

Indigenous Education Curriculum Annexation: The Salt to Nigeria's Advancement Technically

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Abstract: Nigeria is endowed with a huge and vast array of natural resources such as petroleum and natural gas, solid minerals, agro materials, forest and wild life species and extensive water bodies. Notable in Nigeria as a case, the economy is suffering from structural defects and remains a consumer economy as a result of failure of indigenous engineering personnel to understand and take the lead role to process and utilize abundant natural resources for industrial development of the country. The study therefore x-rayed indigenous education and its inclusion to our school curriculum as the salt to Nigeria's advancement technologically. The researchers utilized the descriptive survey type of research design in sought for response from her respondents. Key informants of the study were aged retired lecturers or teachers. A structured questionnaire were developed and used to gather data. Sixty-two (62) questionnaires were distributed and retrieved from the respondents. The statistical tool used in the study was weighted Mean. A four-point scale was used to assess the degree of agreement and disagreement of the respondents. The study revealed that respectful inclusion of Indigenous knowledge at all levels within the conventional curriculum can result in decisions that are based on a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of the world. Furthermore, it also proved that Indigenous knowledge cannot be separated from the people inextricably connected to that knowledge amongst others. It is concluded that in order to achieve meaningful advancement technologically in developing nations like Nigeria, the inclusion of indigenous education/knowledge into the already modern existing curriculum should be considered as paramount. Also increase awareness among the public, policy maker and industrialist on the pivotal role of indigenous education plays in national development.

Keywords: Indigenous education, indigenous technology, curriculum, Nigeria.

1. Introduction

Nigeria is endowed with a huge and vast array of natural resources such as petroleum and natural gas, solid minerals, agro materials, forest and wild life species and extensive water bodies (Okorafor, 2014). Notable in Nigeria as a case, the economy is suffering from structural defects and remains a consumer economy as a result of failure of indigenous engineering personnel to understand and take the lead role to process and utilize abundant natural resources for industrial

development of the country. Despite its natural resources, Nigeria according to the World Bank, in its latest 2022 Poverty and Prosperity Report, contributed three million people to global extreme poverty, while the country is "home to a large share of the global extreme poor". Also, Nigeria was ranked 103 out of 121 countries in 2022 Global Hunger Index (GHI), a position that signifies the nation has a level of hunger that is serious (Nwannekanma & Waliat, 2022). Nigeria is regarded as the giant of Africa but great nations are not made by the abundance of resources inherent in them, rather by the availability of the pool of knowledge adequately applied in delivering goods, processes and services (Mogbo, 2000). Nigeria naturally is designed by God to be the salt of the world but as the bible says "If salt has lost its taste (its strength and quality), how can its saltiness be restored? It is not good for anything any longer but to be thrown out and trodden underfoot by men". Nigeria lost its taste via the lack of knowledge (human potential) that can translate its local natural resources to economic wealth. The country spends a huge amount of money importing back finished products of its local resources that were exported, due to inability to process them for utility. If the status quo is unchecked, the future is lost completely. For the future to be salvaged there comes the need of indigenous education and knowledge.

The term indigenous when used with education, is generally recognized to refer to the first inhabitants of an area that was later colonized by another, more powerful, group of people who then forced their language and culture on the original inhabitants (Jon, & Navin, 2021). Indigenous simply means native or local. It could be used to refer to something that originates within a locality and is unique to the locality (Eziobu, 2019). This is in agreement with Warren (1991); Flavier Chambers, Pacey and Thrupp (1995) and Hamilton-Ekeke, & Dorgu, (2015) who presented a typical definitions by suggesting that: Indigenous Knowledge is the local knowledge - knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. Indigenous Knowledge contrasts with the international knowledge system generated by universities, research institutions and private firms. It is the basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, health care, food preparation,

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education, natural-resource management, and a host of other activities in rural communities (Warren 1991 and Okorafor, 2014). Indigenous Knowledge is the information base for a society, which facilitates communication and decision-making. Indigenous information systems are dynamic, and are continually influenced by internal creativity and experimentation as well as by contact with external systems (Hamilton-Ekeke, & Dorgu, 2015).

