John Dealtry Lord Lugard who was consequently appointed the Governor General. The name Nigeria was given to the newly emerged country by a British correspondent, Miss Flora Shaw who later became Lugard's wife.

The 1916 ordinance came with Education codes with five major objectives, thus:

- i. Character training and habits of discipline
- ii. Cooperation between Government and Mission
- iii. Rural and Urban education
- iv. Increasing the number of literate Nigerians to meet the increasing demands for clerks and other officials
- v. Measuring Government control over all schools including assisted schools

The Need for the 1916 Ordinance

Before 1914 there were two separate protectorates known as the Southern and Northern Protectorates. Each was under a different administrative authority. However, in 1914 the two were amalgamated, and Lord Fredrick Luggard who was before then the governor of Northern Protectorate, was appointed Governor-General of the new Nigeria. As an experienced administrator, who had some mastery of Nigeria, he set up two Boards of Education, one for the North and the other for the South. The new task occasioned by the amalgamation challenged Lugard to make some recommendations in the education system. These recommendations formed major part of the 1916 Education Ordinance. The ordinance which came into existence on 21st December 1916 was almost followed up with the education code of 24th December 1916. The ordinance applied to both the Southern and Northern protectorates as one whereas, the education code was exclusively for the Southern protectorate.

The Objectives of the 1916 Ordinance and Codes

- a. Training on the formation of character and habits of discipline;
- b. Co-operation between government and missions;
- c. Rural as well as Urban education;
- d. Increase in number of literate Nigerian to meet the increasing demand for clerks and similar officials;
- e. A measure of government control over all schools including non-assisted schools. (Osokoya, 2010)

Major Achievements of the 1916 Ordinance and Code

The following are some of the major achievements of the ordinance:

- i. It was the first ordinance that took care of the whole country;
- ii. It provided for increased financial participation of government in the schools;
- iii. It also encouraged high level co-operation between the government and missions;
- iv. it brought a measure of Government control over education as a whole

The code which is operational in the South alone, prescribed new conditions for the disbursement of grants.

These are;

- 30% for tone of the school, discipline organization and moral instruction
- 20% for adequate and efficiency of teaching staff
- 40% for periodical examinations and general progress
- 10% for buildings, equipment, sanitation

The 1916 code also made great achievement as it gave the power to inspect or obtain information from non-assisted schools that were increasingly growing in the South. It also stated age limit of pupils in infant and elementary school system. It in addition, approved religious instruction as an examinable subject.

The 1926 Education Code and the Hedges Schools

Following the 1925 memorandum, the then Governor General of Nigeria, Sir Hugh Clifford identified poor quality of education and growth of mushroom schools as the two major defects of the Nigerian educational system. He therefore proposed more financial provision and control of educational development. The approval of this proposal was given for the colony and Southern protectorate as No. 15 of 1926, hence, the *1926 Education ordinance*.

Notable Government's Educational Input in the Colonial Nigeria

Primary School

In 1895, there was a protest to the colonial government by the Lagos Muslims, alleging that the tax paid by the Muslims was used in funding the Mission schools. Similarly, before any Muslim child could be allowed in the missions' schools, the requirements include renouncing their faith and accept Christianity, even change their names. Those who accepted these conditions to enable them attend mission established schools among the Muslims, according to Kosemani & Okorosaye-Orubite

(1995) were compelled to attend church services, Sunday schools and other religious activities organised by the missions through their school. This did not go down well with most Muslim parents in Lagos, so intensive agitation for a Muslim school was made. This agitation was considered reasonable by the colonial government. This led to the establishment of a Muslim Primary School at Asogbon in Lagos Island in 1899. With this newly accepted education by the Muslims, there manifested a political relevance, social recognition and economic prosperity for the Muslims.

Universal Primary Education

From historical accounts by Fafunwa (1974), Osokoya (1995), Abiri & Jekayinfa (2010) and Abdulrahman (2012), it was recalled that in July 1952, Chief Stephen Oluwole Awokoya, who was the Western Region Education Minister announced the decision of the Action Group to start UPE by 1955. The plan later on materialized with the eventual launching of UPE Scheme in the West on the 17th day of January 1955.

