

Cultural Pluralism and Equality: A Precursor for the Development of Nigerian Educational System

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Abstract

This article looked at the importance of equality and cultural pluralism in the growth of the Nigerian educational system. The relationship between education and culture - including pluralism, cultural equity, and its effects on the advancement of education - is the main topic of this article. In Nigeria, education and culture have long been intertwined, and as globalization picks up speed and the country's culture becomes more unified, the need to accept variety is becoming more urgent. The categories of culture, cultural pluralism, education, and equality are theoretically examined before being further defined in this context. The conclusion drawn from the examination of this article's contents is that Nigeria's educational system has to be reformatted in light of the numerous social, cultural, political, and global developments that are affecting global education. Therefore, a culturally relevant and equitable curriculum is crucial to the success of the educational system. As a nation, Nigeria is urged by the writers to work toward creating an educational system that values social conscience, tolerance, ethics, and a dedication to equality; so as to bring about citizens who are morally upright, democratic, and humane.

Keywords: cultural, pluralism, equality, education, development

Introduction

Nigeria is a multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious society which in the 21st century is a microcosm of the world. It is the most populous African country, endowed with abundant human and natural resources as well as tourism potential; perhaps this is what makes Nigeria an investment and tourist destination. But this does not appear to have alleviated the suffering of the masses as most people live in extreme poverty. While there are concerns about leadership failure on the part of the Nigerian political class who lacks the political will to take significant decision for the development and sustainability of the country's education system, fears of terrorism, increasing level of kidnapping and banditry, religious and ethnic violent conflicts, often orchestrated and magnified by extremists, current rampaging of the new sect known as unknown gunmen activities in the South-eastern states of Nigeria have created a crisis of identity in the Nigerian society today.

Nigeria as a multicultural society today, is a country filled with contradictions as younger Nigerians of diverse cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds feel rather uncertain about

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what the future holds in today's unsafe country. While the value of cultural pluralism is almost universally permitted, it is practically ineffective here in Nigeria as there are uncertainties that point to the limits of tolerance and unease about excessive differences existing among the Nigerian populace. Contemporarily, the Nigerian society is faced with the escalating surge in mistrust, intolerance, suspense, ethnic and religious fanaticism, as well as political conflicts occasioned by disintegrating cultural and ethnic structure upon which the country was founded owing to the amalgamation in 1914 of the Northern and Southern protectorates. The most frightening of the problems as faced by the country is ethnicity which over the years has been used by the political elites to create division among the people of Nigeria.

As used in this context, ethnicity refers to a subjective perception of common origins, historical memories, ties, and aspirations; ethnic group pertains to organized activities by persons, linked by a consciousness of a special identity, who jointly seek to maximize their corporate political, economic, and social interests (Chazan et al., 1999). According to Seol (2008), ethnicity is thought of as a phenomenon that mediates between various human relations and between various values and norms expressed and utilized in different ways at both the individual and collective levels and can have a positive or negative impact on the life processes of ethnic groups. Ethnicity, according to Egwu (2007), is a general term for several ethnic groupings. Obasa and Adebule (2017) contend that using the concept of ethnicity provided above, it is simple to comprehend the issue of ethnicity in Nigeria in terms of competition amongst ethnic groups inside the nation for the few resources made accessible to the commonwealth.

Bruce (1998) contends that internal conflicts over moral economy and political legitimacy connected to the definition of ethnic communities - moral ethnicity - and external conflicts over unequal access to modernity's resources and economic accumulation - political tribalism - led to the emergence of African ethnic invention. The author also stated that elites created ethnicities in particular as the foundation for a conservative modernization. Understanding ethnicity as socially constructed emphasizes it as the varied result of the ongoing and frequently contentious interaction of political, economic, and cultural factors both internal and external to emerging ethnic communities, rather than as a fixed primal identity (Bruce, 1998). Ethnicity, on the other hand, influences how people think, act, behave, and determines their orientation and socio-political identity. Adeyemi and Agboola (2016) found that in Nigeria, centrifugal tensions, resource management and self-determination, indigenous politics, ethnic identity, and religious divisions permeate the national consciousness, leading to diverse ethnic groups becoming part of the state. The more divided Nigerians are, the more eager they are to control their socio-political and economic rights. In short, until the root causes of ethnic conflicts are satisfactorily resolved by all, sustainable educational development remains an illusion envisioned by Nigerians.

Nigeria contains about 371 ethnic communities and over 525 languages, including three major ethnic groups. The Hausa/Fulani, Igbo, and Yoruba are the dominant ethnic groups in the northern, eastern and western regions respectively. Other ethnic groups in Nigeria, sometimes known as "minority groups," can be found all over the nation, but primarily in

the central region and along the south-south coast. Muslims predominate among the Hausa and Fulani. The Igbo are primarily Christians, with a small number of pagan people. Yoruba has a proportionately equal number of Muslims and Christians. According to Ohanyere and Ohanyere (2022), Nigeria's society is intrinsically heterogeneous since it is made up of several ethnic groups, each with its own traditions, distinctive values, belief systems, and social norms that contribute to a dynamic, progressive evolution. Diversity is not only accepted but also formally entrenched in a country like Nigeria. The country's education system has to be evaluated, reassessed, reconstructed, and altered in ways that bring everyone together given the country's rich multiracial and multilingual background. A system of education based on equality would open the door to long-lasting social, cultural, economic, political, and technological progress. The ability of groups to collaborate in order to realize their cultural potential and establish equal opportunity for all minorities is a critical factor in the country's rapid progress toward being a peaceful society. This will greatly advance the nation's social, economic, political, technological, and educational development.

