



Foro de Educación
ISSN: 1698-7799
jlhuerta@mac.com
FahrenHouse
España

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Trends and Innovations in Education of Nigerian Nomadic Population
Foro de Educación, vol. 14, núm. 20, enero-junio, 2016, pp. 407-428
FahrenHouse
Cabrerizos, España

Available in: <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=447544536020>

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Trends and Innovations in Education of Nigerian Nomadic Population

Tendencias e innovaciones en la educación de la población nómada nigeriana

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Abstract: Nigerian population is characterised with multiplicity of ethnic and linguistic groups. These groups in their various geographical and climatic configurations are occupationally distinctive. The northern arid region rears cattle and fishing is predominant in the riverine and coastal south of the country. The search for grazing their animals have made the Fulani cattle rearers a mobile population, so also the fisherfolk, farmers, hunters and gatherers are not stationary because of continuous search for livelihood. Upon this culture of mobility, education of their children who move with them suffers. However, the government social responsibility has been made manifest in the provision of modified education for these groups of underserved Nigerians to meet their needs. Nomadic education is arranged for them and how far has nomadic education fared and the receivers fortunes, innovations to reposition the education programme of the nomads and the strategies for improvement are all discussed in this paper; using historical research method. Ultimately, the paper concluded bemoaning series of policies that are formulated and programmes mounted in the country, but which their implementation and monitoring are lukewarm. Therefore, demonstration of genuine commitment and disposition to policy formulation and implementation are advocated.

Keywords: trends; innovations; Nigeria; nomadic; education; population.

Resumen: La población nigeriana se caracteriza por la multiplicidad de grupos étnicos y lingüísticos. Estos grupos, en sus diferentes configuraciones geográficas y climáticas, son ocupacionalmente distintivos. La árida región norte de cría de ganado y la pesca es predominante en la ribereña y el sur de la costa del país. La búsqueda de espacios para el pastoreo de sus animales han hecho de los Fulani criadores de una población móvil, por lo que también los pescadores, agricultores, cazadores y recolectores no son estacionarios, debido a la continua búsqueda de sustento. Como consecuencia de esta cultura de la movilidad, la educación de sus hijos, que se mueven con ellos, sufre. Sin embargo, la responsabilidad social del gobierno se ha manifestado en la provisión de una educación modificada para estos grupos de nigerianos, con el objetivo de satisfacer sus necesidades. Cómo la educación nómada está dispuesta para ellos, hasta qué punto llega este tipo de educación y en qué medida afecta a sus receptores, las innovaciones para reposicionar el programa de educación de los nómadas y las estrategias de mejora son algunos de los aspectos discutidos en este trabajo; utilizando el método de la investigación histórica. En última instancia, el artículo concluye lamentando la formulación de una serie de políticas y programas cuya puesta en marcha y evaluación carecen de seriedad. Por lo tanto, se reivindica la manifestación de un firme compromiso y una disposición hacia la formulación de políticas y su implantación.

Palabras clave: tendencias; innovaciones; Nigeria; nómada; educación; población.

Recibido / Received: 14/08/2015

Aceptado / Accepted: 30/10/2015

1. Introduction

The description befitting Nigeria is no less a pluralistic country, considering its multi-characteristic nature; recognised from being multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-linguistic, multi-cultural and multi-identity in several other ways. The characteristics of the country are such; identified in the different groups existing therein. There are groups, linguistically known as Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa (as the three major linguistic groups). Others spreading from the North-west to North-east and the North-central are the Fulani, Kanuri, Margi, Kam-beri, Karekare, Gwarri, Gobir, Igala, Tiv, Nupe, Ebira etc. found at the country's northern configuration. Down the South and to the East of the country are the Ijaw, Izon, Esan, Etsakor, Urhobo, Itsekiri, Ogoni, Ikwerre, Idoma, Ibibio, Efik, Ekoi etc. The Yorubas are also found, not linguistically different; but dialectically diverse, such as the Egba, Ekiti, Ikale, Ilaje, Egun, Egin, Ijesa, Ijebu, Oke-Ogun etc.

The diversities have historically, politically and geographically led to the regional proliferation of the country into what are now known as geo-political zones, thus:

- North-West: Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara.
- North-Central: Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Niger, Plateau, Nassarawa.
- North-East: Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, Yobe.
- South-West: Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo.
- South-East: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo.
- South-South: Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Rivers.

A number of other dichotomous groupings are found within States of the federation, such that include:

1. Political Senatorial zones e.g Kwara Central, Kwara North, Kwara South of Kwara State.
2. Northern and southern communities of inhabitants within States e.g Northern Zaria, Southern Zaria, Southern Kaduna etc in Kaduna State.
3. Local Government Areas (States' administrative units/divisions) in all the states of the federation.
4. Riverine and Upland communities of people, e.g. Rivers State feature.
5. Old and new divisions, that is, existing since and newly developed.
6. Other cultural zoning e.g. Owerri Zone, Orlu Zone, Okigwe Zone as in the case of Imo State.