Before the launching of this scheme, preparations were made by the regional government in the West, for a successful implementation of the scheme. To this extent, more primary, secondary and teacher training colleges were established. New teachers were recruited by the government. The scheme which was initially conceived as free, compulsory and universal had the word compulsory removed from it, as the number of pupils registered was beyond the government expectation.

Following the western region in this idea of UPE was the eastern region in 1957. Also in 1957, Lagos which became the Federal Capital in 1954 was severed from the initial inclusion for the West, launched her own The Northern region was in 1958. The scheme was far successful in the West than it was in the Eastern and Northern regions.

As a nation-wide scheme, it was the realisation by the Federal Military Government of the inadequacies that greeted the operation of UPE scheme in the regions and the need to be centrally responsible for education of Nigerians at the elementary level became an impetus for the Federal Government to provide Free and Universal Primary Education in the country and making it a nationwide scheme (Akinbote, et al; 2001 and Osokoya, 2012). The then Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo launched the scheme at Oke Suna Municipal Primary School in Lagos; precisely on the 6th of September, 1976.

Government Secondary Schools – Kings and Queens Colleges

Aside from the existing secondary schools by the missionaries, voluntary agencies and those established by the colonial government, particularly the Kings College Lagos, established in 1909 and the Queen's College, also in Lagos in 1927, as well as other Government secondary schools established at Ibadan, Umuahia and Barewa College, Zaria in 1921 (originally established by Sir Clifford as Katsina College) and later on Kaduna College in 1938 and finally renamed Government College, Zaria in 1949.

Beginning of Higher Education

By 1930, Hussey proposed three levels of education for Nigeria, just like he did in Uganda in 1925; where he established Makerere Higher College. Osokoya (2010) considers Hussey's proposal as that which provided a prototype of Makerere in structure and operation. This proposal therefore focused on the establishment of:

- (i) Primary level which should be six (6) years, replacing the initial eight (8) with local language as the medium of instruction. The curriculum was to include Agriculture, Hygiene, handicraft and interest in the local environment.
- (ii) Secondary level which should also be for six (6) years and after which they can search for employment in any fields.
- (iii) Vocational higher education level that vocational courses are to be provided and to ultimately grow to the British standard of university.

Following Hussey's proposal to the Nigerian parliament in 1930, of the need to structure Nigerian education into three (3) levels as earlier highlighted, the last stage of this proposal eventually led to the establishment of Yaba College in 1932. Yaba Higher College was the first Nigerian institution that provided higher education to train Nigerians to be qualified personnel in the fields of medicine, engineering, teacher training, agriculture, forestry, commerce, veterinary medicine and survey. Officially, Yaba Higher College was opened in 1934, admitted and accommodated its students in 1932 at Kings College, Lagos. By the 1934 official opening of the College, students had already been in their first, second and third years.

University Education

The event that led to the establishment of University College Ibadan was the consideration of Asquith's report and eventual advice by the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Arthur Greech Jones who advocated for the establishment of two university colleges in 1947. Jones was appointed the Under Secretary for the Colonies, following the July 1945 General Elections in the United Kingdom which his party, the Labour party won. Okorosaye-Orubite (2017) maintains that coupled with the resistances and oppositions from all angles to the implementation of minority report, that is, of establishing only one University to serve the whole of West Africa.

All these culminated in the establishment of University Colleges Ibadan in 1948 and approval was also given for the transfer of about 104 students of Yaba Higher College to form the foundation students of the new university. Dr. Kenneth Mellanby was appointed the first principal of the University College Ibadan.

For a very long time that Nigeria expected the establishment of a university and that one was eventually established. One would have equally expected it according to Kosemani and Okorosaye-Orubite (2002) that Nigerians would see the establishment of University College Ibadan as a welcome development, but no sooner than its establishment than the general public and the press were antagonistic to this new university that the very first five years were characterised with criticisms and agitation for full university and not University College.

