Using Education to Enhance Social Mobility and Nation Building in a Multi-Ethnic Country: The Nigerian Situation

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Abstract: This was an attempt to analyse social mobility complications, in multi-ethnic societies. Key issues around the discourse were social mobility, education, stratification and obstacles to opening up multi ethnic societies. The author highlighted common social systems in societies: slave, serf, caste, class/open and classless societies. The pros and cons of closed and open societies were also touched. The author concurs that the best way to build a nation is by opening up the society; for all to compete and put in their best. Obstacles to opening up societies were identified, as: politics, family, economic position, world-system, urbanization, education and prejudices among others. These were reflected on, along how they play out in a multi-ethnic country like Nigeria. The author posits that intents at exclusion, representation for ethnic and religious groups (ascribed positions) weigh heavily against drives for ability and qualification; to the detriment of achieved status. Suggestions were made that for multi-ethnic nations to actualize the attainment of human potentials of their citizens, enjoy peaceful cohabitation and sustain nation building aspirations; they need to foster policies that ensure openness, equality and meritocracy, by using education/ability to attain social status.

Keywords: Education, Social mobility, social stratification and nation building.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a unique country. Williams [1] thinks that Nigeria could be anything from eight to sixteen different nations, because of her social and geographical diversities. She is ranked only 32nd in land space and 10th in human population globally [2] but quite a few nations exist with her exacerbated cultural diversity. She has more than 500 ethnic or living language groups [3], 36 federating states and, still, some of these states have more than twenty different languages (Kogi and Plateau). These differences in languages have shaped up differences in culture and world view. The major ethnic groups Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, Tiv, Ijaw, Igala, Bini, Nupe, and Kanuri persist at efforts to maintain distinct socio-cultural traditions; to ensure survival and relevance at the national space. Arguments over continuing existence of Nigerian as a nation state may never end; nor would reviews and criticisms of extents and impacts of policies, urbanization, education and neo-colonial supervision on ensuring her survival and evolution to a modern state abate, for now.

Following world-system and dependency theory postulations Nigeria could be said to be existing, purely, to serve imperial or global capitalist interests. From this angle she exists as a farm for comprador bourgeoisies of western multinationals and local cabals who oversee the contiguous geographical space as Lords of the manor. On the other hand, opinions of nationalists like Azikiwe, Chinweizu, and Achebe, as underscored by Nwakamma [4], contend that the extensive land space and vast human population engendered by this colonial contrivance could be used as take-off point, for launching of the African or black super power. The land space has the largest concentration of black population and the wide population has produced great scholars, athletes and business moguls; and at crucial points, the country has been useful in stabilizing other African countries at crises. To this group, if genuine modernization steps are taken to allow merit, inclusive open social system, and achievement motivation orientation; the country can in a short span of time, like some Asian tigers, climb to an enviable height of national development.

Till date arguments about the pace of development of Nigeria have continued to hang on these two subtended lines; while the nation continues to regress into chaos. There is a wide cry over the bad state of the education system [7], a poor rating of the states of national development indices [4, 5]; and complex problems of insecurity, ethnic antagonisms and duels. Yet, there remains a continuum of same old and ethnic prompted faces in leaderships of politics, economy, industry, education, and civil service. No

wonder Daron and James [6] posit that among the factors that influence the rise and fall of nations to include: types of social mobility permitted; in whether it makes for peace, encourage expertise, assure fairness and equality before the law, to enhance productivity of goods and services, and act as tonic for nationalism. The levels of mobility permitted in any society, surely, have affected the development of the society at any time in history. Alejendro [8] and Pujari [9] point out that social positions in any society are always shaped by skill, training, legislation, politics, family, biological gift of intelligence, and human biases. All these can influence or be influenced by education. In a country whose population is made up of different languages, with a history of colonial and cabal manipulation, using these factors to place people accordingly for efficiency of services and to raise sound elites for nation building could be difficult. Yet, education, can be a tool for inculcating and grading the youth for proper character, attitudes and values, needed economic skills, knowledge and national ethos and ideals for the survival and progress of individuals and the nation state.

In pursuance of this, Nigeria set up her first major independent commission on education for higher manpower development, led by Lord Ashby. It worked between April 1959 and September 1960. The group advised, among others, that quality is necessary, more universities were needed, and different forms of higher training should be broached to enhance middle and higher manpower. It also harped on the need for Nigerian universities to have national outlook, and a controlling body, for quality check in accordance with universal best practices [10]. The Nigerian national policy on education, starting from an independent era educational summit, in 1969, also advised that higher education at all levels should prepare students in History, culture, nationalism, and logic for good reasoning and understanding; it hopes that these will create basis for unity. The policy also counted on education, in general, as an instrument per excellence for national development [11]. The philosophy of the national policy aims at the nation evolving equality, democracy, and availing opportunities to all to attain his individual ambitions. The import of these is that there was a belief that through education differences existing between groups and other national needs can be resolved by education. These goals and policy statements are really wonderful, but are they being met?