The above is what the country looks like in terms of divisions or entities. As indicated earlier, the reason for geographical and climatic configurations of the country is correspondingly reflected in the cultural, economic and social lifestyles of the different people and locations in Nigeria. Historically and by natural designs, the northern Nigeria is a combination of savannah and arid (desert) vegetations while the south is riverine, having a vegetation cover of the rain forests and swamps. This therefore occupationally explains why in the north, cattles, sheeps, goats and other livestock are reared, having no excess rains that predispose livestock to different animals' diseases. The Fulani therefore move out of their environment, even down to the south, for grazing their animals. Also in the south, with their endowed abundant rivers; are presented with no other option than making living from the water resources, particularly those at the coastal lines who engage in fishing as their economic and social mainstay.

The two environments (north and south) have been somewhat linked to occupational engagement of the inhabitants, so also, it is educationally synonymous. The education earlier contacted and practised in the north was Islamic education which came to them via desert and efforts credited to the merchants, scholars and traders from Northern Africa, who had been Islamized earlier by the Arabs. Consequently through countries such as Mali and Niger Republic, Islam was dispersed to *Kanem* Empire which now extends to sizeable parts of northern Nigeria (Abdulrahman-Yusuf, 2012). Islamic education therefore flourished among the northerners and the missionary-facilitated formal western education among the southerners, which in their own case came through the Europeans (Missionaries) that explored and voyaged African coasts, including but not limited to Nigerian south coasts. One thing to be noted is that the Muslim north had been used to their age long Islamic educational tradition with no flare for anything less. At the long run, the colonial government's recognition of formal western education being provided by the missionaries further placed the Muslims in the north at a disadvantaged edge, including the pastoralists.

The need therefore, to get the various disadvantaged groups in Nigeria to the main fold in the modern day, necessitated government's attention and focus on the pastoral nomads and subsequently the other disadvantaged groups to benefit from formal education, not only for literacy and numeracy skills, but also manipulative skills, civic orientations etc.

2. Statement of the Problem

From the foregoing, it clearly shows that Nigeria is conscious of her heterogeneity, making it a decision to consider having governments at different levels

catering for the needs associated with these recognised diversities and the glaring dichotomies. There are federal, state and local governments discharging governmental responsibilities on a number of activities that will make impact on the lives of their subjects; from health, agriculture, education and so on.

Since, education from the pre-independence till date has been identified as a tool to effect positive changes in the lives of the Nigerian people; Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) in the National Policy on Education document portrays education as an instrument par excellence for effecting national development. Genuinely or not, it is evident in the series of government's policies that her concerns are being shown in the educational opportunities for different groups of people with some special needs (disadvantaged or underserved), including the handicaps or disabled, vulnerable children, adults who missed out of regular schooling, girls or women population, as well as the nomadic and migrant population etc.

The major concern therefore is in the manifestations that portray the efforts as not being comprehensive to attain the very best, which still makes the underserved to remain underserved.

3. Objectives

The thrust of the paper produced well directed objectives that are focused on:

1. Assessment of situations in the education of the underserved groups in Nigeria.
2. Making clarifications on the various associated concepts with nomadic education in Nigeria.
3. Examining the trends in the education of pastoral nomads.
4. Examining the trends in the education of Fishing nomads.
5. Examining the trends in the education of Farming nomads.
6. Examining the trends in the education of Hunting and Gathering nomads.
7. Exemplifying the current innovations in the Nigerian Nomadic education.
8. Suggesting strategies in theory, practice and on policies for improvement.

4. Research Questions

1. What is the situation by assessment in education of the underserved groups in Nigeria?
2. How can the various concepts associated with Nomadic Education be clarified?

3. What are the trends in the education of pastoral nomads?
4. What are the trends in the education of Fishing nomads?
5. What are the trends in the education of Farming nomads?
6. What are the trends in the education of Hunting and Gathering nomads?
7. What are the current innovations in the Nigerian Nomadic Education?
8. Which strategies can possibly be adopted to improve the theory and practice in, as well as the policy on Nigerian nomadic education?

5. Methodology

Tracing and examining the trends of experience in the Nigerian nomadic education is very historical, particularly that issues and events have unfolded. The method appropriate for this research is no less a *historical research method* which combines the use of both primary and secondary sources of data. Data gathering was achieved using Interviews, observation and documentary analysis which were treated with external criticism for validity and internal criticism for reliability in historical data evaluation. To analyse the data, since data cannot speak, the researcher analysed the content of the information on melioristic value, hence a content analysis.

6. Data Analysis and Findings and Discussion

The analysis of data is presented by exemplifying the findings based of each research questions generated to guide the study, thus;

6.1. *Research Question One: What is the situation by assessment in education of the underserved groups in Nigeria?*

6.1.1. Situational Assessment in Education of the Underserved Groups in Nigeria

The importance of education to any country's socio-economic, cultural and political development has generally been accepted as what cannot be over emphasized, as it is a vital tool for the development of a nation. There is a general consensus all over the world, that education should make the recipients more knowledgeable, skillful and become better citizens. Education serves as a tool through which a nation can achieve greatness and improve the standard of living as a prerequisite to national development. It makes an individual discover his potential and make him contribute meaningful to the development process.