According to Colombo (2012), the fundamental issue facing educational systems today is the growing impact of pluralism, which is brought on by the fragmentation of the cultural context in which it develops due to the socialization process that began at the beginning of the late modern period. The author also noted that as socialization processes become more polycentric, serious issues arise with respect to recognizing and managing diversity at different levels, including those of political actors (students, teachers, parents, and school leaders) as well as social actors (students, teachers, and parents). OECD (2019) maintained that education systems not only play a critical role in the integration of students from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, but should also aim to contribute to the building of a diverse yet inclusive society with students as global citizens. This in essence implies that for the Nigerian education system to develop and improve to the desired standard, it becomes pertinent that Nigerian citizens develop a collective self-awareness of themselves; an understanding of how they think, feel, do things, and relate with others in the immediate family, community and society, and in relation to their aspirations towards total well-being; discover what elements of their indigenous culture as well as the cultural elements imbibed from other groups outside of themselves could be unified towards fullness of life now and in future generations. Therefore, the main focus of this paper is to examine the relevance of cultural pluralism and equality to the development of Nigerian education system.

The concept of culture

Due to the fact that several experts have defined culture from their own points of view, there is no single definition for it. The expression of a people's way of life, including their language, cuisine, crafts, attire, greetings, morals, and values, is called culture. In essence, culture is viewed as the connecting factor across all societies. Human survival depends on culture; so a society without culture is equivalent to a building without a foundation. Eno in Asuquo et al (2010) defines culture as a particular group of people's social legacy and the way they live. According to the author, a person's knowledge, experiences, and habits make up their social legacy and are socially transmitted through involvement in society and social education. According to Umukoro (2018), culture is a person's identity at a certain period. Additionally, Ohanyere and Ohanyere (2022) define culture as the rules

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and traditions, beliefs, types of cuisine, clothing styles, language, and social greetings that shape how people live and behave. Through interactions between young people and adults in society, these ways of living are taught and passed down socially.

Additionally, culture, according to Stolley (2005), is made up of all the thoughts, values, practices, and shared objects that characterize a group's way of life. Everything that individuals make and own through their interactions with one another can be considered part of the culture. For sociologists, the term "culture" refers to all aspects of human life, such as cognition, traditions, customs, religion, music, visual arts, food, and other abilities (Egbule & Olori, 2018). As a result, one is seen to be civilized when one behaves civilly, communicates properly, is considerate of others, is not violent or self-righteous, and always follows the norms. Therefore, if someone misbehaves, that person might be considered "uneducated," which denotes that they do not adhere to the social norms. Culture has two models: the model of conflict with ideals and the model of behaviour. The ideal model focuses on the approved behaviour or way of life, whereas the behavioural model examines a specific person's actual behaviour. On the other side, when there is a gap between what is expected and what is really done, there is a risk of deviant behaviour. Conflict and uncertainty result from this. People who insult their parents and elders, for instance, are viewed as deviant children.

The Cultural Policy of Nigeria, which Egbule and Olori (2018) cite, defines culture as "the totality of the way of life evolved by a people in the attempts to meet the challenges of living in their environment, which gives order and meaning to their social, political, and economic aesthetic and religious norms and mode of organization thus distinguishing a people from their neighbours" (Egbule & Olori, 2018). This definition goes on to further explain the concept of "culture." According to Gbotokume in Egbule (2018), culture is a by-product of history and represents a people's way of life and adaptability to their physical, social, and ideological milieu. This description is supported by the definition given above. According to Tylor in his wide-ranging anthropological definition, the complex whole that comprises knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, tradition, and any other abilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society is referred to as culture (Kuper, 2000). Everything created by man in his environment is included in culture, which also incorporates values and ideals. It is also a characteristic of a people's way of life, or their entire way of existence (Egbule & Olori, 2018). A society's culture upholds its citizens' moral standards and passes those onto the next generation through education in a formal setting called school. Brown (1990) defined culture as the totality of a society's way of life that has been shaped and molded by external conditions and surroundings. Using this as a foundation, Ohanyere and Ohanyere (2022) confirmed that culture is socially dynamic in nature and does react to changes as the society develops from a traditional to a contemporary society through interactions with outside factors. Culture is acquired, shared, and transferred through the educational process, and it must be recognized as a crucial tool for the advancement of the educational system in Nigeria.

Cultural pluralism

It is a form of principle that argues that diverse people can be united with a large and rich culture while retaining their own potential. Ideologically, it has been used to describe the

peaceful cohabitation of several ethnic groups in the same geographic area while upholding their individual identities and beliefs. A multicultural society is not the fusion of several diverse cultural identities and practices, but rather the potential for their coexistence in interpersonal relationships, maintaining their individuality while facilitating communication. This basically indicates that every group in Nigerian society should strive to develop a polite sense of appreciation, acceptance, understanding and respect for the cultures of other peoples while also showing a commitment to peaceful coexistence with all Nigerians regardless of caste, language, culture, ethnicity and religion.