It is difficult to guess, because of the state of the nation and her educational system, and that is the basis of this work. The researcher wishes to lay bare the forms, rooms and problems of social mobility in Nigerian; how education contributes to social mobility, how social positions influence education; and attempt to point out how open/merit based society can play due

roles in social placement, efficiency and enhance nation building in a multi-ethnic society like Nigeria.

SOCIAL MOBILITY

The term social mobility describes how a person or groups of persons move from one social status or class to another. People or individuals across societies are always grouped by class or caste into positions and statuses. The Book Archive [12] classifies systems of stratification into five. At the base of the ladder, according to the authors, is slavery which can be explained as 'man being owned by another man'. This is a case where some people are taken as prisoners of war, bought properties, collaterals for loans, or held for ransom; and is subjected to whatever uses the captors choose. The captives could be used for sacrifice, sex objects, and articles of trade or deployed in forced labour, by their captors. Slaves are often stigmatized and treated as less human within their immediate societies; hence they enjoy the least of human rights in any society where such practices exist [13]. This practice still persists in eastern Nigeria and may occur in some other regions.

The second form is the estate system. This comprises of 'landed nobilities' and the 'serfs'. Serfs have more freedom and fewer stigmas than slaves; but they are, as well, not a fully free people in the real sense, as their lives and aspirations are always subbed to the nobilities. This practice still persists in the northern Nigeria. The third is the "caste system", where the statuses of one's parents decide wholly what one can be; and one almost remains where he is for life. This is a common feature in India, Apartheid days in South Africa and silently operates in many multi ethnic societies as prevalent in northern and western Nigeria for non indigenes; where those who claim indigene ship try to ensure that others are kept out of corridors of societal relevance. The fourth is the "class system''. This can also be referred to as the ''open'' or competitive society. Here, a mixture of factors: wealth, power, prestige, knowledge, skills, and motivation, inborn qualities and personal efforts and ability determine one's status. At this fourth level, positions are attained through two dimensions 'ascribed' and 'achieved' routes to status. 'Ascribed' status is when race, ethnicity, religion and family gives you privilege. When people rise or fall in positions based on their efforts, skills or lifestyles, it is an 'achieved' status. This is the desired practice in Nigeria and world over; but in reality it is always a matter of extents in all societies because those in advantaged positions hardly want to lose their privileges. Finally, the fifth form, an ideal, hoped for and theorized course to status is a "classless society'. Here all men, from birth, are expected to be unrestricted from attainments, equally. A dream, of Marxist-Leninist socialism, not yet actualized in communist experiments of the Soviet Union and

China; but relatively existing today in social democracies of Nordic nations of Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark. The OECD [14] explains that these nations have removed, to very large extents, factors that reinforce inequalities more than other societies in the world.

To further understand social mobility, some key concepts need to be clarified. These are concepts like stratification, class or status, inequality and equality. Stratification refers to how societies are arranged or structured in status of inequalities of condition; opportunities and outcome, and ways groups maintain class or status boundaries [15]. Moffit [16] posits that it is a system by which a society ranks or categorizes people in hierarchies; and mainly, these considerations are based on status, power, and wealth. Societies carry their system of stratification as a trait; it does not always reflect individual differences and it persists over generations. It happens everywhere but takes different forms. It involves not only inequality but beliefs. Moffit [16] and World Book Archive [15] further explain its functions in societies, from the functionalist, conflict and interactionist perspectives. The functionalists see stratification as necessary and inevitable to reward key actors and positions, so as to attract people to certain tough and tedious duties in societies. The conflict theorists however contend that rewards accruing to positions are created for and from inequalities and lack of opportunities arising from discrimination and prejudice in societies. Therefore, they are neither based on necessities nor difficulties of performing given duties but imposed by those who have gained strategic advantages over others. The interactionists' anchor their views on the effects of position, status or role on people's beliefs, lifestyles and interactions in a society. They are all right to a point and that is why education, achievement value, and policies that diminish ascribed statuses, are keys to reducing prejudice based stratification and create or justify paths to achieved/merited positions to enhance group progress.