As noted by Iyieke (2014), most pluralistic societies are faced with the educational challenge of how best to achieve the national goals, while at the same time satisfying sectional and ethnic needs; including ethnic interests. Imbalance or inequality in educational development in any country is one of the major factors militating against one of the cardinal objectives of educating the citizens, contained in the National Policy on Education, that is, the emergence of a united and strong nation, particularly one with many ethnic nationalities that may be identified within a nation state. It is the responsibility of responsive governments all over the world to provide remedies to the educational challenges confronting it. The challenges of having to strike a balance and address educational inequalities, as well as the provision of quality type education to all citizens are the government's responsibilities.

Equally recognised by Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (UNESCO, 2003, p. 7) states that:

Education is both a human right in itself and indispensable means of realising other human rights. As an empowerment right, education is the primary vehicle by which economically and socially marginalized adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty and obtain the means to participate fully in their communities. Education has a vital role in empowering women, street working children from exploitative and hazardous labour and sexual exploitation, promoting human rights and democracy, protecting the environment, and controlling population growth.

To some extent, the Nigerian government has demonstrated a commitment through policies and programmes of addressing the glaring challenges of education in national development and to achieving the goals of education. This has consistently been manifested in the different policies and programmes of governments at all levels in the country, targeting different groups. The provision of nomadic education politically is basically to maintain equity and justice. The contribution of nomad to the nation's economic growth is invaluable, particularly in country like Somalia where about 80% of their foreign exchange earnings are from pastoral nomadism. Nigeria is not an exemption; income is generated for exports of hide and skin, even the rate of consumption of products and by-products of nomadism.

Retrospectively, some categories of these people were seen or still being recognised as the minority; because of their number (*population*), location (*geography*) and terrain (*accessibility*), therefore disadvantaged and underserved with social services and opportunities, including education. These people, for their age-long neglect made their situation worst socially, environmentally, economically and above all, in the area of educational attainment. However as indicated earlier, the plight of these people are no longer the same as they are now, having

government's hand of fellowship been extended to them; recognising them as part and parcel of the make-up of the country, with series of clear policies and programmes on education. Among this group of people are the pastoralists, migrant fisher-folk, hunters, farmers and gatherers.

6.2. Research Question Two: How can the various concepts associated with Nomadic Education be clarified?

6.2.1. Conceptual explanation and clarification

Over the years, series of changes and innovations, in nomenclature, characteristics, structure, practices and general content have been witnessed in the education of the underserved or disadvantaged group. This in essence calls for some clarifications and explanations to make the issue well articulated and digested. The focus therefore examines who are the nomads, fisher-folk, farmers, hunters and gatherers in the context of their occupational mobility and social opportunities, including education.

6.2.2. Nomads and Nomadism

From the Dictionaries.com, the word nomad describes member of a people or tribe that has no permanent abode but moves about from place to place, usually seasonally and often following a traditional route or circuit according to the state of the pasturage or food supply. This simply means any wanderer; itinerant. American Heritage (2008) and Farlex (2014) also explain nomad as a member of a group of people who have no fixed home and move according to the season from place to place in search of food, water and grazing land. The American Heritage concludes in its description of nomads as persons with no fixed residence and who roam about, are wanderers. Similarly, Kenerman (2010), from the Webster College renders nomad in nomenclature, to mean a member of a people that has no permanent abode but moves from place to place along a traditional circuit in search of pasturage or food. Also, Kenerman (2013) considers in his definition of nomads as one of a group of people with no permanent home who travel about with their sheep, cattle etc.

According to Collins English Dictionary (2003), it explains the concept both anthropologically and ethnologically as a member of a people or tribe who moves from place to place to find pasture and food. Collin further summarises this as a person who continually moves from place to place, wanderer. In a more clear term, nomads are described with the words like wanderer, migrant, rover, Rambler, itinerant, drifter vagabond and so on.

6.2.3. Clarification

From the foregoing, the various definitions or explanations that describe who the nomads are clearly show that people or tribe who are always on the move for their economic survival and lives of their flocks are the nomads. If this is the meaning of nomads, then it should not be limited in use to refer to only the pastoralists as being the nomads, as it is being generally conceived. The word nomad had a historical origin, thus; the word was first used in 1550s, that is, 16 century thus;

- from Middle French *nomade* (16c.),
- from Latin *Nomas* (genitive *Nomadis*) «wandering groups in Arabia»,
- from Greek *nomas* (genitive *nomados*, plural *nomades*) «roaming, roving, wandering» (to find pastures for flocks or herds), related to *nomos* «pasture, pasturage, grazing», literally «land allotted», and to *nemein* «put to pasture».

