

CHALLENGES TO SOCIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH-SOUTH NIGERIA IN THE GLOBALIZATION ERA: THE ROLES OF EDUCATION

Awah, Okorie Awah & Florence Pereolade Okoh

Department of Educational Management
University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt
Email: awahokorie@yahoo.com & pereolade2002@yahoo.com

***Abstract:** The study examined the challenges to social and technological development in South-South Nigeria in the globalization era: The roles of education. In line with the aim of the study, three research questions guided the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey design having the 6 South-South states of the federation as the population while the five state ministries and five tertiary institutions were the sample which had a total of 250 respondents consisting of 150 civil servants and 100 lecturers and these were drawn using the stratified disproportionate sampling technique. A single instrument (questionnaire) with 23 items titled Challenges to Social and Technological Development in South-South Nigeria in the globalization Era: The Roles of Education Questionnaire (CSTDSSNGETREQ) was used for data collection and it had a reliability coefficient of 0.73 using Cronbach Alpha. This instrument was structured using the modified Likert rating scale while mean and rank order scores were used to answer the three research questions. The findings of the study proved that some of the challenges to social development include poverty, illiteracy and lack of clean water, and so on. The findings of the study also showed that the challenges to technological development are poor budgetary allocation to science and technology and negligence from government, and so on; while the identified roles of education in achieving social and technological development are provision of creativity for technological development and provision of a stable life. The study concluded that, the government should increase its budgetary allocation to the sector. Some of the recommendations were that government should increase its budgetary allocation to science and technology and that government should champion the course of social development by the eradication of poverty; and so on.*

Key words: Social Development, Technological Development and Education

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INTRODUCTION

There exists a symbiotic relationship between man, technology, education and the society and of which they cannot function in isolation. Suffice it therefore to say that what we can make out from any of the four variables is a function of their level of interaction.

Man as a living being lives in a society and whatever he grows up to become is determined by a large extent how he has been socialized by the people and forces in the community/society be it education, technology, politics and other wise. Every day, man looks for an easier way to solve the problems that are in the society and in doing this, he requires technological input. The ability of man to design a significant level of technology that helps to solve his problems therefore depends on how well educated he is, *ceteris paribus*. In essence, education avails man the opportunity of discovering better ways of solving his problems through the testing and application of theories in the creation of required tools for solving this problem.

It is established that a society cannot exist in a vacuum but must have human beings inhabiting in them, there is need to ensure a continuous social development for harmony to exist in the society. Social development therefore is a deliberate act by an individual, group of individuals or government designed to cater for the needs of the people and as well, improve on their well-being. In conceptualizing social development, International Institute of Social Studies (2016) opined that it is about putting people at the centre of development. This means a commitment that development processes need to benefit people, particularly but not only the poor, but also a recognition of people, and the way they interact in groups and society which shape development processes. The success of any society is not based on the level of technological advancement, GDP or income growth but on the well-being of the people in the society. In essence, the ability of a nation's wealth to reflect significantly on the well-being of the individual reflects how successful the nation is because there is no nation or society without people. The achievement of social development therefore involves the investment of people through education, poverty reduction, job creation, civic participation, gender equality and so on.

The world all over is evolving as a result of the changes brought about by globalization and the Nigerian society is not left out of its effect as its major tool is science and technology. Kaegon & Awah (2016) observed that one basic truism in the world today is that the distance which was before now a barrier to individuals and nations are gradually fizzling out. This is because the world has become a global village with little or no barrier in accessing or reaching out to any nation or individual, thus the aftermath of globalization. Globalization therefore implies the opening of local and nationalistic perspectives to a broader outlook of an interconnected and interdependent world with free transfer of capital, goods, and services across national frontiers and whose major driver is technology.

Technology can therefore be defined as that branch of knowledge which involves the application of scientific knowledge, mental and physical efforts of man for practical purposes for the creation of tools which helps to add value to human lives as they are used to solve human problems. UNESCO (2016) succinctly defined technology as the extension of our human capability, in order to satisfy our needs or wants. The

importance of technology cannot be overemphasized. Philip (2006) opined that fortunately, a significant number of former "developing" countries are now on the threshold of development, helped by technology transfer and technological innovations that have benefited large parts of their populations. It has also developed the social life of man through improvement in health care, better transportation and social amenities.