The concept of class, position and status are also central in discussing social mobility. Sociology Guide [17] and The Encyclopaedia Britannica [18] describe status as the relative rank that an individual holds, with attendant rights, duties, and bearing, in a social hierarchy based upon honour or prestige. People are classified by worth and perceptions, as seen by themselves or others, as sharing similar affinity in relation to wealth, power and prestige. Status can be seen as ascribed or achieved. Status is 'ascribed' when it is bestowed by birth. When it is from merit, competition ability or personal achievement, it is 'achieved'. Ascribed status is around gender, age, race, and family privileges. On the other hand, achieved status comes from a person's distinguished

accomplishment, occupation, training and deftness in skills. In modern societies, occupations, possessions, physical appearance, etiquette, skills, education and intelligence should rank more than family, ancestry, ethnicity and religion in status ranking. According to the Business Dictionary [19], four common social classes are recognized in open societies: upper, middle, working, and lower classes; but, this is in the social sphere of western societies. Bongo [20] notes that only two classes exist in Nigeria: a tiny wealthy, politically influential upper class and a mass of poor, lower class, without access to representation or social mobility.

The factors used for gauging 'developedness' of any society range from how open the society is in social mobility, to the extents of reduction of class gaps and the openness of factors that determine or drive status placement. The state of these factors may as well increase harmony, equality, and ensure achievement value, and uplift the qualities of social institutions in a society. Thus Pujari [9] posited, that social mobility is the movement of individuals, family and groups of people, in a given social strata/class/status or position, from one position to the other on the social ladder. It could be upward or downward (vertical), horizontal, intra-generational or inter-generational. Individuals in any society are always motivated or pushed by complex variety of factors, offered by the social system of that society, to work or not to work, for new roles; based on the structured path to higher status and rewards. When a society is open, complacency is reduced because failure to do the needful could lead to a slip, from the top to the bottom of the social strata. On the other hand, good things of life make individuals to compete, conflict, and cooperate for better society and better personal attainments.

Every society has peculiar problems that arise from her operational social system. Pujari [9] deposes that all systems whether slavery, estate, caste, class or classless system; or basically, the 'closed' and 'open' societies, have some gains and problems integral to them. The closed system makes citizens to condition themselves in low aspirations and avoid personality crises as one knows what height is available. This can only work out well in a homogenous society, but not smoothly in a heterogeneous society. For the very gifted, closed system may push them to emigrate, making that society always lose her enterprising population. The open society gives people the freedom to reach their dreams and makes motivation and hard work the bases of reward and status. It is central tenet in modernization as it kindles individualism, democracy, industrialization, urbanization and spurns archaic traditions. Pujari [9] cautions, though, that open societies do not always guarantee happiness. This view is right, as western society that operates this system is riddled with issues of homicide, suicide, high divorce

rate and neglect of the weak and elderly; due, sometimes, to inordinate ambitions. Too much openness in social mobility could also lead to social flux by giving no time for building of traditions and institutions. Thus there is need for clear choice of a mix of direction and approach to opening any society.

In both open and closed societies some consistent factors have been identified as the wheels which move social mobility front and back. They are family, individual ability and efforts, urbanization, social change, government policies, socio-economic status, prejudices, migration, share luck and Education [9, 21]. Of all these factors, education is the looked at as the key to social mobility as it moderates and can be moderated by all of these factors; and by its role of equipping individuals to use their natural talents optimally, can empower one to make good uses of available spaces in social mobility as can be permitted in any society [22].

UNIVERSAL VIEWS ON EDUCATION AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

The place of education in social mobility in any society can be pursued from two distinct dimensions. First, is how attainment of higher and quality education is affected by social positions in a society? Second, is how educational attainment can enhance social positions for individuals in a society? Thus, education affects social status as social status affect education.

Education as a concept can at times be defined in relation to situations. On these ground Abiogu [23] says that *it inducts the individual into the shared values of society, and develops commitment to social goals in individual. It prepares the young members, of society for the future. It as well defines behavioural patterns of individuals and society. It enhances the productive capacities of individuals...* Though education is mainly associated with knowledge creation and impartment; but skill training, character and attitude formation are among the key concerns; and these are all linkable to nation building. Therefore, whatever social disposition a nation deems fit to cultivate should inform her educational policies, processes, access as well as rewards that educational attainments attract. Enemuo & Enemuo [24] posit that education from this premise is a tool for social transformation. They construe that higher education, in particular, could be said to be functional only if it envisions the production of graduates who are imbued with marked developed critical thinking and life skills; and who could actively and positively influence the society. Thus it is a given that education, when qualitative, can be a catalyst to dispositions to openness or closed-ness in a society. Toeing the same line, Haveman & Smeeding [21] observe that all type of education should be a filter that keeps away parent's