Nomads from the beginning had been regarded as a member of a people who have no permanent home, but move about according to the seasons, as contained in various definitions rendered above. These are:

1. Bedouin, Beduin - a member of a nomadic tribe of Arabs.
2. Bushman – a member of the race of nomadic hunters and gatherers who live in Southern Africa.
3. Hun - a member of a nomadic people who invaded Europe in the 4th century.
4. Saracen - (historically) a member of the nomadic people of the Syrian and Arabian desert at the time of the Roman Empire.
5. Scythian - a member of the ancient nomadic people inhabiting Scythia.

The word nomad is applied to mean bird of passage, roamer, rover, and wanderer -someone who leads a wandering unsettled life. This therefore implies that other people or group of people with these characteristics can as well be referred as nomads. Aboho and Maduewesi (2006) lend voice on this, saying that some nomadic groups are not attached to pastoralism. In this category are the migrant fisherfolk, migrant farmers, itinerant hunters, fruits and food gatherers.

6.2.4. Nomadism

In this connection, nomadism as a concept provides a more illuminating explanation to this position and submission, thus, from dynamic consideration; all of these people are nomads and therefore nomadism by definition is any type of existence characterised by the absence of a fixed domicile (Aboho, Maduewesi, 2006).

According to Ezeoma (1990), nomadic groups that are found in different parts of the world fall into three categories – hunter/food gatherer, itinerant workers and the pastoralists. As equally accounted for in Iyieke (2014), most atimes, nomadism as a word is used in referring to those other people with similar lifestyles of no permanent homes like the fisherfolk (men and women); as well as the migrant farmers. Iyieke's submission here recognises alongside the pastoralists, the fisherfolk and migrant farmers.

Another distinction and impressive clarification could be sought from the views of UNICEF (1993), seeing a nomad as a livestock owner who keeps the productivity and survival of his herds through extensive, yet cyclic wandering in areas where there are not enough resources to remain in one place permanently. While pastoralists are considered as people whose main livelihood is herding.

In view of the above and the fact that all identified groups are migrant or mobile population, so it is not out of place to regard them all as nomads. However from the foregoing, there are various categorisations of nomads by different scholarly definitions. In the opinion of this researcher, attaching specificity is necessary, therefore, should be clarified and classified thus:

- Pastoral nomads (the migrant pastoralists)
- Fishing nomads (migrant fisherfolk)
- Farming nomads (migrant farmers)
- Hunting nomads (itinerant or migrant hunters)
- Gathering nomads (itinerant or migrant gatherers)

6.3. *Research Question Three: What are the trends in the education of pastoral nomads?*

6.3.1. Trends in the Education of Pastoral Nomads (Migrant Pastoralists)

Quantitatively, nomads are found in at least 20 different countries across the continent (Ajidagba, Yusuf & Olumorin, 2014). The population of nomads in its magnitude is such that requires Nigerian government's attention, particularly for education. Akinpelu (1993) submits statistically that the nomads constitute about 6% of the African population. In Nigeria, the cumulative figure of nomadic population is put numerically, according to Aderinoye, Ojokheta and Olojede (2007) at 9.0 million with the breakdown of «pastoral nomads» population thus:

1. The Fulani (with population of 5.3 million).
2. The Shuwa (with population of 1.0 million).
3. The Buduman (with population of 35,001).
4. The Kwayam (with population of 20,000).
5. The Badawi (with population yet to be established).

From another source, Badawi's population was accounted to be 20,000 in number (Ajidagba, Yusuf and Olumorin, 2014). The largest group of the nomadic pastoralists are the Fulani, found in 31 out of 36 States of the Federation, while the rest of the pastoralists are mainly found in the Borno plains and the shores of Lake Chad. In the overall, the population of the pastoral nomads alone gulped about 7 million, out of the total 9.0 million nomadic Nigerian populations.

One time Minister of Education in Nigeria, Prof. Jubril Aminu in 1987 considered the need to have pastoral nomads in the education scheme of the country. Also, in recognition of the government's commitment; Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) in the National Policy on Education which emphasizes the provision of functional and purposeful education to all Nigerians, irrespective of tribe of origin, religion and places of work, nomadic education was launched to provide purposeful education to the children of Fulani cattle rearers with many centres across the country. The launching of this programme by the government was aimed at changing the way the pastoral nomads think, way they feel and their overt actions.

Today the nature of nomadism in Nigeria is what could be regarded as semi-nomadism because of their current lifestyle patterns. Most pastoral nomadic families have their recognised camps with make-shift homes (huts) in the Sudan Savannah zone of the country; but do not remain around their vicinity throughout the year. The pastoral nomads continue to move all year round with their herds in search of favourable grazing land and water as the seasons change, but at some point, return to base. Since the pastoral nomads move as a family, including their children, mostly boys within the ages of 5 to 14 years; the implication is that these children are deprived modern education. Aboho and Maduewesi (2006) assert that this group can be made to benefit from formal and conventional education as dictated by their semi-nomadic life.