World Bank (2013) acknowledged that indigenous knowledge is the basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, naturalresource management, technologically and a host of other activities in rural communities. It is part of the lives of the rural poor; their livelihood depends almost entirely on specific skills and knowledge essential for survival. For instance, during Covid-19 era, so many civilized countries were expecting to record a high death rate in Africa and Nigeria precisely, but the opposite was seen. The secret was nothing but the application of indigenous knowledge, science and technology in a time modern technology and medicine failed completely. Some of the challenges bedeviling third world have been identified as: inefficient use of available resources (human, financial, material etc.), low human capacity building, absence of good and safe infrastructure, and epileptic power supply amongst others (Adefemi; Ilesanmi; Charles & Samuel. 2015). The resultant plaques are poverty and disease, environmental degradation and pollution, mass unemployment, poor quality of life, mass crime and insecurity just to mention a few. Great uncertainties surround the survival of both present and future generations in the third world as a result of growing population, food shortages, poor resource control, severe effects of environmental changes due to environmental pollution, fast depletion of available resource, fuel scarcity, fluctuation of fuel prices etc. Hence, the need to stem the tide and increase security in critical sectors so as to sustain and increase the standard of living while averting its devastating effect on the economy, human health, quality of life etc. The use of indigenous education/knowledge and technologically based viable alternatives to transform key sectors for wealth creation in the third world while developing competent, resourceful and skillful man power that can add value cannot be over emphasized.

Indigenous technology can be defined as locally developed art and science that is unique to a given culture or society, which is applied to meet man's need. Eionet (2012) defined it as the technology employed by native inhabitants of a country and which constitutes an important part of its cultural heritage and should therefore be protected against exploitation by industrialized countries.

Indigenous education specifically focuses on teaching indigenous knowledge, models, methods, and content within formal or non-formal educational systems (Wikipedia, 2023). The growing recognition and use of indigenous education methods can be a response to the erosion and loss of indigenous knowledge through the processes of colonialism, globalization, and modernity (Grenier, 1998 in Nyangaresi, 2022). Indigenous communities are able to 'reclaim and revalue their languages and (traditions), and in so doing, improve the educational success of indigenous students,' thus ensuring their survival as a culture. Increasingly, there has been a global shift toward recognizing and understanding indigenous models of education as a viable and legitimate form of education. There are many different educational systems throughout the world; some are more predominant and widely accepted. However, members of indigenous communities celebrate diversity in learning and see this global support for teaching traditional forms of knowledge as a success. Indigenous ways of knowing, learning, instructing, teaching, and training have been viewed by many postmodern scholars as important for ensuring that students and teachers, whether indigenous or non-indigenous, are able to benefit from education in a culturally sensitive manner that draws upon, utilizes, promotes, and enhances awareness of indigenous traditions, beyond the standard Western curriculum of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

In the emerging global knowledge economy a country's ability to build and mobilize knowledge capital, is equally essential for sustainable development as the availability of physical and financial capital (World Bank, 1997). The knowledge in the local areas is considered not only as the high quality competitive power for the developed areas, but also as the social capital of the rural poor, their main asset to invest in the struggle for survival, to produce food, to provide for shelter or to achieve control of their own lives (Yonah, 2013). The rural poor's livelihood depends almost entirely on specific skills and knowledge essential for their survival. However, today, many indigenous knowledge systems are at risk of becoming extinct because of rapidly changing natural environments and fast pacing economic, political, and cultural changes on a global scale.

Practices vanish, as they become inappropriate for new challenges or because they adapt too slowly. However, many practices disappear only because of the intrusion of foreign technologies or development concepts that promise short-term gains or solutions to problems without being capable of sustaining them (Buseri, 2010). The tragedy of the impending disappearance of indigenous knowledge is most obvious to those who have developed it and make a living through it. At the same time, indigenous knowledge is not yet fully utilized in the development process. Conventional approaches imply that development processes always require technology transfers from locations that are perceived as more advanced. This has led often to overlooking the potential in local experiences and practices.

2. Statement of the Problem

Some indigenous people view education as an important tool to improve their situation by pursuing economic, social and cultural development; it provides them with individual empowerment and self-determination. Education is also a means for employment; it's a way for socially marginalized people to raise themselves out of poverty. However, some education systems and curricula lack knowledge about indigenous peoples' ways of learning, causing an Educational Gap for indigenous people. Factors for the Education Gap include lower school enrollments, poor school performance, low literacy rates, and higher dropout rates. Some schools teach indigenous children to be 'socialized' and to be a national asset to society by assimilating. Thomas-Slater, Kabutha and Ford, (1991) opined that "Schooling has been explicitly and implicitly a site of rejection of indigenous knowledge and language, it has been used as a means of assimilating and integrating indigenous peoples into a 'national' society and identity at the cost of their indigenous identity and social practices'. This exactly has kept Nigeria and Africa where we are, leaving us at a state where we lack the knowledge (human potential) that can translate our local natural resources to economic wealth. The country spends a huge amount of money importing back finished products of its local resources that were exported, due to inability to process them for utility. If the status quo is unchecked, the future is lost completely. Hence the annexation of indigenous educational curriculum into the existing curriculum to serve as a salt to proper harnessing of the local natural resources and as well reduce waste and ensure sustainable future of the country.