positions (economic, social, and political status) from simply passing straight through to their children. It is when so that education helps a society in promoting economic efficiency, social justice, unity and act as the bedrock of social mobility. Breen & Karizon [25] impute that social mobility works hand in hand with meritocratic society. Schools are therefore the best places to learn hard work and meritocracy [26] and build 'achievement value' orientation for the citizens. All these views lend credence to observations of Dike [13] that the development of a society is not limited to science, infrastructure and industries; but extends to social justice, fairness, and human equality. The OECD [14] joined the discourse by positing that mixing well and freely in classrooms prepares citizens for social mobility. The Quality Trust [27] also accordingly observed that, education provides a sort of ''social lift''; because it improves incomes for those at the bottom of the income ladder than for those at top. The OECD [14] underlined that the Quality of education available is a factor that helps its enhancement of social mobility, in the sense of lift. Wilkinson & Picket [22] elucidated further, how education affects social mobility, by pointing out that inequality in labour market and distribution of wages are linked to education. They contended that, the very educated elites take advantages of preparing their children better, guiding them well, committing more time and resources to the training their wards; and these earn their wards better positions in the social ladder. In this sense, discrepancy in quality and access to higher education create inequality instead of bridging it. Thus, Briggs [28] recapped the angles from which education influences social mobility to include 'Human capital creation', entrenchment of 'certificates as signal for productivity' and 'values completion theory'.

Socio-economic inequalities also influence chances of using education to climb up the social ladder. Greenstone, Looney, Patashnik & Yu [29] depose that the quality of education accessed by the high income group is different from those at the reach of the low income group. College attendance is higher for the high income group, attendance at top colleges of the world favour the high income group, and the best establishments want graduates from top institutions. Wilkinson & picket [22] concur that income and wealth affect the quality and level of education acquirable because children from privileged backgrounds perform better due to better schools, more time for study, family encouragement and linking of educational certificates to demands for services; and people of influence take advantage, by placing their children at better positions once they acquire the certificates. For education to decide social mobility it must be unfettered by social inequality via policies of undifferentiated and mandatory basic education, fund assistance for all the

able and willing to access higher training; and positions pegged on merit.

The roles of education in social mobility can also be undermined by public policies. This factor is related to social systems in political rules, laws, interventions and prejudices' adopted by societies. Haveman & Smeeding [21] proffer three theoretical steps to avoiding the undermining factors of policies as that the links between individuals' social origins and their schooling should reflect or be anchored only on ability. Secondly, specializations and eventual employment must be strengthened by qualifications acquired through education. And thirdly, that school achievement and employment must be constant for individuals of differing social origins. The Quality Trust [27] adds that low level of trust in unequal societies is a cause of poor quality, as groups wrestle for representation. Hidden goals from policies for balance of representation when they conflict with merit could make a mess of using education for social mobility due to poor quality; and may leave the society too slow in opening, and crises prone.

A fourth factor identified as having influence on education and social mobility is family. No matter how open a society may be, according to Briggs [28]; it can make a grade 'c' brain like George bush, become a president. Alejandro [30] outlined means by which family impacts education to include a father's job or family income, motivation, and genetics in intelligence and social discrimination linked to social status. These are all family factors, because a father's job is determined by level of education, and these often tell whether he can help his son's education or not. Intelligence does have some hereditary links and families and ethnic groups could carry biological traits and socio-cultural dispositions that may influence educational attainments. Discrimination and prejudice linked to family affect education from obvious policies and silent social stigmatization that sway motivations. Perhaps, Mathew [31], along this reasoning noted that education, occupation, status, wealth and longevity have links to family roots. He deposes that these factors have been maintained by sun names and family line in genetics and socio-cultural ways; and that empirically patterned studies have failed to rule out the link of family in social mobility. OECD [14] also observed that in UK and Southern Europe, part of the so called open society, children whose parents hold university degrees earn 20% more than those whose have not, regardless of personal effort or ability.