Generally in Africa, the lifestyles of the pastoral nomads are similar, as most of them are Muslims and Quranic learning is central to them. UNICEF (2006) observes that children of pastoral nomads go without modern education, but not without education at all. They receive traditional education that is oriented to their ways of making a living and which contains the cultural and societal values of society. For example, herd boys learn the value of different kinds of grazing for each species of stock by watching animals and the environment and through direct teaching by male elders, while girls in nomadic Nigeria do not usually on the move like the boys, rather, acquiring household related activities from their mothers and sisters; in addition to the production and sales of dairy products like cheese, milk etc.

Because of the nature of these people's lifestyle of not being stable, they are disadvantaged, as regards the accruable benefits of regular schooling. The

sensitivity of Government to the plight of these people informed why educational policy of compensatory education was formulated to cater for their educational needs. Consequently, nomadic education programme was instituted. National Commission for Nomadic Education therefore was established by Government with Decree No. 41 of 12 December 1989 (Federal Government of Nigeria, 1989 and Iyieke, 2014). This effort of Government was calculated, according to Lar (1989, p. 55), to provide education to nomadic people in the various States where they are found, which is in line with the general national desire to bridge the gap between the served and the underserved. Ultimately, the programme was aimed at acquiring functional literacy and numeracy as well as situational changes and skills relevant to the lifestyles and occupational role of the nomads.

6.4. *Research Question Four: What are the trends in the education of fishing nomads?*

6.4.1. Trends in the Education of Fishing Nomads (Migrant Fisherfolk)

One important correction that has to be made first is in the nomenclature. This correction bothers on the name «migrant fishermen». The activities of migrant fishing population of Nigeria which involves using hooks, rowing or paddling of canoes/boats, throwing nets, harvesting and processing, sales (raw or smoked) are all carried out, not only by men; but involving the father, the mother, children and even relatives. In this regard, everyone involved or associated with this practice is in the fold, hence the contemporary nomenclature of fisherfolk and no longer the archaic fishermen.

Discussing the migrant fishing population or fisherfolk requires an explanation on who are the migrant fisher-folk. The migrant fisher-folk are a coastal or riverine population whose main livelihood is dependent on fishing. The duo of Gbamanja and Aboho (2006) consider the fisherfolk as men, women, children and dependants who accompany their families to fishing ports and migrate to other conducive places as guaranteed by the season. It was further identified that the nature of houses in the fishing settlements is very typical, portraying their temporariness. The lifestyles of fisherfolk families in Nigeria is such that render them spending a greater part of their lives outside their homes at different fishing sites of the riverine environments and in response to the season and atimes, due to wave and tide.

6.4.2. Need For Migrant Fisherfolk Education

Accounting for the need to educate the children of the migrant fisherfolk, Gbamanja and Aboho (2006) opine that the peculiar environment of migrant

fisherfolk poses a great problem to the inhabitants with regards to the implementation of educational strategies as contained in the National Policy on Education. Also, the very many resources in the Nigerian waters can be greatly sourced, processed and commercialised in large scale. This only requires the involvement of literate personnel. This is not unconnected with the realisation by the government to proliferate series of literacy projects, among which led to the establishment of different bodies to address the situation. Among these are the National Commission for Mass Literacy, the National Centre for Adult Education in Kano and specifically too is the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE).

Basically, the objectives of all of this according to Obanya (1992) consist of philosophy of lifelong education as the basis for the nation's educational policy with the main thrust of the programme as the liberalisation of all citizens of Nigeria by the year 2000. In this connection, the education of the fisherfolk children was conceived with the objective which centre around meaningful interpretation and deliberate policy of equal and balanced development of all parts of the affected States, importantly to

- Integrate the fisherfolk children into the formal education system through the provision of suitable facilities
- Raising the awareness of migrant fisherfolks and their families towards accepting the formal education of their children as a parental responsibility.
- Eradicating illiteracy by attacking it at source to ensure a 100% enrolment of the primary level within the shortest possible time
- Improving the occupational competencies of migrant fisherfolk by giving their children an education suitable to their environment; and
- Improvement of the general living conditions of migrant fisherfolk and their families, by creating awareness of the need to be enlightened.

Initially when the idea of incorporating fisherfolk who shares the same lifestyle with the pastoral nomads, it was regarded as earlier clarified in nomenclature as «migrant fishermen», but more women and children were involved, necessitating the recent change to «migrant fisherfolk». Precisely, it was at the 37th meeting of the National Council on Education (NCE) held in Kano between 22nd – 23rd March, 1990 that the national programme for the education of the children of migrant fisherfolk was approved for the concerned riverine states. The National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) was equally saddled with the responsibility of handling the affairs of the migrant fisherfolk. Importantly, the scheme according to Obokoh (1992) maintains its needs in addition, seem to be compensatory for what the people involved had missed earlier.

Wali (2007), however, concludes about this education as what will enable the fisherfolk process, refrigerate, smoke and establish fish ponds; thus creating jobs and improved lifestyle.