Every day, man experience new challenges of life and this requires a higher level of technology to tackle this challenge. In order to achieve this, there must be a continuous development in the area of our technology. Technological development could therefore be defined as a desired quantitative and qualitative improvement of a technology which is geared towards adding value to man's life. To a significant degree, technological progress is what makes the difference between fast-growing developing economies and slow-growing ones (World Bank, 2008). Education have been seen as a veritable tool by which nations solves her problems; therefore the achievement of social and technological development lies in the giving of skills and knowledge that help towards actualizing this. The Nigerian government have not really done much in social and technological development as evidence abounds where the lives of the people keep deteriorating even in the face of affluence as we are called the giant of Africa and the method of handling problems are still very archaic. If this be the case, where lies the position of Nigeria when compared to other advanced nations of the world? The task of this paper was therefore to examine the challenges to social and technological development, looking at the roles of education with a view to proffering solutions.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The existence of any society is a function of the people in it. The quality of life the people experience is therefore determined by the extent of their social development. Social development therefore could be defined as efforts geared towards improving the lives of the citizenry to make the society a better place for everyone. It is aimed at putting people at the fore of any development process whether economic, political or otherwise. In essence, any level of development that is pursued by any government aims at improving the lives of the people living in the society.

Conceptualizing social development, International Institute of Social Development (2015) opined that it is a commitment that development processes need to benefit people, particularly but not only the poor, but also a recognition that people, and the way they interact in groups and society, and the norms that facilitates such interaction, shape development processes. In their view, New Nouveau Brunswick Canada (2009) opined that social development means investing in people. It requires the removal of barriers so that all citizens can journey toward their dreams with confidence and dignity. It is about refusing to accept that people who live in poverty will always be poor. It is about helping people so they can move forward on their path to self-sufficiency. Jorge (2014) noted that a major change in development thinking came as a result of the experience of the

industrialized countries as it showed that economic growth could take place together with social ills, such as mal-distribution of income, poverty and increasing homelessness to mention but a few and that social problems are best and most economically solved when economic development is taking place and not after the act. Experiencing social development could be manifested in the areas of poverty reduction, improved access to medical care, availability of clean drinking water, social activism and so on. International Institute of Social Development (2015) identified five indices of social development and these are civic activism, clubs and association, inter-group cohesion, interpersonal safety and trust and gender equality; while the indices of social progress as identified by Social Progress Imperative (2015) include access to basic knowledge, access to information and technology, health and wellness and ecosystem sustainability.

The Nigerian government has not done much to improve on the social development of the masses. In all the 187 countries assessed in the world Human Development Index, Nigeria came 152nd position showing a low human development (UNDP, 2014). Jinaḡu (2015) lamented that a historical analysis of the development of social service structures and concepts in Nigeria will provide support for the argument that existing structures and concepts are inadequate to stimulate social development. The reason for this is not farfetched as the situation in Nigeria shows high level of poverty, illiteracy, over population and so on.

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Technology can be simply defined as the application of scientific knowledge to solve human problems. It is a major catalyst to desired development in any given sector. The major driving tool of development in all the industrialized nations of the world is technology. The importance of technology cannot be over-emphasized. It helps in the reduction of poverty by the provision of more tools which help to produce more goods and service. It has also helps in improving life expectancy rate as more efficient drugs that combat diseases are produced. Technology has also made the transmission of information and knowledge possible which has turned the world to a global village. It also aided quicker transportation system. Technological development can be defined as the gradual desired growth of a skill or in the production of tools which will help in solving problems faster for greater results. Technological developments are not without its benefits. World Bank (2008) argued that technological progress (development) contributes to development by lowering costs, improving quality, creating new products, and helping reach new markets and using relatively simple skills to generate substantial improvements in living conditions.

The Nigerian government has not really done much in technological development. Uwaifo and Uḡḡin (2009) lamented that it is regrettable that over forty years after independence, Nigeria still depends largely on foreign nations for her various technological and industrial needs. Its development is still grossly low in terms of its

technological productivity. The government on the other hand has not been committed towards achieving this as the amount apportioned in the budget cannot be compared to what is tenable in the advanced countries of the world.

THE PROBLEM

No nation can claim to achieve any level of economic development where a greater percentage of her citizens are suffering. It is on record that Nigeria is the 6th largest oil producing country in the world, yet the social impact of the wealth generated is yet to reflect on the lives of the common man. The common man in the remote south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria do not have shelter, electricity, access to medical facility, good nutrition, education, clean drinking and bathing water, leisure to mention but a few. The aftermath of the above is societal upheavals like the resurfaced issue of militancy in the Niger Delta. Taking a journey of mind to the Niger Delta region, it is obvious that there is a high level of environmental degradation and the worst of it all is that there is no significant social development in the lives of the people.