Societies exist as different systems from policies, laws and crystallized social structures that can be easily observed, as created by political systems and governments. The five stated systems of stratification; slavery, estate, caste, class and classless societies [12]

usually exist in part or fully in different nations. Even America and Europe still have emigrants that are treated like slaves, serfs or lower castes in some communities. There have been instances of inhuman treatments of immigrants and asylum seekers used as sex slaves, or forced into prostitution [32] or made miserably paid menial workers and slum dwellers, in western nations [33]. Politicians still publicly taunt and stigmatize others (Trump, Le Pen and others) and are backed by a significant number of the population. Making the 'we', 'us' against 'they' or 'them' mentality continue to pervade the world. However, Arnesson [34] contends that equality of opportunity is a political ideal that is opposed to caste hierarchy but not opposed to hierarchy per se. Thus in racial, ethnic, religious, and ethnically divided nations, there continues battles of staying on top or using political power to take advantage economically and socially, by the group that holds power. These lead to resistances and calls for new states from existing ones as seen today in Ukraine, UK, Spain, Canada, India, Nigeria and Sudan. Often time, a group that takes control of state affairs fear the rise of others, or equality with others, as was in apartheid South Africa; and discernable in 'quota system' policy in education but not in political appointments in Nigeria. Those enslaving or lording over others want privileges and make rules and policies that ensure it, thus scuttling the usage of merit and education for social mobility.

The world-system, globalization and social mobility, is yet to be adequately treated in discussions of social mobility. This may be because the West dominates social mobility discourse and refuses to indict herself, or that the discussion has always focused on social situations within nations and, at most, attempt only comparisons. How power is used in global politics are many a time confusing and misleading. Achebe [35] and Wallerstein [36] among many others have exposed how western powers constructed and preserve social systems that hold back diversity, indigenous autonomy and social progress in most developing nations. Nnoli [37] narrated clearly the constitutional process to the making of modern Nigeria. The process placed one region (North) as a representative of the interest of Britain in Nigeria. This socio-political structure has continued to determine social mobility in the country as backed by the UK at international levels. When the UK and U.S say they fight for democracy; their fight for democracy in Libya and Syria jolt you when you deduce that they fight against democracy in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait. The west which supports freedom for Kosovo to seek independence from Serbia will not see it worthwhile for Russians in Ukraine and Georgia, Igbos in Nigeria and the Kurds scattered in the Middle East. The struggle for racial equality in South Africa saw Western Europe back apartheid, yet they claim to be champions of human equality. Watson [38] was right therefore to insist that

many nations exist just to represent global capitalist interests, and not for the benefit of the nationals. In such cases evolving social mobility is dependent on the consent of the interested neo-colonial powers. The global powers want structures, ethnic or religious groups that would serve their economic and strategic goals; and these influence the value of education, policies, and who can use certificates to attain a position. This may be why the best brains of most third world countries often go into exile while western backed fools hold the helm of affairs in their nations. The New world Encyclopedia [39] notes, differently though, that in global businesses, outsourcing companies create employment opportunities in emerging nations, generate more jobs outside of governments control and this do open new sources of mobility hinged on education. From a different lane Komolafe [40] adds that migration can be fuelled by globalization or people being assimilated into foreign culture. Such that because of share culture with colonial masters, in times of economic crisis, political upheaval, and declining opportunities for upward mobility any overlooked groups in the society will easily migrate. Across nations those who feel short-charged in a society are those who go out to try other social enclaves where they may be welcome. These influence motivation, the link of education to occupations and affect the use education for positions by a people. It could impact on genuine use of education for mobility and national development; because if emigration is the option left for the best brains, local institutions will suffer, and the migrants will be devalued where they relocate.

Some other forces like urbanization, skill training and industrialization may also contribute. However, the author thinks that when government policies, world-system, family, politics, urbanization and prejudices are treated; all other factors will be touched. The above factors could contribute to social mobility differently in different countries; thus each nation needs to adopt positive means to control them.

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL MOBILITY IN NIGERIA
This work is set to use a universal frame to discuss factors that influence the usage of education in general to enhance social mobility in Nigeria. This will be best started from history, globalization and world system theory explanations. Nigeria as a colonial creation has seen wars, social strives and endless policy adjustments; in a bid to patch-on. She has not yet survived as a nation in truth; and education has long been hoped on as an instrument per excellence for building her into a united nation [11]. Therefore, educational policies and practices need to be continuously analysed around how they help to ease openness and social equality conditions, for individuals from different family settings, ethnic groups and political regions of the country to embrace common values that could help make her a nation.

