

ACHIEVING NIGERIAN EDUCATIONAL GOALS THROUGH THE CONFUCIAN EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY.

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Abstract

The importance of education to the development of any society cannot be gainsaid. However, decades after the inauguration of Nigeria's National Policy of Education, achieving the required educational goals for the nation's development, has largely, remained a hard sale. In consequence, the country faces alarming rates of social stability and underdevelopment. In the light of the current clamour of tongues and quest for effective ways of achieving more positive outcomes regarding the nation's educational goals, this paper critically interrogates the major challenges to the attainment of these goals. As the way forward, it presents the ideals of Confucius' philosophy of education as a philosophical perspective that could be utilized in transforming Nigeria's education sector towards a more effective attainment of the nation's educational goals. The analytic, critical and prescriptive methods of philosophical research are adopted in the paper.

Keywords: Nigeria, Educational Goals, Philosophy, Education, Confucius, Schools.

Introduction

The importance of education to human beings and to national development cannot be over-emphasized. In recognition of the centrality of education, Moses Hadas declares that "education is man's most important enterprise" (1963, p.3). To enunciate the importance of education to human and national development, Plato makes it the central theme of his *Republic*, and submits that "education should be controlled by the state and made compulsory for all citizens both males and females" (524d – 526d). Immanuel Kant believes that, "Man can only

become man by education. He is merely what education makes him” (1960, p.3). In the same vein, Confucius declares that, “education is an indispensable factor for social stability and development” (Analects, 15.38).

In Nigeria, education has been adopted as an instrument per excellence for achieving the national goals and objectives (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2008, p.10). As an independent and developing nation confronted with the problems of nation building, social integration and economic development, education is seen and adopted as a means of dealing with the great problem of national development. In pursuance of this, the Nigerian government in 1977 inaugurated a National Policy on Education, “which enunciates, standards, structures, strategies and guidelines for achieving the national education goals in Nigeria” (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2008, p. 10).

However, several decades now after the inauguration of this policy document, the realization of the identified educational goals in the country, leaves much to be desired. Today, the very mention of the Nigerian education system, conjures up in the mind a totally befuddled sector seared with highly dwindling fortunes and poor-quality outcomes. Expectedly, the negative impacts of this on the country’s stability and development, is deep and really concerning. Many have rightly attributed the near failure of the Nigerian state to the failure of the education system and have called for a comprehensive review of the system. Olu Ojewale rightly says that, “Nigeria’s socio-political backwardness is to be blamed on the failure of the education system....” (2008, p.24).

Since all educational efforts need philosophy as a guide in the determination of their ends and means, this paper undertakes a philosophical critique of the challenges militating against the effective realization of the educational goals in Nigeria. It equally proposes the domestication of the philosophical ideals of Confucius’ philosophy of education in the Nigerian educational sector, to remedy the ills retarding progress in the system, as well as enhance a more effective realization of the nation’s educational goals.

The Concept of Education

The term, “education”, is a broad term that easily lends itself to a variety of definitions, based on one’s school of thought. However, for our purpose in this paper, some notable definitions of the term can be of value. In line with R. S. Peters’ view, we may define education as “the transmission of what is worthwhile to those who become committed to it” (1967, p. 45). Sharing this view, J. Cumming says, “education is the systematic imparting of information in order to integrate a person in his culture” (1975, 424). In the words of Babs Fafunwa, “education is the aggregate of all the processes by which a child or adult develops the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour which are of positive value to the society in which he lives....” (2004, p. 3).

Going by the above definitions, we may say that, education involves the attempt to teach an acceptable culture of a given society to the young to enable them to live acceptably and contribute meaningfully to the its growth and development. The idea of education, as William Frankena rightly observes, “is the idea of someone fostering dispositions in someone by activities of certain sorts” (1973, p.1). However, since the term “education”, is normally at least, a laudatory and morally value-laden term, if one says, for instance, that X is educating Y, one must be thinking that X is cultivating desirable and morally pleasant dispositions by morally unobjectionable means, otherwise, it is not education; for as Samuel Amaele points out, “what makes a process educational is the virtue it carries and inculcates” (2007, p.5). Peters also indicates that, “we would not say that X is education Y if he is fostering undesirable and morally objectionable dispositions or using undesirable and morally objectionable methods....” (1967, p. 6).