3. Objectives of the Study

The study primarily x-rayed indigenous education and its inclusion to our school curriculum as the salt to Nigeria's advancement technologically. More specifically, the study aimed to determine the importance of indigenous education /knowledge; its benefits and relevance to modern education; the challenges of integrating indigenous education into our modern curriculum and finally, the strategies for incorporating the indigenous education/knowledge into our modern curriculum.

4. Method

The researchers utilized the descriptive survey–type of research design in sought for response from her respondents. Key informants of the study were aged retired lecturers or teachers. A structured questionnaire were developed and used to gather data. Sixty-two (62) questionnaires were distributed and retrieved from the respondents. The statistical tools used in the study were weighted Mean and Standard deviations. A fourpoint scale was used to assess the degree of agreement and disagreement of the respondents: 1.0 - 1.70: Strongly Disagree (SD); 1.79 - 2.49: Disagree (D); 2.50 - 3.19: Agree (A); 3.20 - 4.00: Strongly Agree (SA).

5. Result and Discussion

Recognizing the importance of Indigenous knowledge is part of a necessary process of recognizing history and rectifying relationships. Respectful inclusion of Indigenous knowledge at all levels within the conventional curriculum can result in decisions that are based on a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of the world. The findings also proved that Indigenous knowledge cannot be separated from the people inextricably connected to that knowledge. It applies to phenomena across biological, physical, social, cultural and spiritual systems, hence its acceptance as important and beneficial.

The study findings (Table 2) revealed that the current education does less in motivating the people to be productive or do well to themselves and for the community from which they come from. Some people have criticized it as unexploited education unlike the Indigenous education. Therefore, the study can confidently say that it is relevant to have Indigenous education incorporated into our curriculum to help the current

	Importance and benefits of indigenous education /knowledge to modern education		
	Importance/Benefits	WM	Decision
1	The basic component of any country's knowledge system is its indigenous knowledge.	3.34	SA
2	It encompasses the skills, experiences and insights of people, applied to maintain or improve their livelihood.	3.84	SA
3	Indigenous knowledge is part of the lives of the rural poor; their livelihood depends almost entirely on specific skills and knowledge essential for their survival.	3.97	SA
4	Significant contributions to global knowledge have originated from indigenous people, for instance in medicine and veterinary medicine with their intimate understanding of their environments.	3.86	SA
5	Indigenous knowledge is also the social capital of the poor, their main asset to invest in the struggle for survival, to produce food, to provide for shelter or to achieve control of their own lives.	3.84	SA
6	The basic component of any country's knowledge system is its indigenous knowledge.	3.40	SA
7	Indigenous knowledge is developed and adapted continuously to gradually changing environments and passed down from generation to generation and closely interwoven with people's cultural values.	3.54	SA
8	The basic component of any country's knowledge system is its indigenous knowledge.	3.15	А
9	Indigenous knowledge can be preserved, transferred, or adopted and adapted elsewhere.	3.02	А
10	Indigenous knowledge forms part of the global knowledge.	3.12	А
11	The development process of any country interacts with indigenous knowledge.	3.33	SA
12	It makes it easier for children to transition into the realm of adulthood.	2.52	А
13	For indigenous learners and instructors, the inclusion of these methods into schools often enhances educational effectiveness by providing an education that adheres to an indigenous person's own inherent perspectives, experiences, language, and customs	3.10	А
14	For non-indigenous students and teachers, such an education often has the effect of raising awareness of individual and collective traditions surrounding indigenous communities and peoples.	3.42	SA
15	It can contribute to reducing racism in the classroom and increase the sense of community in a diverse group of students.	3.54	SA
16	Promotes greater respect for and appreciation of various cultural realities.	2.99	А
17	The inclusion of indigenous knowledge within curricula, instructional materials, and textbooks has largely the same effect on preparing students for the greater world as other educational systems, such as the Western model.	2.62	А
18	Indigenous perspectives may offer solutions for current and future social and ecological problems.	2.84	А
19	By including Indigenous knowledge in the science classroom, the social identities of learners can be acknowledged and learning turned into positive experience.	3.66	SA
	Average Weighted Mean	3.32	SA

 Table 1

 Importance and benefits of indigenous education /knowledge to modern education

education such that it will be possible for the current education to plunge the learners into themselves and to others.