The nomadic education centre of the University of Port Harcourt is one of the centres for the education of the nomads, specifically the fishing nomads. This centre being the fourth, after those of the Universities of Maiduguri, Sokoto and Jos to be established, following a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Federal Government, represented by the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) and the University of Port Harcourt which after the University's endorsement, the centre was commissioned on May 10th, 1999.

The population of the migrant fisherfolk, according to Eheazu (2014) is that from inception, consisted of twenty (20) states of the federation; namely: Northern States – Adamawa, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, Kebbi, Kogi, Niger, Benue, Kwara and the Southern States – Rivers, Bayelsa, Cross Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Delta, Edo, Ondo, Ogun, Osun, Anambra and Ebonyi. However, the fisherfolk population as provided by the Federal Ministry of Education (2000) and (2005) is concentrated in Rivers, Ondo, Edo, Delta, Cross River, and Akwa-Ibom States (Education Sector Analysis, 2005). In the overall, the updated population figure of the fishing nomads or fisherfolk is put at about 3.8 million, out which 1.3 million are children of school going age. From the Nomadic Education Centre, University of Port Harcourt; Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta and Edo States are said to be having the largest concentrations of migrant fisherfolk children.

6.5. *Research Question Five: What are the trends in the education of Farming nomads?*

6.5.1. Trends in the Education of Farming Nomads (Migrant Farmers)

The importance of food as a basic necessity of life and its production for economic growth cannot be treated by any nation without levy farm households produce over 70% of the agricultural output of Nigeria in their characteristic small sized plots (NISER, 2003). These households collectively form an important foundation upon which the nation's agricultural economy rests. Migrant Farmers are not different from the other two previously discussed mobile people. The only difference is in the type of activity that drives them around for survival. The migrant farmers also engage in movement from place to place in response to the practice of farming as orchestrated by seasonal changes and other factors, not excluding the use and over-use of land, resulting in its loss of nutrients to support their farming activities, as well as outbreaks of diseases and war, including ethnic or civil crisis. On the other hand, Grant (1998) recalls that migration to farming

areas begins with scarcity of land at source area and establishment of farming locations in areas many miles away from the residence or place of origin of farmers.

This concept of migrant farmers in some countries are known and practised as migrant farm workers, particularly and predominantly the Mexican-born sons, husbands, and fathers who leave what is familiar and comfortable with the hopes and dreams of making enough money to support their families back home; feed themselves; purchase land and a home; and – like many immigrants who came before them – ultimately return to their homeland (eXtension, 2013). Migrant farmers may equally be seen from another perspective of being labourers who go about in search of whom to cultivate the land for, plant for, weed for, harvest for and engage in any other processes associated with farming which are done for pay. In most cases, it is a family affair where the wife and their children move together in this search.

In his explanation of who the migrant farmers are, Udo (1971) sees them as tenant farmers who move to another environment other than theirs for the practice of farming. Therefore, Udo regards them as those who settle to cultivate farmland leased to them for at least one crop a year, share-croppers, and those who obtain lease to harvest a defined area of palm forest for specified period. Udo's definition is basically rendered in line with the traditional practice of farm tenancy which is as old as the practice of farming in Nigeria.

Udo (2012) recalls that today in Eastern Nigeria, there is a growing movement of people from very densely populated rural districts to those which are sparsely peopled. The movement according to Udo involves farmers who because of the increasing pressure on the already overworked and impoverished soil of their village territories, move to districts favoured with abundant and more fertile farmlands. Migration to the farm during the farming season (February - October) may be distinguished from that in which the migrant stays at his place of work for many years before returning to his own village. There are therefore those who are involved in short distance movement to the farmlands, rarely more than twenty miles from natal village. The other is a movement over a long distance. Udo in his submission, maintains that migrant farmers not only engaged in growing crops, but also in harvesting and processing of palm fruits

In a record of the known migrant farmers of Nigeria, as portrayed in a study by Osemeobo (1987), indicating that migrant farmers were attracted to areas of abundant farmland in hospitable environments that were located near to their natal settlements. However, he concluded that the migrant Igbira farmers produce the bulk of the foodstuff which supports the high concentration of non-farming urban population in old Bendel State (now, Edo and Delta). This group of people as professional food crop farmers whose push and pull factors of migra-

tion are motivated by access to farmland and cash income from food crop production. Osemeobo further submits that these farmers fill the gap left by subsistence indigenous farmers who produce food mainly for household requirements.

6.5.2. Migrant Farmers Education

In Nigeria, there are farmers who equally move from their homes to another place to grow crops and cereals. They are compelled to move to another areas to farm during the farming season. A good number of these farmers are found in Plateau, Benue, Taraba, Adamawa, Niger and Kogi State (Aluede, 1998). Education of the children of these farmers suffers because of their movement lifestyle. Government is not folding its hands in supporting the education of the farmers. The Federal has equally recognised these and allowed the NCNE to incorporate this as additional mandate. What this means is that migrant farmers are inclusive of the mandate of the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) of integrating the migrant farmers' children into the formal education system through the provision of suitable facilities and other responsibilities as saddled on NCNE.