Although the individual is usually the immediate beneficiary of any educational endeavour, the ultimate beneficiary is always the society. For this reason, no worthwhile development and progress can take place in any society unless the citizens are well educated and are fully equipped to use their education as a tool for solving the diverse and complex problems facing that society, thereby bringing about meaningful change and positive progress in that society. Education may be formal or informal. Informal education involves the general social process by which human beings acquire the knowledge and skills needed to function in their culture,

obtained in places other than the formal academic environment. Formal education refers to the process by which teachers instruct learners in courses of study within the formal academic environments. This paper is concerned with the latter.

The Philosophy and Goals of Nigeria's Education

The philosophy and goals of education of a nation is usually an off-shoot of the people's aspirations, which can be regarded as the identified societal values to be attained or sustained through education. Within the framework of Nigeria's philosophy of education, which is based on the development of the individual into sound and effective citizen and the provision of equal educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education in the nation (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2008, p.11), the National Policy on Education in Nigeria sets out the following as educational goals the country hopes to achieve:

- (a) The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity
- (b) The inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society
- (c) The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around
- (d) The acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of the society (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2008, p.11).

The responsibility of educational enterprise in Nigeria, is to ensure the attainment of the above-mentioned goals, and thereby lay the foundation for national development. Among the necessary measures enumerated in the policy document, which the government must adopt to guarantee the effective realization of these goals and gain from its contributions to national development, include adequate funding of education and ensuring that, educational activities are learner-centred; teaching is practical, activity based, experimental and ICT supported; education is related to overall community needs; and all tiers of government promote the establishments of Reading Clubs in schools, and community Libraries; special provisions and incentives are to be made for study of the sciences at each level of education system, as well

as ensuring that continuing education is a part and parcel of the education system (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2008, pp.12-13).

However, for more than four decades now after the formulation of this policy and endorsement of these goals, the implementation of the policy and realization of these goals in the country, leaves much to be desired. The education sector in the country is faced with multiple challenges that constitute serious obstacles to the effective realization of these goals. Instances and consequences of this failure variedly abound in the country. For instance, against the desire for proper value-orientation of Nigerians necessary for national consciousness and unity, as anticipated in the above-stated first educational goal, ethnocentrism has remained a major threat to national unity and progress in the nation. Many Nigerians – both educated and uneducated – appear pathologically steep in their culturally biased judgment and attitude about their ethnic culture's superiority and contempt for others. With such mindset, they become constantly domineering and oppressive, polarizing, and seek parochial interest and absolute privileges at the expense of others in their social relations.

Joseph Ebegbulem confirms that, “politics of ethnicity and ethnic domination is the major source of political crises in Nigeria” (1998, p.77). According to Victor Inoka, “in Nigeria today, all forms of favouritism, nepotism, and all forms of sundry preferential means are selectively adopted in the allocation of opportunities for individual advancements” (2000, p.134). Ademola Fayemi believes that “ethnocentrism in Nigeria promotes struggles over resources through social exclusion and ethnic violence” (2021, p.177). Ethnocentrism is responsible for the increasing rate of ethno-religious rivalries and violence, ethnic politics, nepotism, ethnic tensions and suspicion, ethnic agitations as well as threats of ethnic secessions across the country. Since the society is a reflection of the quality of its educational system, this sad situation eloquently testifies to the nation’s failure in achieving her goal of inculcating the sense of national consciousness and unity in Nigerians through the educational process.

Also, with the second educational goal, the nation anticipates that education should be a vehicle for ensuring better human relationship, effective citizenship, through the inculcation of such virtues and attitudes as fairness, appreciation of diversities, mutual reciprocity, essential for the survival of the nation. However, the reality

on ground today in the country, shows a clear failure to achieve this laudable goal. Instead, the Nigerian society is plagued with all-high incidences of deviant and anti-social behaviours that contradict these values and attitudes, and ultimately threaten the survival of the nation, since the greatest obstacle to the survival and development of our country is lack of moral values.