No level of social development can be achieved without a commensurate level of technological development. Live for an ordinary Nigerian is unfair and the level of technology available is not really meeting up in solving his need, as the present level of technology in the power sector, telecommunication and banking sectors have not really impacted much on the social lives of the ordinary Nigerian as the number of dropped calls and power outage is yet to be a thing of the past. Where this is the case, can one live to his full potentials where the indices that will warrant that are lacking? Nigeria is four years close to year 2020 and with the present level of technology in the country; can we achieve the vision 2020 goal of becoming one of the industrialized nations in the world? Looking at the present scenario, it could be there are challenges that impede the achievement of social and technological development in Nigeria in the globalization era. This paper was therefore poised to identify these challenges and proffer solutions and as well, identify the roles education can play in achieving these.

AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to examine the challenges to social and technological development in South-South Nigeria in the globalization era looking at the roles of education. Specifically, this study sought to:

1. Examine the challenges to social development in South-South Nigeria in the globalization era.
2. Find out the challenges to technological development in South-South Nigeria in the globalization era.
3. Determines the roles of education in achieving social and technological South-South Nigeria in the globalization era.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the challenges to social development in South-South Nigeria in the globalization era?
2. What are the challenges to technological development in South-South Nigeria in the globalization era?
4. What are the roles of education in achieving social and technological South-South Nigeria in the globalization era?

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive survey method. The population of the study was the entire 6 South-South states of the federation consisting of Akwa-Ibom, Cross Rivers, Edo Delta, Rivers and Bayelsa State. A total of 250 respondents constituted the sample size and this was arrived at using stratified disproportionate random sampling technique as 30 civil servants were randomly selected from five state ministries, thereby making it 150 and 20 lecturers from higher institutions in the states were also randomly selected to equal 100, making a total of 250 respondents. A single data gathering instrument questionnaire titled Challenges to Social and Technological Development in South-South Nigeria in the globalization Era:

The Roles of Education Questionnaire (CSTDSSNGETREQ) was used for data collection. This CSTDSSNGETREQ had a total 23 items and was patterned using the modified four point Likert rating scale and all points were summed and divided by two to get the criterion mean of 2.50 for scoring the questionnaire. Mean and rank order score were used to answer the three research questions. The questionnaire was validated by two experts in Educational Administration and its computed reliability was 0.73 using Cronbach alpha, thus indicating a high reliability. The researchers employed the services of research assistants in the distribution and collection of the questionnaire and this way, it recorded 100% of return.

RESULTS

Research Question One

What are the challenges to social development in South-South Nigeria in the globalization era?

The data for answering the research question were presented in table 1.

Table 1: Weighted Mean and Rank Order Scores of Civil Servants and Lecturers on Challenges to Social Development in South-South Nigeria in the Globalization Era

S/No	Challenges to social development in Nigeria in the globalization era	Civil servants = 150 \bar{X}_1	Lecturers = 100 \bar{X}_2	Mean set $\bar{X}_{1/2}$	Rank	Decision
1	Poverty	2.65	2.54	2.59	4 th	Agreed
2	Inadequate medical care	2.69	2.59	2.64	3 rd	Agreed
3	Over population	2.34	2.21	2.27	7 th	Disagreed
4	Illiteracy	2.70	2.84	2.77	1 st	Agreed
5	Inadequate clean drinking water	2.58	2.58	2.58	5 th	Agreed
6	Inadequate leisure	2.84	2.67	2.75	2 nd	Agreed
7	Lack of interest of the government on the electorate	2.63	2.52	2.57	6 th	
		18.43	17.95	15.6		
		2.63	2.56	2.60		

The table showed the response pattern of civil servants and lecturers on the challenges to social development. Items 1, 2, 4-7 had mean score above the criterion mean of 2.50 and were thus agreed to be the challenges to social development in South-South Nigeria in the globalization era. Conversely, item 3 whose mean score was below the criterion mean were disagreed to be among the challenges. Thus, with an aggregate mean score of 2.60, it is obvious that these challenges as identified by these respondents are poverty, inadequate medical care, illiteracy, inadequate clean water, inadequate leisure and lack of interest of the government on the electorate with item 4 ranking the highest.