6.6. *Research Question Six: What are the trends in the education of Hunting and Gathering nomads?*

6.6.1. Trends in the Education of Hunting Nomads (Itinerant or Migrant Hunters) and the Gathering Nomads (Itinerant or Migrant Gatherers)

In this case, the duo of itinerant hunters and food gatherers are treated together as one. This is as a result of clear identification of the relatedness in their activities of scouting, searching and scavenging. As can be recalled that the beginning of the world and the creation of the first man left him and his wife with no options than having to hunt animals for food and gather fruits, before cultivation started. Naturally, some fruits germinate and grow into full trees bearing fruits, following several means of dispersal - by animals, winds, man, run-offs etc. These were the food available from the beginning which the early roamed about (itinerancy) and gathered for his feeding survival.

Literarily, the activities of the hunters and gatherers are those involving movement from place to place and not in any way sedentary. The lifestyles of these category of Nigerians put them at some educationally disadvantaged situation, as in most cases; it's a family engagement which requires the father and male children in the case of hunting and entire family, including mother and

female children in the case of food gatherers. It is no news again to say that there are some minority groups in the Nigerian society whose economic lifestyle has made them permanently unsteady and lack fixed domicile. These groups of people according to Encyclopedia Britannica (1980) are moving from one place to the other because of economic necessity, considering them to include those hunting for food and food gathering...

Typical of this group in Nigerian is the fact that some occupational groups fall into itinerant hunting and gathering. They are not really gathering food as done in places like some parts of South Africa. Agricultural resources (trees, berries, nuts, fruits, even the land) are owned in Nigeria, either by the individuals, families, communities, even the Kings or chiefs, therefore attract no free exploitation. For those who hunt for animals or game by firing, using bow and arrow, aiming with spear and setting traps in the bushes or forests, far away from their abode, even crossing boundaries; are the hunters. This is mostly engaged in for livelihood (both for consumption and sales). These hunters may in some cases are lost in the bush or forest and to be able to come back in months.

Another group of people in Nigeria are the fruits and food gatherers who are, in the case of Nigeria involved in travelling from one rural community (hinterland) to the others for retail buying purposes from producer-villagers. Some of these people involved are sometimes out of their state or country for the gathering. They are sometime referred to as hustlers.

Educational consideration of these groups of people is not different from the other nomads already discussed. They are itinerant and migrant, so deserve a better deal like the pastoralists, fisherfolk and farmers.

6.7. Research Question Seven: What are the current innovations in the Nigerian Nomadic Education?

6.7.1. Innovations in Nomadic Education

Importantly and following the discussion so far, nomadic education in Nigeria is not as crude as anyone can think; as it has witnessed and still witnessing a lot of changes that makes the programme itself dynamic and sustainable. Both government and Non-Governmental Organisations, including international agencies have continued to make nomadic education in the country a revolutionised practice. Below are some of the direct and catalytic innovations that have come to reshape the programme:

A) Radio Transmission and Television Broadcast

Using radio transmission for reaching out to the various categories of nomads is an innovation that has painted the programme a glittering colour in the

assessment of its effectiveness. Television is also an impressive means of promoting nomadic education, but limited in its broadcast's effectiveness to achieve maximally because of some associated factors, both on the part of the target viewers, the economic power and the mobile lifestyle that cannot allow television to be carried about by the nomads.

In a study jointly carried out by the Federal Government of Nigeria and UNESCO in 2004, reported in Aderinoye et al (2007); «Improving Community Education and Literacy, Using Radio and Television in Nigeria», it was established that 37.0 percent of Nigerians owned only radio, while 1.3 percent owned only TV sets. Nearly forty-eight percent (47.8%) owned both radio and TV sets, while 13.9 percent had neither. Findings from this study revealed that radios are easily affordable, accessible, and often more handy to use than TV. Those without TV and radio, however, still have access to the media through socialization in their local communities. The table 1 below highlights:

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Listening Habits

Do you listen to radio?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	1,126	90.1%
No	124	9.9%
Total	1,250	100%

Source: NMEC/UNESCO, 2004 and Aderinoye *et al.*, 2007.

The table above shows that 9 out of every 10 Nigerian adults listen to radio. Analysis by State, also shows the same pattern with more State recording higher percentage of between 90 percent and 100 percent. As noted earlier, the accessibility to radios accounts for the high listening habits.

In addition to the above and specifically, the assistance to the Nomadic Education Centre in the University of Port Harcourt in 2002 which the World Bank approved and provided Radio Transmission and Recording Studio (RTRS) for the production and transmission of interactive radio instruction targeted at the migrant fishing communities of Nigeria is a catalytic role of the innovative disposition.

B) Appraisal and Learning Approaches

Using Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA)/Participatory Learning Activity (PLA) approaches in providing community-led and affordable educational programmes for the fishing communities which started with the Niger Delta region. This is an innovation since October 1999, piloted in Bayelsa under an arrangement between the NCNE/NEC, University of Port Harcourt and Akassa Community Development Project (ACDP)/Pro Natura International (Nigeria).