Evidence of this is that, many schools in the country have lost their sacred character as formation centres, and have eventually become breeding grounds for thieves, cultists and gangsters, “who intimidate their teachers and kill rival cult members and innocent student with dangerous weapons which they which they use in show of strength to establish their supremacy over other groups” (Njoku, 2000, p.35). The country is also inundated with alarming cases of examination malpractices and sexual immorality in our schools, banditry, drug abuse, armed robbery, corruption and embezzlement of public funds, kidnapping, oppression and domination of the minorities by the majority groups, religious intolerance, terrorism and all sort of criminalities that have engulfed the country. For this reason, various organs of the country cannot function properly. The economy of the nation, like other structures (political, social and religious) has collapsed, leading to unprecedented sufferings of the masses: “life in the country has become increasingly difficult, insecure and unhappy” (Amaele, 2007, p.6); and, “nowadays, our people live in fear because of insecurity of life and property” (CSN News, 2009, p.2). In this regard, it can be said that our education system has failed to inculcate and develop the proper value-orientation for the survival of the individual in the society.

Behind the third educational goal is the intent that, given the present complex and modern society, education should enable Nigerian citizens to acquire the appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy, manipulative, communicative and life skills that lays the foundation for reflective thinking, to make them skilled and competent citizens capable of competing globally. This is implied in the “training of the mind in the understanding of the world around”. It is for this reason that the policy document emphasizes the need for the country’s commitment to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2008, p.73). However, the unfortunate and disheartening experiences characterizing the Nigerian society today, shows no

significant progress made in this instance. For example, a lot of children in Nigeria are still out of school. According to the official report by the Education Ministry, “Nigeria has the largest number of children out-of-school in the world” (qtd. in ClassHall.com, 2022, p.3). Again, the spirit of inquiry is often silenced in schools due to improper method of teaching and learning of most ill-trained and ill-equipped teachers. Threats, drills, indoctrination appear to be dominant methods of teaching in schools, rather than teachings that is learner-centred that provokes the sense of inquiry and self-discovery in the student.

Consequent upon this, the standard of education in the country has nose-dived with such anomalies as mass failure and examination malpractices, waxing in strength through organized syndicates of students, teacher and parents, terrorizing the nation’s education system. On account of this, a greater percentage of our university graduates are unemployable even after obtaining relevant qualifications from the university. Also, the country today faces low productivity, occasioned by serious shortage of skilled workers and technicians in the industrial and service sectors; and the Nigerian economy is consistently recording negative growth rates, while the unemployment level is consistently high.

Furthermore, the country’s fourth educational goal of the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of the society, remains largely a dream in Nigeria. The expectation here is that education should contribute to national development through high-level manpower and capacity training of Nigerians. However, it is no news that our educational system has been so dysfunctional with poor funding and irrelevant curriculum that makes the achievement of this goal a rather tall order. Tam David-West succinctly declares that, “our educational system is out of step with the realities of the society and would only then succeed in producing a class that is useless to any strategies directed towards building a better society for the masses” (1980, p.56).

Today, the changing nature of work today, technology and competition in the global market has certainly outpaced what the educational system in Nigeria provides her students. J. Babalola says, “universities in Nigeria increasingly continue to manufacture half-baked graduates from heavily congested and obsolete factories...today, general

commitment to teaching and learning (to scholarship) has become extremely low” (2007, p.12). In the words of J. Okoh, “we have ended up producing graduates who are completely irrelevant to the society, graduate who have been miss-educated” (2008, p.4). This shows that there is a failure in terms of attaining the nation’s fourth educational goal.

Some Identifiable Problems in Nigerian Education

From the above analysis, it becomes clear that many factors are responsible for the relatively poor outcome in terms of realization of the desired educational goals in Nigeria. Below are some of the principal factors:

Inadequate Financing

The first and perhaps the greatest challenge militating against the realization of educational goal in Nigeria is inadequate funding by all levels of government in the country. There is a strong lack of political will on the part of the Nigerian government to adequately fund education in a way the makes the effective realization of these goals possible. Statistics show that the federal government annual budgetary allocation on education has been all-time extremely far below the UNESCO recommend 26% minimum benchmark. Ayodele Akinkuotu observes that, “no Nigerian government has ever come near spending the 26 percent of the annual budget recommended by UNESCO for the education sector” (2008, p.10). The highest ever recorded was 13% in 2008. Since then, it has constantly dwindled to less than 10%. The situation is no better in the states and local governments. This explains the poor and acute shortage of educational infrastructure and facilities at all levels of education in the country, which can hardly be utilized for any meaningful delivery of educational services. Salif Atojoko confirms that, “the schools are poorly equipped, teachers poorly remunerated and motivated, thus making it difficult for them to deliver” (2008, p.84).