The listed items (Table 3) are all agreed upon as challenges faced trying to integrate indigenous knowledge into the conventional curriculum. Notwithstanding, self-determination is about making informed choices and decisions which are not without challenges. It is about creating appropriate structures for the transmission of cultures, knowledge and wisdom for the benefit of each of our respective cultures. Education for our communities and each individual is central to the preservation of our cultures and for the development of the skills and expertise we need in order to be a vital part or the world.

The strategies (Table 4) were all agreed upon by the respondents as strategies for incorporating Indigenous knowledge into the conventional curriculum except items 51, 52 and 59 (Maintain consistency in government policies to allow for long-term planning and investment with value 2.42;

run your curriculum ideas by Elders and Practitioners first with value as 2.440 and develop disciplinary measure and process skills required among students with a value of 2.24) respectively. Indigenous Knowledge, observations, and interpretations are significant for understanding livelihoods, security and well-being, which is essentially for adaptation.

6. Recommendation

The government of Nigeria should incorporate policy dialogue in developing an inclusive science curriculum that is meaningful to Nigeria's social, cultural and economic needs. Such a dialogue which should include community leaders, teachers, associations, and curriculum developers, colleges of education, universities and civic organizations, should be the cornerstone for a cross-cultural science education.

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Table	2

Relevance of	of indigenous	education	to modern education	

	Relevance of Indigenous Education	WM	Decision
1	African indigenous education is the basis for the foundation of Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) in modern education.	3.77	SA
2	It prepares the learners to enter the world of work, and more specifically it changes with time.	3.42	SA
3	It prepared its recipients for life duties in their societies; likewise modern education is no exceptional.	3.97	SA
4	African indigenous education has also greatly influenced the need for development of more appropriate problem solving educational curriculum and the promotion of life-long education.	3.86	SA
5	Learners' participation in learning is highly encouraged by modern educators.	3.84	SA
6	Some aspects of African indigenous education have continued to feature in policy and practice of education.	3.40	SA
7	Basically African indigenous education managed to provide education to all members of the community, although it differed from tribe to tribe.	3.54	SA
8	Including the history and culture of Indigenous people in the education system affirms how important their contributions have been to society as a whole.	3.18	А
9	We can learn a lot about our world through studying Indigenous cultures and languages	3.15	А
10	Indigenous youth benefit from having their realities, experiences and contributions woven throughout science, history and literature.	3.35	SA
11	Seeing themselves as part of the curriculum is important in ensuring they feel they are an integral part of society.	3.66	SA
	Average Weighted Mean	3.56	SA

Table 3

Challenges of integrating indigenous education into the curriculum				
	Challenges of Integrating Indigenous Education	WM	Decision	
1	In contrast to structured hours and a classroom setting, learning takes places throughout the day, both in the home and in adults' workplaces.	3.75	SA	
2	Based on the traditional belief that children are 'fragile, soulless beings,' the traditional education focuses on nurturing children rather than on punishing them, children develop an understanding of cultural values, such as speech taboos and the 'reflection' of individual actions 'on the entire household'.	3.32	SA	
3	Traditional education is less formal than the standard Western model.	3.97	SA	
4	Forms of indigenous knowledge, including weaving, hunting, carpentry, and the use of medicinal plants, are passed on from adult to child in the workplace, where children assist their relatives or serve as apprentices for several years.	3.86	SA	
5	Resources such as textbook are a hindrance to successful integration of indigenous knowledge because they document 'fact' and 'truths.'	3.84	SA	
6	Teachers tend to focus on what was already prescribed as scientific knowledge.	3.40	SA	
7	Overshadowing the stories and experiences the students brought from home and their communities to the learning situation due to the need to fulfill the demands of the syllabus leading to the passing of examinations.	3.54	SA	
8	Teacher preparation and courses taken in teachers' colleges (higher institutions) do not incorporate indigenous knowledge in its curriculum and pedagogical practices.	3.56	SA	
9	Western curriculum wasn't designed to interpret science in a culturally sensitive manner by not providing room for relativism of knowledge.	3.84	SA	
10	To disregard cultural fusion in the science program in teacher education denies teachers the skills and techniques for successfully incorporating indigenous science in formal curriculum.	3.64	SA	
11	Advising student teachers to use the environment as their classrooms without relating teaching and learning to the social and cultural environments of students undermines any effort aimed at knowledge pluralism and alternative ways of understanding science, including science hybridization.	3.72	SA	
12	The systemic and structural hierarchies that legitimize and validate knowledge should stop perceiving indigenous knowledge as non-scientific, superstitious, and fatalistic.	3.54	SA	
13	Lack of policy makers and curriculum planners who are conscious of the vitality of blending or creating a hybrid of indigenous knowledge and western science and transforming pedagogies.	3.21	SA	
	Average Weighted Mean	3.36	SA	