There were a lot of discriminations in the staff strength, condition of service, students' enrolment and admission policy, so also the curriculum was British-oriented. Between 1948 and 1949, the university had forty expatriates and six Africans. From this period till 1953, the number of expatriates increased to eighty-one while that of Africans remained stagnated at six. Also, from 1952 to 1962, the certificates issued to University College's graduates were similar to those given to private candidates who sat for London University Exams. Persistent criticisms of the discriminatory posture of the whites and other allegations signaled the necessity of transforming the University College into a full-fledged and autonomous university.

In addition to the above, Okafor (1971:93-97) points out that the most constructive and lucid discussions of the university college by a Nigerian political party was “the Action Group policy paper on Higher education in Nigeria 1958”. He further explained the four serious defects of the college as put forward by Action Group Policy paper, thus:

- i. That the University College was completely residential and this made university education rigidly exclusive
- ii. That the academic orientation of the college was wrong. This, the paper explained to mean “the allocation of priorities to certain faculties at the expense of others and the emphasis placed on certain courses in relation to others” while Christian Religious Knowledge was introduced right from the beginning, Islamic and Arabic Studies were not offered. Arts, pure Science, Agricultural Science and Medicine were allocated high priorities while it took the college eight years to introduce education, law, economic, engineering, geology, archaeology, anthropology, sociology and forestry. Public administration and philosophy were not available as at 1958.
- iii. The relationship between technology and university education was poor.
- iv. The paper explained that integrating potential of higher education was not utilized by the college authority. For example, in the 1957/58 academic session of 746 students enrolled in the college, only about 15 were from Northern Nigeria, yet the Northern region provided more than half of the nation’s population.

Ashby Commission - April, 1959 - September, 1960.

The Commission on Post-School Certificate and Higher Education other wise and popularly known as Ashby Commission was the first Nigeria’s Commission set up in April, 1959 on Higher Education; specifically, to investigate and recommend to the government, among others, on the needs for higher education in Nigeria. The nine-man commission was set up by the Federal Minister of Education composed of three members each from Nigeria, Britain and America.

The commission's report was so comprehensive that it embraced the secondary, technical, commercial, veterinary and higher education needs of Nigeria. It also projected the manpower needs of the country up to the 1980's and worked out effective strategies for realizing such through the various levels of our education (NOUN, 2011).

The Major Findings of the Commission

- i. Lack of continuity from primary to secondary schools. It stated that students were not well prepared for higher education, stating that three-quarters of the teachers were uncertificated;
- ii. That there were high drop-out rates leading to shortage of teachers;
- iii. That secondary education was too literal;
- iv. That few students were attracted to agriculture and technology;
- v. That there was educational imbalance between the North and the South.

Commission’s Recommendations

The recommendations of Ashby’s Commissions Report, summarized in the Government’s White Paper include among others the following:

- i. Concentrating higher education in university institutions through the provision of degree courses suited to Nigerian needs.

- ii. All universities should be national in outlook and unnecessary duplication of expensive course should be avoided
- iii. Professional qualification in Commercial subjects should be gained through courses leading to a degree.
- iv. Each university should organised extension work in its own area.
- v. Universities seeking federal funds, should negotiate through a national universities commission, not directly with the Ministry of Education
- vi. The international aid should be sought both in money and in the temporary loan of university places and of young graduate teachers from overseas.
- vii. That an inter-regional manpower board be set up to review nation's needs and to formulate programmes for man-power development (Kosemani and Okorosaye-Orubite, 1995).

The findings and the recommendations of the commission as highlighted above assisted, to a great extent, the establishment of more universities in the country. The report was submitted in October, 1960; few weeks before the opening of University of Nigeria Nsukka.

Soon after independence, precisely on 7th October, 1960, University of Nigeria, Nsukka was formally opened as the first Nigerian autonomous and full-fledged university; patterned in line with American orientation. Subsequently, 3 other universities were established and University College Ibadan upgraded to a full autonomous University alongside University of Ife, Ile Ife, 1962; Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, 1962, and University of Lagos, Lagos, 1962.