Poor Teachers’ Training and Welfare

No education system can rise above the quality of its teachers, and there is no nation that can rise above its education system. Quality education in Nigeria is being compromise as a result of the poorly quality of teachers in our classrooms as well as the lamentable working conditions, which do not motivate them to give out their best. Due to poor training

facilities in our colleges of education and universities, and lack of regular in-service training for teachers our educational system is inundated with poorly trained and unqualified teaching staff churned out from these institutions. Thus, teacher education in Nigeria is “not fostering in teachers adequate knowledge and skills for effective practice in schools” (Ajeyalemi and Aloy, 1987, p.5). They lack the basic literacy competency, methodology of pedagogical formation, moral values and depth in their subject areas. I. Onyechere explains that, “at least 50 percent of teachers engaged in public and private educational institutions are unqualified and unprofessional” (2010. P.47). Molagun summarizes it thus, “Retardation of the highest order is being invited in a situation where unqualified teachers dominate the nation's classrooms” (1999, p.6).

Besides, the situation with teachers' welfare and condition of service is so bad in the country, that it appears as though it is a curse to be a teacher in Nigeria. John Odey notes that “the teaching profession has become a stigma in Nigeria” (2000, 195). This poor condition of service takes away the teachers' dedication to service and encourages irregularities and unethical behaviours among them. Due to this poor condition of service too, there is a high degree of brain drain syndrome in the country, where our teachers drift away from the educational sector in search of greener pasture within and outside the country. Many teachers take to the teaching profession today only as the last resort and would readily leave as soon as better opportunities show up. This is also what encourages the frequent industrial actions or protests by teachers and students at various levels of education, which constantly disrupt and stall the academic activities.

Irrelevant Curriculum

Another important challenge to education in Nigeria is the issue of irrelevant curriculum content of studies, which does not adequately equip students to contribute meaningfully to the society because as well as respond to the challenges of the modern society, after the learning process. For Ajeyalemi and Aloy (1987) describe this problem as “the planlessness of our educational system and the irrelevant nature of the curriculum” (8). The result of this is that, “while millions of people among the educated Nigerians are unemployed, millions of jobs are awaiting to be done, because people with the right education, training

and skills cannot be found” (Aderalegbe, 1985, p.26). Most of the country’s labour market prefers employing graduates of foreign universities to occupy strategic positions, particularly in the Oil, Telecom and Industrial sector, because they consider Nigeria graduates as misfit.

Indiscipline among Students

In view of the prevalence of examination malpractices, cultism and other related irregularities at all levels of education today, the interest and habit of reading, procurement of books and other skills development materials has drastically dwindled among many students in our schools. This is responsible for the rising cases of mass sexual promiscuity among students, mass failure in examinations, and general decline in the standard of education in the country and high illiteracy level in the country, which Fafunwa describes as “alarming, and constitutes about 50 percent of the Nigerian population” (cited in Tell magazine, 2008, 24).

Confucius Philosophy of Education

Having identified the challenges constraining the effective realization of educational goals and their causes, it is pertinent to examine Confucius’ philosophical views on education, wherein we hope to identify some basic principles for a successful education process that can enhance the realization of our educational goals in Nigeria. Confucius (551–479 BCE) was a Chinese philosopher and founder of the social and ethical philosophical system known as Confucianism in ancient China. Confucius’ teachings on education greatly shaped China’s educational system and development (Zhao, 2017, p.789). Confucius, believes that education is an indispensable factor for social stability and development (Analects, 15.38). For him, education is a means of transformation, discovery of human nature, and cultivation of character; and through education, virtues are developed and integrated for the well-being of the individual and the society. According to him, education must train a person’s character, for no one has the right to govern others until he has first learned to govern himself: "What has one who is not able to govern himself, to do with governing others?" (qtd. in Zhou, 2017, p.790). Education must also be practical and instrumental to the transformation

of life in the society. He believes too that education should make a man learn to think for himself and be self-reliant.

For him, education is essential for effective social relation and public service in the society. For this reason, he sought to revitalize Chinese social institutions, including the family, school, community, state, and kingdom through the process of education. Confucius also believes that, given its crucial role in the society, there should be equal access to education to all (Analects, 15.38). He also believes in the educability of all people, as well as in the capacity of education break down artificial barrier and class distinction among people in the society. Again, Confucius advocates for learners-centered teaching and learning, where the attention focuses more on the learner's improvement (qtd. in Tan, 2015, p.428). Learning, for him, should be geared towards understanding and fulfilling one's true self (improving one's self) rather than aiming at gaining recognition from others. He maintains that, through education or learning, learners should be able to discover their potentials.