Western Europe, at Berlin in 1884-85, shared out geographical regions in Africa into spheres of businesses operation by the European powers on ground (Germany, UK, France, Portugal, Belgium, Spain, Italy, and Holland). The WW1 and WW2 led to countries like Germany and Italy losing their spheres' in Africa, over European conflicts, prejudices and political resolutions at the end of the wars. This made western nations lump and firm up patchworks of black nations into countries; for convenient of administration and commerce. These are what we call today called African countries. It appears that Nigeria, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo are the fusions/nations most harmful to life amongst the conjoined groups. Lugard, who forged Nigeria, appeared to have bias against the south, which got Christian/Western education first and tended to make out that freedom was a right to all individuals, largely resisted British political and economic project of indirect system. Before independence, apparently to use the north that has been subservient, Britain organized a plebiscite through which it reduced the southern population by cutting off southern Cameroon from the Eastern region and hacked-in parts of Northern Cameroons into northern Nigeria. The colonialists detested liberal elites, who were many in the south; they saw them as threats to the bid to keep the space as an imperial farmland for exploitation. Forsight [41] reported how military recruitments and promotions, civil service and political positions had to disregard ability and certificates and chase regional balancing; to quell imaginary fears of ethnic domination, invented and amplified by the British. Achebe [35], Ademoyega [42] and Forsight [41] recounted that, soon after independence, tensions aggravated and resulted in coups, counter coups and a civil war; the UK and her allies were there to fight to ensure that Nigeria (good or bad) survived, even when the north wanted to go their way. It is still a part of the social system that even in the 2015, presidential elections a particular candidate campaigned from Cheltenham house in England; and was heavily backed by UK and US propaganda and threats, as 'foreign friends' [43] to wrestle power and give to where they want it. The UK and US ambassadors held series of secret talks with opposition leaders to bolster rebellious confidence. Aware that most from the east, the base of the ruling party were disenfranchised; under age voting were rampant, threats and killings of uncompromising electoral officers were common in the north, the base of opposition; yet, the UK and US were quick to call the 'fraud' a credible election.

A president, whose ordinary level's certificate is still in doubt till now, has been imposed under the pressure of UK and the US; whose interest is to direct

events in the country. Under these neo-colonial ambits, education cannot play major roles in political status or social mobility because whom the west wants would be the leader, and they always back fools. Also the place of new jobs which is expected to come from foreign investments may not follow certificates or abilities but ethnic and family factors; because the partners used locally for these businesses are trusted cronies of the west (comprador bourgeoisie). From joining mutually suspicious ethnic groups together, choosing whom to back as in Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and apartheid era in South Africa; the world system sows seeds for conflict, closed society and oppression. It tampers with open and achieved social status by stifling the chances of opening up institutions and the general society through democracy, meritocracy and specialist ordered positions. Foreign backing made illiterate soldiers hold sway for long, rejected and aggravated seemingly mutual attempts to devolve Nigeria; they refused the cry of incompatibility and backed a genocidal, war to ensure power in the hands of those the west wants. They turned many to slaves' or serf's status by their actions.

In Nigeria, history records that in early times before the WW2, most regions saw western education as alien and an obstruction [10, 35]. Slaves, weaklings and the mentally low operators, who could not cope with farming and crafts were those allowed initially to go to school, in the south. In Muslim areas, mostly northern parts, the social system was such that the Muslim faithful detested perceived Christian encroachment, through education. As time passed and pressures mounted from economic and administrative needs, Muslims would allow some sort of western education (if the Christian control was removed). The Emirs and other strong kings in Nigeria, in those early days of Christian education, saw the knowledge in western education as what only their off springs should imbibe for use in lording over their subjects. We can still see this today as Emirs, powerful kings and government top officers get admission wherever they want (choice courses and institutions) in the Nation; and often have reserved spaces in the best universities of the world for their children. After schooling, most high status works are got by recommendation—ascribed status in practice. For example, to be recruited as a police cadet, custom officer, Army cadet, or into any elite positions, one needs recommendations from powerful chiefs, Emirs, governors, senators or retired officers. This is the social reality in Nigeria. When access is determined largely by names, positions and cronyism instead of rigorous tests for ability or interest; the education process is stripped of influence in the attainment of a position, from its grading, selection and certification of experts.

Economic inequality in capital accumulation and income distribution derails the role of education in social mobility in Nigeria. In Korea, a rule exists where children must attend primary and junior secondary schools within their neighbourhood, free and compulsory education up to junior secondary is catered for by the government, attempts are made for all the schools to be qualitative, efficient and not to differentiate learners too early; they keep a tradition of respecting hard work and merit [26, 44]. In Nigeria, people send their children abroad for primary and secondary education. Forsight [41] recorded how Emeka Ojukwu went to Eton as a kid. Today many send their toddlers farther than 100 kilometres from home, to boarding houses, for quality education. Reasons adduced for this include the spate of 'decadence in public schools' Torulagha [45]. But, as the OEDC [14] pointed out, differentiation should only come after 16 years, to avoid exaggerating the impacts of economic inequality in education. As World Bank [46] averred, economic inequality when allowed to influence education, leads to a perpetuation of social inequality. Briggs [28] corroborates this by opining that education in this unequal measure provides protection to those on top from downward mobility by buying the best education available, differentiating themselves, and at the end make incomes more favourable to their background. The children of the rich in Nigeria go to the best schools of the world, with top facilities and are recommended for the best jobs from their father's connections, or work in their fathers firms at exalted starting positions. It is such that they marry one another to give their base a firmer protection [47]. The Nigerian national policy on education FGN [11], among other aims, hope to found a nation on the principles of freedom, equality and justice. These are good dreams, but how can one actualize these without equal right to access quality education? As Haveman and Smeeding [21] contend, schooling will only be useful in social mobility if entrance and choice of study will relate to one's ability; employment will be linked to qualifications, and the use of certificates and grades in employment are constant for individuals of differing social groups. With economic status determining the quality, specialization and extent of education, and job placement in Nigeria, education's role in social mobility is distorted by socio-economic status.