C) Workshops and Development of Instructional Materials

Series of workshops were undertaken for the development instructional materials (Textbooks and Teachers' Guide in the areas of Mathematics, Social Studies, English, Primary Science and Technology. Phase One of this covered primaries 1-3 in 2001 and second phase for primaries 4-6 in 2008. These manuscripts have since been printed and distributed nationwide by the National Commission for Nomadic Education.

D) Linkages and Collaborations

Nomadic education has transcended beyond being localised or national, linkages and collaborations have also been established through National Commission for Nomadic Education with the likes of UNESCO, Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Department for Foreign and International Development (DFID), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

E) University's Coordination

Housing Nomadic Education Centre in the Universities is an innovation on its own which sees the universities playing the traditional roles of conducting research on all aspects of the lifestyle education of the various categories of nomads. At the universities of Maiduguri, Sokoto, Jos and Port Harcourt, Nomadic Education Centres (NEC) are established.

F) Mobile School

Mobile Schools with collapsible classroom which can also be easily assembled or disassembled in 30 minutes have been. These mobile schools are said to be portable, that is, can be carried conveniently by pack animals. Aderinoye, Ojokheta and Olojede (2007) added that while a whole classroom and its furniture can be hauled by only four pack animals. Another innovation to this is the introduction of motor caravans which are replacing pack animals to move the classrooms. A typical mobile unit according to Aderinoye at al consists of three classrooms each with spaces to serve 15 – 20 children. Some of these classrooms are equipped with audio-visual teaching aids.

7. Conclusion

Attention that is focused on the education of the underserved, particularly the Nigerian nomadic population is, at times not the issue, but sustaining it. Series of policies are formulated and programmes mounted in the country, but implementation and monitoring are two major issues demanding proactive disposition of the authorities in charge. More and more ideas are often generated, leading to many innovative manifestations in the education of all kinds of no-

madic groups in Nigeria; but some of these innovations are just mere window dressing and for scoring political points by successive governments. So many scholarly works and studies have been carried out on different aspects of nomadic education in Nigeria – from the policy, structure, content, curriculum, equipment, facilities, personnel to other areas bothering on the various categories of nomadic groups. It has to be said here that the affairs and education of the nomadic groups are in most cases politicised and the level of corruption has dealt a great blow on the implementation of calculated policies and programmes. It has to be equally recognised and accepted that the economic contributions of the nomads (pastoralists, migrant fisherfolk, migrant farmers as well as itinerant hunters and gatherers), with a non-negligible figure of their population in Nigeria; require serious and sustainable attention on their overall welfare, but importantly their children's education.

8. Recommended Strategies

To sustain and further the innovation in the education of the nomads in Nigeria, the following are suggested as strategies that can make whatever innovations more effective and result-oriented, thus:

- Establishment of a large expanse of land with fencing, to be dedicated for grazing flocks. This may reduce the frequency of the movement nomads out of their vicinity. This will equally reduce the incessant communal clashes between the farmers and the herdsmen which has become the order of the day in Nigeria.
- It is a familiar dictum that he who wears the shoes knows where it pinches. It is therefore advisable that in the planning, implementation and evaluation of project meant for the living conditions of the nomads; they should be considered to play; not catalytic, but participatory roles.
- Experts have always advocated importance of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in educational process of the 21st Century. Digital literacy should therefore be an integral part of nomadic education. This will no doubt help them access information and be enlightened through all available digital means.
- It has been severally, advocated and widely suggested that Nomadic teacher be groomed from among the nomads and who moves with his students, so that anywhere they are is the school for his students.
- Educational curriculum content for the children of nomad should include practical manipulative skills which will ultimately help them re-focus or diversify in their job orientations.

- Nomads are mostly rural and developing their rural community is what a number of scholars and researchers have considered imperative. Provision of modern social facilities across the country will provide the nomads the ample opportunity to sight schools where nomadic children would have opportunity of attending nearby schools anywhere as they flock.
- Similarly, studies have revealed that setting up section for nomadic education in all the rural community primary schools should be encouraged for possible temporary enrolment. This is therefore necessary to be captured in the national policy, without government statement or formal commitment; no serious achievement can be witnessed in the education of Nigerian nomadic population.
- Financial commitment is important. Production or procurement and making available the needed Kits for nomadic education be considered integral to the programme and should be made massively available and attractive to support educational continuity of the mobile nomads' children. This equally goes with a good maintenance culture on the part of end users.
- For a progressive and sustainable innovation, it has been suggested that Mobile Network operators like MTN, glo, etisalat, airtel, multilinks, starcomms, etc. should first make their network coverage reach, especially the rural areas and possibly partner with relevant agencies or singularly package online/e-learning or cell broadcast on educational enlightenment of the nomads. This is not enough, because the network providers consider lucrative or business thriving environments to invest. Without a government policy being formulated to make it mandatory for the providers to extend their coverage to all rural communities of Nigeria, it may be a mirage.

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