Confucius' curriculum of studies was not simply a variety of the human arts and skills of the day, it was holistic syllabus, which he believed represented the unified cultural vision of the former sage kings (Yao, 1996, p.179). This unified curriculum Confucius called his *Tao (Dao)*, a word that originally denoted a path or a method, and which we often translate as "Way" to include both these senses. Confucius saw his *Tao (Dao)* as a path to personal and social perfection which had been discovered and passed down over the centuries, and which, once mastered, generated in individuals an all-encompassing form of knowing and skills. Confucius' syllabus involved four aspects of the critical points: knowledge of literature, norms of conduct, loyal to duty, promise. In his opinion, it is essential to teach students cultural knowledge, but it is even more critical to reshaping their moral character. Learning cultural knowledge is just to lay a foundation for future conduct shaping. Only when students learn more can they understand more truths, and then they will follow these truths to restrain their words and deeds. It is a process from simple to profound. Confucius believes that this system of education will produce "The Perfect Gentleman". For him, a state ruled by the perfect gentleman will be peaceful, secure and prosperous; for the perfect gentleman will be

just, impartial and will seek to establish a fair wealth, which will promote security and peace in the society.

The Confucian educational theory has five steps of learning, namely: To study extensively, inquire accurately, think carefully, discriminate clearly and practice earnestly. The first two steps belong to the learning process. Thinking carefully and discriminating clearly are the thinking process. Earnest practice is the process of applying knowledge (qtd. in Chen, 1990, p.19). Confucius encourages students to construct their beliefs actively. He encourages them to learn by making connections in order to understand concepts easily. However, Confucius believes that students have different abilities and interests. In view of this, he tries to understand and get to know his students when teaching. He feels it is necessary for the teacher to consider his learners' needs and peculiarities characteristics such as age and aptitude while teaching.

Hence, he advocates for a differentiated education according to students' interests, talents, cognitive abilities and characteristics, under the teaching principle (Analects, 6.19). He also advocates for the "heuristic teaching" technique, according to which the student must be an independent discoverer. In this method, the students are placed as far as possible in the attitude of a discoverer. In this method, the student has to find out the answer to his or her problem by unaided effort, in order to intuitively discover themselves and the path that they envision most satisfying, practical and interesting. In this method, which is a deductive, and an experience-based technique of elicitation, a problem is placed before the learners and they are asked to find the solution to the problem.

According to him, someone cannot acquire knowledge without studying independently. Thus, he encourages students to be eager and to take ownership of their learning and engage in higher-order thinking. He says: "To one who is not eager I do not reveal anything, nor do I explain anything to one who is not communicative. If I raise one corner for someone and he cannot come back with the other three, I do not go on" (Analects 7:8). Again, he says, "To learn without thinking is unavailing; to think without learning is dangerous" (Analects 2:15). However, he maintains that if a student thinks positively about a particular problem and is eager to solve it but has not yet figured it out, at this time, the teacher should guide the student in time to help him open his thoughts. Teachers should help students clarify their thinking

and the essential properties of things and then express them in more accurate language. Confucius rejects the method of passive learning by rote-memorization (qtd. in Tan, 2015, p.429). He discourages memorization and encourages critical thinking processes such as analysing, interpreting, evaluating, summarizing, and synthesizing (qtd. in Tan, 2015, p.429). For him, teachers should encourage and give full support to students' initiative when it comes to studies to guarantee the attainment of educational goals and objectives.

Confucius also stresses that teachers must be an exemplary role-model, who practice and act in accordance with what they say (qtd. in Watson, 2007, p.29). He believes that "the teacher's responsibilities should include cultivating students' morality, imparting knowledge to them, and developing students' abilities" (Woods & Lamond, 2011, p.666). In addition, a good teacher takes care of the students and shows love, patience, humanness and empathy, and "instructs others without being wearied" (Analects 7. 2). Teachers are also expected to have full knowledge of their subject matter in their teaching career, recognize students' ability, and encourage them to learn step by step. Confucius believes also that teaching and learning interact and are mutually beneficial to each other; for while the students benefit from the teacher through learning, "teachers can improve their knowledge by teaching" (Analects 7. 2).