Research Question Two

What are the challenges to technological development in South-South Nigeria?

The data for answering the research question were presented in table 2

Table 2: Weighted Mean and Rank Order Scores of Civil Servants and Lecturers on Challenges to Technological Development in South-South Nigeria in the Globalization Era

S/No	Challenges to technological development	Civil servants = 150 \bar{X}_1	Lecturers = 100 \bar{X}_2	Mean set $\bar{X}_{1/2}$	Rank	Decision
7	Poor budgetary allocation for research	2.73	2.58	2.65	4 th n	Agreed
8	Inadequate practical works in schools	2.68	2.77	2.72	2 nd	Agreed
9	Poor research	2.93	2.83	2.88	1 st	Agreed
10	Lack of sponsorship	2.76	2.54	2.65	4 th	Agreed
11	Over dependence on foreign technology	2.82	2.49	2.65	4 th	Agreed
12	Negligence from government	2.56	2.58	2.57	8 th	Agreed
13	Huge cost implication	2.65	2.55	2.60	7 th	Agreed
14	Low technical literacy	2.54	2.78	2.66	3 rd	Agreed
		21.67	21.12	21.38		
		2.71	2.64	2.67		

The table showed all the items 7-14 had mean scores above the criterion mean score of 2.50 and above and were thus agreed to be the challenges to technological development in Nigerian in the globalization era. With an aggregate mean score of 2.67, it is obvious that both the civil servants and lecturers agreed and identified these challenges to be poor budgetary allocation to research, inadequate practical works in schools and poor research. Others include lack of sponsorship, over dependence on foreign technology, negligence from government, huge cost implication and low technical literacy.

Research Question Three

What are the roles of education in achieving social and technological development in South-South Nigeria in the globalization era?

The data for answering the research question were presented in table 3

Table 3: Weighted Mean and Rank Order Scores of Civil Servants and Lecturers on Roles of Education in Achieving Social AND Technological Development in South-South Nigeria in the Globalization Era

S/No	The roles of education in achieving social and technological development	Civil servants = $150 \bar{X}_1$	Lecturers = $100 \bar{X}_2$	Mean set $\bar{X}_{1/2}$	Rank	Decision
15	Education provides the requisite knowledge for technology	2.57	2.67	2.62	7 th	Agreed
16	Provides the creativity for technological development	2.76	2.66	2.71	2 nd	Agreed
17	Helps in the transfer of technological knowledge across borders	2.77	2.88	2.82	1 st	Agreed
18	Provides an enlightenment platform for civic activism	2.62	2.76	2.69	4 th	Agreed
19	Equips man with tool to navigate the world	2.43	2.20	2.13	9 th	Disagreed
20	Education improves quality of life	2.55	2.78	2.66	6 th	Agreed
21	Education raises productivity through technology	2.79	2.55	2.67	5 th	Agreed
22	Helps one become useful member of a society	2.62	2.63	2.62	7 th	Agreed
23	Provides a stable life	2.90	2.51	2.70	3 rd	Agreed
		24.0	23.6	23.6		
		2.67	2.62	2.62		

Result from the table showed that items 15-18 and 19-23 had mean scores above the criterion and thus were accepted to be the roles of education in achieving social and technological development in South-South Nigeria in globalization era. Conversely, item 19 was disagreed to be one of the roles. In essence both the civil servants and lecturers agreed that these roles are: Education provides the requisite knowledge for technology, provides the creativity for technological development, education helps in the transfer of technological knowledge across borders and provides an enlightenment platform for civic activism. Others include education improves quality of life, education raises

productivity through technology, helps one become useful member of a society and provides a stable life with item 17 ranking highest with an aggregate of 2.82.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The summary of findings were presented as follows:

1. The challenges to social development in Nigeria in the globalization era are: poverty, inadequate medical care, illiteracy, and inadequate clean water, inadequate leisure and lack of interest of the government on the electorate.
2. The challenges to technological development in Nigeria in the globalization era are poor budgetary allocation to research, inadequate practical works in schools and poor research. Others include lack of sponsorship, over dependence on foreign technology, negligence from government, huge cost implication and low technical literacy.
3. The roles of education in achieving social and technological development in Nigeria in globalization era are: Education provides the requisite knowledge for technology, provides the creativity for technological development, education helps in the transfer of technological knowledge across borders and provides an enlightenment platform for civic activism. Others include education improves quality of life, education raises productivity through technology, helps one become useful member of a society and provides a stable life.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Challenges to Social Development in Nigeria in the Globalization Era