	Strategies for incorporation of indigenous education		
	Strategies for Incorporation of Indigenous Education	WM	Decision
1	Acknowledging and building understanding of the generational impact that government abuses have had on Indigenous people and their communities is very important in helping build respectful relations with Indigenous communities.	2.58	А
2	The adoption of an endogenous approach to education that involves the contextualization of the school curriculum by integrating indigenous knowledge with other relevant and useful knowledge.	2.62	А
3	Link indigenous education/knowledge to industries to fast-track process management and value addition to Nigeria vast natural resources.	3.97	SA
4	Control foreign investment and enhance Nigerian local content.	3.86	SA
5	Develop and improve indigenous education programs to respond to the economic needs of the country.	3.84	SA
6	Support technological innovations and patronize local manufactured products	3.40	SA
7	Develop import substation measure on parts or equipment and machinery that can be made locally	3.54	SA
8	Maintain consistency in government policies to allow for long-term planning and investment	2.42	D
9	Run your curriculum ideas by Elders and Practitioners first.	2.44	D
10	Get community members into the classroom to share their stories and have a yarning circle.	3.20	SA
11	Have students to run a lesson, which is often something they have never experienced before and fosters their self-esteem.	3.15	А
12	Support community context, use local resources that align with the curriculum. This could be found in form of written resources relevant like books and DVD about the topic of lesson.	3.12	А
13	Transmit information that will enhance reading, promote understanding through explanations. Respond to student's misconceptions or conflicts, difficulties, engage them in new areas and motivate them with related assignment.	3.18	А
14	Practice good thinking and communication skills in the subject. Evaluate their arguments, identify problems, inconsistencies, conflicts, difficulties, defend positions and get feedback from and about the students' expertise.	3.25	SA
15	Apply analysis method of learning, discipline, problem-solving, high level of cognitive skills. Critical thinking, blending of cognitive and affective in case of ethical controversy.	3.40	SA
16	Develop disciplinary measure and process skills required among students.	2.24	D
17	Call for community-based instruction, service learning places with experience and outcome.	2.88	А
18	Find out areas that are of interest to students with in-depth, coercive plan: carry out research with creative project work. Give room for independent work and opinion and seek mentorship from experts.	3.67	SA
19	Indigenous knowledge-based: indigenous scholarship and expert indigenous voices are prioritized, helping students learn from rather than about indigenous people.	3.85	SA
	Average Weighted Mean	2.99	Α

Table 4

7. Conclusion

Just like the word Indigenous suggests, which means doing things our way. All developed nations that I know practice and teach Indigenous education except Africa and some part of Asia-Middle east. The effect of colonialism has made our people think of the word Indigenous has been primitive or some sort of bad practice. However, is in the best interest of every community to be identified by some unique way of life that adds values to the world. Africa over years gradually becoming a consumer base market, the major reason is wrong educational system. I used the word 'wrong' because the system is not ours and was not designed base on our values and believe, hence resulting to poor performance after graduation.

If we return to Indigenous education system or incorporate them into our conventional curriculum, we can expect rapid growth in Agriculture, Technology, Medicine, Low rate of Unemployment, High quality of life, Zero corruption etc. As a kid growing up back in the days in my village, if I see money on the floor, take it to my parents and they will announce to everyone in an attempt to return the money to the owner. The current system discourages an average African from researching traditional African medicine, discourages us from taking courses that are related to our reality such as farming, hunting, fishing, carving, crafting etc. if you cannot craft something little then you cannot become inventor overnight. For example, while growing up, there were many blacksmiths, young people going there to learn (apprenticeship) (Achi, 2021), today is not the case, every young man want to sit in an office (white collar job), drive a big car, marry a beautiful woman and all those things are liabilities.

Too much appetite for luxurious lifestyle for no reason and no sense of responsibility is what western education have degenerated us to. This is what we were taught in school, prepared us to work in offices, have money, no one told us that we would have to work hard and innovate. The system prepares Africans to serve their masters still. Many scholars in the field assert that indigenous education and knowledge has a 'transformative power' for indigenous communities that can be used to foster 'empowerment and justice'. The shift to recognizing indigenous models of education as legitimate forms is therefore important in the ongoing effort for indigenous rights, on a global scale. On this note, it's very clear and understanding that if Nigeria must strive to advance technologically, indigenous education and knowledge is the bridge to salt the numerous natural resources and make Nigeria and Africa a heaven on earth.

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