Implications for the Nigerian Educational System

The problems of education in Nigeria may be multi-faceted, yet they are not insurmountable. To solve the problems and reposition the sector is most fundamental for nation stability and development. Emerging from the above analysis of Confucius' philosophical views on education are clear principles that can immensely contribute to the effective realization of our educational goals. Firstly, in the light of Confucius view on the importance of education for social stability and development, and the need for its accessibility to all citizens in the society, all levels of government in Nigeria must appreciate the need to provide quality and accessible education to the Nigerian citizens if the country must enjoy social stability and development implied in our educational goals. This places the specific demand on the government of the day to prioritize education by ensuring that public schools are well funded and made

conducive for effective learning with adequate facilities, as well as attractive remunerations for teachers.

It is proper in this sense, for the government to allocate at least the 26% of the annual budgetary allocation to the education sector. There should also be the proper monitoring mechanism put in place to ensure the effective utilization of the funds for the required purpose. Also, the cost of textbooks should be subsidized for the student by the government, and concessions should be granted to educational institutions to import books and other educational equipment. Such radical attention and funding of the educational sector will encourage effective and sustained teaching in schools, investment in research, development and innovations in the educational sector that call ensure the realization of our educational goals.

Also, the quality of any educational system is determined by the quality of the teaching-learning process. It is a truism that unqualified teachers will mar, rather than make the individual needed for the much anticipated national development. If men and women are to be fully prepared for life, and if our cultural values, knowledge, understanding and skills are to be adequately transmitted to the members of the society for effective citizenship, then, teachers will also have to be fully equipped to meet up with these challenges through their services.

Furthermore, Confucius' view that education is a means of transformation, discovery of human nature, and cultivation of character, should awaken the consciousness of stake holders in the education sector on the importance of moral education in our schools. This is necessary if the proper value-orientation identified in our educational goals is to be achieved for the good of the nation. Of course, if the citizens are properly educated with sound moral values, then economic and political development will follow as necessary consequences. Hence, education should not be solely for the cognitive or the psychomotor formation of the learner, but also for his affective development of our students. To this extent, moral and civic education should be emphasized in our schools. Moral principles like punctuality, honesty, hard work, patriotism, patience, courage, respect, obedience, justice, tolerance of diversity and complementary existence should be fostered in our schools, to enhance human development, inter-cultural awareness, political literacy, and responsible citizenship anticipated in

the educational goal. Of course, the teachers should strive to be virtuous role-models to their students.

Again, Confucius' idea of learners-centered teaching and learning can be a highly useful alternative method of teaching needed to advance cause of our educational goals in the country. Thus, for the attainment of our educational goals, it would be important to embrace Confucius' idea in this regard by ensuring the educational activities centre on the learner for maximum self-development. In view of this, teachers should encourage and give full support to students' initiative when it comes to studies. It would therefore, be an important teaching task for teachers to motivate their students to embracing critical thinking and to discover things for themselves, as well as to earnestly practice the process of applying knowledge for practical use. Such reflective and analytical thinking is essentially philosophical and beneficially to the realization of the nation's educational goals. Emphasis should not be placed on paper qualification so that students would be encouraged to work hard and produce qualitative rather than quantitative products.

Moreover, just as Confucius' curriculum contents of studies, reflected the practical needs of the society of his day, so our educational curriculum should take cognizance of the current industrial and technological development challenges of our day. As Fafunwa says, "the future of education in Nigeria will in the long run hinge on whether the curriculum is adjusted to the needs of the child and the society" (qtd. in Sharma and Hyland, 1991, p.24). This is an essential imperative to bridge the gap between the industry/economy and the academia, and by this, our educational institutions will be in a position to turn out people with the needed intellectual capacity to contribute to our national stability, growth and development, we aspire to attain as a country through our educational goals.

Conclusion

As far as the attaining the educational goals, for the stability, growth and development of Nigeria is concern, it has largely been a disappointing experience with the education sector, characterized by poor funding, poor educational facilities, ill-trained and unmotivated teachers, moral degeneration, highly rate of illiteracy and unemployable graduates. This has left telling consequences on the nation's stability, growth and

development, as no nation can advance above its level of education. However, in the light of the disappointing outcomes in our education sector, Confucius philosophical ideals on education, which calls for the prioritization and accessibility of educational services in the society, learner-centred method of teaching, reflective thinking and practical relevance of knowledge, constitutes an essential philosophical perspective that could be utilized in transforming Nigeria's education sector, for a more effective attainment of the nation's educational goals.

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