The study revealed the challenges to social development in Nigeria in the globalization era. This includes poverty and inadequate medical care. This conforms to the findings of Eric(2016)Nebo(2015) and UN(2013) in their independent studies. A visit to the remote areas in South-South Nigeria will showcase the level and of social development deprivation. Eric (2016) lamented that about 24,000 people in the north lack enough food and medical care. In his words, Prof. Nebo decried that over 40% of Nigerian lack medical care. The number of people living in slums may triple in 2050 if there are no policy network established to address issues of social development as access to public services like water and electricity remains inadequate (UN, 2013).

Other findings as identified in the study include inadequate leisure and lack of interest of the government on the electorate. An average African man does not appreciate leisure. We tend to work round the clock thinking that success can only come when we do not rest. Most Nigerians do not understand the concept of working healthy and this amount to stress leading to untimely death. During election period, the electorates are deceived with sweet manifestoes of the politicians but once they assume the seat, they forget the masses that voted them in as there will be no significant improvement in the social life of the electorate.

Challenges to Technological Development in South-South Nigeria in the Globalization Era

The study identified the challenges to technological development in Nigeria in the globalization era. These include poor budgetary allocation to research, huge cost implication of technology, inadequate practical works in schools and poor research. No meaningful development in technology can be achieved where there is meagre money apportioned for it. Many developed nations apportion a significant amount of money in their budget to allow for development. Taking for instance, America been as technologically advanced as it may, apportioned a whopping some of \$ 135.4 billion in 2015 (White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, 2014), back in 2012, China's fiscal expenditure on science and technology was 560 billion Yuan, (Xinhua, 2013) while Nigeria as backward in technology as it may, apportioned only # 25.8 billion in the 2016 budget. With this level of finance, where do we hope to be in realization of Vision 2020 as one of the world's technologically advanced state?

Other challenges as identified in the study include inadequate sponsorship, over dependence on foreign technology, negligence from government and low technical literacy. There has been in the past many Nigerian who developed a level of technology but was not sponsored just like the case of the little boy who designed an aircraft that can take off and fly few centimeters above the ground. World Bank (2008) further stressed that developing countries' capacity to absorb technology is further weakened by low technical literacy and Nigeria is a culprit on this.

The Roles of Education in Achieving Social and Technological Development in South-South Nigeria in Globalization Era

The study identified the ways education helps to achieve social and technological development. It found out that education provides the requisite knowledge and creativity for technological development. This knowledge and creativity helps to usher in an upgraded level of quality which as well helps man towards attaining social development. No wonder, Sunny Levin Institute (2016) argued that by improving access to education, it has the potential to help people around the world overcome geographic or income barriers which currently degraded the quality of their lives. It was also discovered that education helps in the transfer of technological knowledge across borders and this is true in that the knowledge about technology can only cross the border of a country through education. In this case, education therefore becomes the only vehicle through which any significant level of development can be achieved. It was also discovered that education provides an enlightenment platform for civic activism. One who is not informed about his civic roles can only sit aloof. No wonder International Institute of Social Studies (2014) opined that social development refers to the social norms, organizations, and practices which facilitate greater citizen involvement in public policies and decisions which can be achieved through education.

Other findings include that education improves quality of life, education raises productivity through technology, helps one become useful member of a society and provides a stable life. Kavya (2015) noted that education helps to develop the social aspect of man by providing him with a stable life and once he is educated, he has little job insecurity, no inferiority complex and a better understanding of the world.

IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the study portends the need to declare a state of emergency on the level of social and technological development as we Nigerians cannot continue to live our lives faced with deteriorating level of social and technological development. The finding of this study therefore implies that the government must show a significant level of commitment if we must experience any level of development.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the paper therefore concludes that given the roles education play in the achievement of social and technological development, the government should increase its budgetary allocation to the sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to ensure the achievement of social and technological development, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government should champion the course for social development by ensuring the masses feel the impact of democracy by the eradication of poverty, provision of medical care and provision of clean water.
2. In order to actualize technological development, Nigerian government should increase her budgetary allocation in science and technology
3. Education should enlighten the masses for civic activism
4. Education should be able to teach novel ideas that will help advance technology

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Awah, Okorie Awah & Florence Pereolade Okoh

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