In Nigeria, education and other social policies are always made to meet the need for representation of the 36 states, more than 16 major ethnic groups, six or two geopolitical regions; as well as the two major religious groups (Christians and Muslims); to allay fears of marginalization. Whether done in good or bad faiths, these policies may be impacting on the role played by education in social mobility in the society. Equality of opportunity is what Nigerian constitution and national policy on education canvas. Arneson [34]

posits that positions ought to be determined by competitive processes and all members of the society allowed competing in the national sphere. The author claims that modern states can only evolve or be maintained through open social mobility by allowing citizens equality and meritocracy in the nation building processes. Anazodo [48] informed that the origin of civil service could be dated back to the Greece in 462 BC and the Ancient Chinese in 202BC. In Greece, it was from rewarding officials who show commitment to work daily in public administration. The Chinese commenced it from the need to keep a permanent body of officials who would implement government policy. Reward has always been one of the factors for the workers; but the most important factor for the nation builders (Pericles and Sun Hung) was to select those with the best knowledge and skills to lift their nations. It was never, as campaigned by Adujie [49]; for everybody or group to be represented in national affairs for assurance of federal character; nor the abandonment of modern practice of anchoring institutions on individual ability, professionalism and meritocracy which today undermines Nigeria's national development [35, 50]. Princewill [50] laments, that if one looks up the names of those on boards of government agencies or Parastatals and questions their antecedents, it is obvious that nothing qualifies them to this or that position beyond political connections-- which is often ethnic based. This is so because, Princewill contends, the rich and elites who make these obnoxious policies know that they can't survive competition, so they exclude the bests from competing and hoard opportunities for themselves and their children. This is a clear rejection of usage of education and specialization for placement. Policies are also used to deny many of the best heads educational opportunities and dash same to those not qualified. This makes the nation continue to fail to benefit from the expenses put to education; yet such policies still persist as if they are meant to hold some people back. To use education to create an open society, governments should be fund education before age 16 for all Nigerians, ensure meritocracy and equal opportunity by extensive grants and loan supports for higher education, and use the most able and trained citizens selected from competitive exams as in 'kwako' which Park [51] reputes as 'education and merit wars' that enhanced the ascendance of South Korea. In contrast Nigeria uses policies and practices of exclusion to stifle the role of education in social mobility.

Inequality, bias, and prejudices are basis of discrimination; they also influence how social groups may benefit from education. From variations in emotion, scope and limits of aspirations and general motivation; different social backgrounds influence social mobility across Nigeria. Unless one migrates from his immediate home, in some close communities,

the Osu caste system engenders distraughting experiences in Igbo land. Dike [13] points out that, till date, it remains an impediment to social, psychological and emotional health of some people in Imo state. The Christians in many parts of the North, according to Daniel [52], have suffered rejection, discrimination and forceful denial of socio-political positions because of their religion; regardless of their level education. In the just concluded 2015 elections (presidential and governorship) most Northern states and Lagos in the south ensured that millions of Igbo voters fled back home and their votes lost from bias, orchestrated by political elites of the states. In Lagos the threat was such that an Oba was so hateful to declare that any Igbo who voted against the Oba's choice of governor would be thrown into the Lagoon [53]. These prejudices could impact the choice of people working in some locations if you are not an indigene; because of fear of violence or being dismissed once a 'son of the soil' appears for the job. This disposition to exclusion influence the placement of a people from particular ethnic groups in choice positions without regards to qualification. Building a united, indissoluble, sustainable and peaceful nation cannot work through a social structure that stratifies people from primordial instincts of biases based on ethnicity and religion in the use of education for social mobility.