In summary and by 1962, the number of universities in Nigeria rose from one in 1948 to five.

The First-Generation Universities

1. University of Ibadan, Ibadan, 1948;
2. University of Nigeria Nsukka, 1960;
3. University of Ife, Ile Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University), 1962;
4. Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, 1962, and
5. University of Lagos, Lagos, 1962.

Today, university education in quantitatively expanding, but in quality, it is another aspect to be explored. According to NUC (2023), the Federal Republic of Nigeria can boast of 264 universities of 54 Federal, 62 State owned and 148 by the private.

Emergence of Private Universities Nigeria

The 1999 official licences issued to private universities proprietors was not the beginning of private participation. This is because the first attempt at establishing private universities in Nigeria before 1999 only fizzled out with Decree No. 19 Private Universities (Abolition and Prohibition) Act, 1984 (Ogbondah, 2012). In 1985, Decree No. 19 of 1984 was amended allowing the establishment of higher education by Governments (Federal and States), company incorporated in Nigeria, individual, or association of individuals who are citizens of Nigeria.

In 1991, the report of the Commission on the Review of Higher Education in Nigeria popularly called "the Longe Commission" gave credence to the establishment of university education by private organizations and individuals. The Federal Government accepted the above recommendations leading to the promulgation of the Education (National Minimum Standards and

Establishment of Institutions) (Amendment) Decree No. 9 of 1993, thereby paving way for the abrogation of federal or state governments' monopoly of university education.

In 1999, private ownership of university was liberalised and individuals and religious organisations became increasingly interested in establishing university. Babcock, Madonna and Igbiniedion Universities were the first to be issued licence of operation in 1999 and followed by Bowen in 2001; Covenant, Pan African, Benson Idahosa Universities in 2002 (Abdulrahman, 2013).

The Progress of Education in the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

This highlight is not just to make a statement about whether or not the republic is doing well educationally, but providing information for ideas to be generated and discussions to begin. In this regard, the Federal Republic of Nigeria has so far recorded the following:

- i. Having Unity schools, mixed and girls only, now in each state of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- ii. Establishment of public and private primary and secondary schools of international standards all over the states in the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- iii. All states of the federation have at least one state's university. Some states have up to 3 state universities.
- iv. Many specialized universities are now everywhere in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, from specialized universities for education, science, agriculture, technology, petroleum resources, marine technology.
- v. There are also a number of security universities in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, from the Defence Academy, Army, Police universities.
- vi. A large number of private colleges of education, polytechnics and universities; owned by individuals, faith-based and corporate organisations in the Federal Republic of Nigeria; which are even more than the entire records in all the French countries of West Africa or any other regions.
- vii. Education received in the Federal Republic of Nigeria has produced renowned international officers, such as the Nobel Laureate, Chief Justice and Vice Chancellors of other African countries.
- viii. Secretary General or Deputy, Chair, President, Director and country representative to International Multilateral Organisations (IMOs) e.g UNESCO, WTO, AfDB, UN, Commonwealth of Nations, etc. have been produced by Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- ix. Forbes acknowledged richest African is from the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- x. The first Television station in Africa is a credit that goes to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- xi. Trained doctors (medical), nurses and others (para-medical) specialists from the Federal Republic of Nigeria are in large number in Europe, Asia and America.
- xii. Unequal computer scientist celebrated in the world is from Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- xiii. Many international award winning musicians, sports men & women, inventors/innovators and those with ground-breaking discoveries; who have become reputed, are from the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Conclusion

Formal Western Education in the republic called Nigeria saw the Christian missionaries as the pioneers. However, the purpose of their presence in the now Federal Republic of Nigeria was not for education, but evangelism. The later recognition of the need by colonial government was also a game changer, with her involvement, first with financial grants to regulation of education, and the ventual pragmatic involvement with establishment of schools upto university level, to produce higher level manpower, from the colonial time till the attainment of independence. Chronicle of what former education has succeeded in achieving in the Nigerian federation are carefully highlighted, to show the progress made in the republic, not necessarily exploring or measuring how well education fared from the different angles of assessment or appraisal.

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