The family factor is very strong in Nigeria. Not only do family names give you security and privileges, they ensure access to education, and map out how your certificates could further your status. This is not strange as Mathew [31] revealed that even in western societies, families that have high social competence, no matter the social system, will always find their way to the top. In Nigeria, family name can be a wide protective umbrella; whether based on wealth, political power or academics, whosoever sprouts under a big family umbrella suffers no hash sun or drenching rain. Members of the ruling families or those close to them enjoy prestige, especially in the northern parts of the Nation [47]. Even though according to the United Nation's university [56] modernization, urbanization, industrialization and other social factors have made the extended family set-up less viable; and the modern nuclear family of husband and wife, with 2-4 children, more socially viable. This is because it ensures psychological satisfaction, by becoming a haven in a heartless world of modernity. Family offers, among other values, better statistics of social mobility in change in income, better education, and other aspects of socio-economic status indices. The factor of family type shifting from polygamous to the monogamous is highly related to the extent of adoption of western education and culture in that area of Nigeria. The family type has effects on economic, social awareness, comfort and affordability of the cost of quality education. The OECD [14] noted, already, that

the education level of families influences the education chances of their offspring noticeably. Suleiman [47] explains that in the north there is a narrow circle of influential, power holding and educationally exposed families. Their children are mostly educated outside the nation since schools available within are deemed of low quality. They recycle themselves through extended family and the tradition of marrying their parent's old mates. These make the family a very strong factor, and are making it hard for education to create a permeable social field. In the south family's influence also comes in genetics and support circumstances to use name to help lift members upwards. In most public institutions today, family and tradition of none application of rigorous examination for employment, make people plant their children, wives and relations in jobs they are not qualified for. Also, Nigerian privatization, by default, ended in selling of public institutions to connected families as private nests; and now, this organizations can exclude none family members with ease, thereby stifling the use of merit or educational attainments as a major course to social position.

Finally, other factors like urbanization also have special links with educations and social mobility. Akande [54] noted that education can help in universalizing values for urban dwellers if political spheres are rationally, peacefully and respectfully conducted. Komolafe [40] pointed out that, in Nigeria, politically guided unequal urbanization caused some groups of rejected people to migrate from one point to the other, within and outside the country. But Mberu & Ponguo [55] highlighted the pitiable position of internal migrants, and how they are treated as foreigners in their own countries by being almost totally excluded from political participation in their places of residence. This is because of government policies, long culture of family and community identity, and ethno-religious cleavage manipulations in Nigeria. The authors emphasize that these persist, no matter the level of education of the group. It makes modernization difficult, constricts aspirations, relegates achievement values; and limits chances of the use of education for social mobility across Nigeria. Education, which pools people of different ethnic, religious, family, and regions together in hostels, disciplines, sports and recreational activities should be the best means of acquiring values and skills for cohabitation, which urban setting demands. Since the location of one's residence are counted among factors of class or position, the places elites dwell should reflect good taste, behaviour and security. But due to poor quality of education [7] and disregard for using educational attainment in allocation of duties and positions, there is lack of fellow feeling and decorum, as cattle graze even at Aso Rock lawn, staff quarters and central bank premises; and recommended police officers leave their functions of safeguarding the people to block the road for extortion

freely as their approved these actions; making misery replace joy in cities, except for those connected to the chain of abuse, which passes for status or class. Therefore, education can't help sort the residents and appointments with no regards to merit have turned the urban setting to a jungle.

CONCLUSION

Social mobility refers to a movement from one social class, status or position to another. Many factors influence these shift: education, urbanization, family, globalization, socio-economic position, politics/polisscy, and prejudices among many other factors. The study attempted to fathom how education and social mobility interplay in opening up the Nigerian society. Nigeria as a colonial creation is an amalgam of many different nations; and is still battling to build a homogenous society. Family, socio-cultural biases, religion and language differences are having dire effects on social evolutionary processes for social mobility to work openly in the country. Education has been identified, universally, as a tool for opening up any society; since it can make citizens work with equality in evolving a social structure where all will partake or compete to attain the chances and positions offered by a society.

The work tried to explore how the relationships between education and social mobility in Nigeria interplay. It puts to analysis how education affects the factors influencing social mobility and also how these factors impact on education. It arrived at the conclusions that so far, Nigerian education is not significantly influencing social mobility. Routes through which education could impact on social mobility are by opening up a society through emphasis on meritocracy, specialization, universalization of values and enhancement of achieved status. However these are rather constrained by further distortions of the process, access and usage of educational attainments by circumstances of prejudice, world-system, family, policies, socio-economic privileges among other factors. These, deprive education of its central role in creating equality of opportunity for open social mobility and the nation continues to nourish a distorted and closed society, of advantaged groups, who sit on the role of education in social mobility.

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