Furthermore, cultural pluralism can be defined as a philosophical belief in an educational system that emphasizes group acceptance, understanding and respect, and a moral commitment to equality and social inclusion. Stent et al. (1973) defined cultural pluralism as a state of equal co-existence in a mutually supportive relationship within the boundaries or framework of one nation of people of diverse cultures with significantly different patterns of belief, behaviour, colour, and in many cases with different languages. To achieve cultural pluralism in building a robust educational system in Nigeria, there must be unity in diversity; meaning that each individual must be conscious of and confident in his own identity, and be willing to extend to others the same respect and honesty that he expects to enjoy himself. According to Newman (1973:29), societies can range from those that are monistic (composed of one group) or dyadic (composed of two groups) to those that are pluralistic (composed of many groups). He goes on to point out that “societies that are customarily described as culturally pluralistic are those composed of numerous groups that, either by virtue of coalitions between minorities or on the basis of their own critical size, are able to resist being lumped into an undifferentiated mass.”

As Pantoja et al. (1976) argue, the outcome of cultural pluralism is a society in which people, groups, and communities can successfully communicate in one, two, or more languages and cultural styles. Cultural pluralism consists a place where people, communities, and groups can live and work together with traditions, religions, social classes, and gender practices that are different from those of the majority of groups. In this society, factors like colour, gender, culture, and class do not supersede others. Cultural pluralism, according to Hadiya (2017), is the belief that smaller cultures are easily accepted by larger cultures in the sense that smaller cultures maintain their identities, faiths, and ethical and value practices. Peggy, mentioned in Pantoja et al. (1976), defined cultural plurality as having various stylistic characteristics and being present in all communities. In this case, society has multiple sets of cultural themes, constituent information, and accepted behavioural styles. On the other hand, cultural pluralism in the areas discussed by Bruce in Pantoja et al (1976) means a country coexisting with two or more cultures that are very different from each other, with beliefs and behavioural patterns, including language, differ on a case-by-case basis. Schachner (2017) states that the ideology of pluralism (or multiculturalism) means that differences between groups are recognized, valued, and perceived as resources. He added that this approach supports intragroup identity among members of minority groups and may lead to greater acceptance among members of the majority group.

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Ireyefoju and Ireyefoju (2010) points out that cultural pluralism as a theory of pluralism or multiculturalism has become timely and necessary. This is because macro-cultures have refused to let micro-cultures become the mainstream of things, and many minorities have chosen to maintain their identities (Ireyefoju & Ireyefoju, 2010). Those who want to create a multicultural society where all ethnic, cultural, and religious groups contribute to society as a whole through their traditions support cultural diversity as an aim for education. Nigerian residents would be able to express their culture on an equitable basis, thanks to the development of an inclusive and culturally diverse society and an improved educational system, enabling people to have a feeling of belonging. The hunt for ways to educate and enlighten the younger generation in this country originates from diverse cultures due to the rising cultural diversity of the people in most countries of the world, including Nigeria. Because Nigerian residents come from diverse cultural backgrounds, cultural pluralism has also turned into a problem for organizations. This frequently results in miscommunications and conflicts of interest, which have a detrimental effect on the improvement of education in the nation.

Education

The term "education" has no uniform definition because it is viewed differently by various intellectuals. According to Craft (1984), the term "education" in English has two distinct Latin sources. Although they have very different meanings, the words "education" stand in for each of them. Therefore, education can be defined as the process of moulding a person's personality with the explicit goal of obtaining the skills required to lead out the innate and learned experiences required to significantly contribute to the creation of a more vibrant, healthy, and democratic society. It is crucial to conclude from the definition above that humans possess innate ideas but are unable to articulate them, necessitating rigorous training and education programmes to unlock their full potential. Education encourages healthy human transformation, creatively develops ideas, improves intellectual capacity, and most importantly, promotes the social and cultural advancement of a nation. Education is additionally described by Unimna and Akim (2018) as the process of enabling learning and acquiring knowledge, skills, and values. According to the authors, Nigeria's progress is based on its residents' level of education because they contribute to that development. The global, social, cultural, and political developments affecting education necessitate reform of the Nigerian educational system.

A quality education has always been a source of competence, creative thinking, analytical and problem-solving skills, innovative competence, added value and the ability to build advanced, humane and civilized societies rooted in peaceful coexistence. It comes from learners with the right positive attitude. Furthermore, Obot (2020) sees education as a social process that provides everything necessary to foster learner behaviour patterns that society considers culturally acceptable. Esu (2019) states that education is seen globally as a process of inheriting cultural heritage, stabilizing the present, and improving or transforming people's futures. Fafunwa in Esu (2019) states that education is the set of processes by which individuals acquire and develop the skills, competencies, and other competencies that enable them to become active and effective participants in any society. The education system in Nigeria is based on its ability to train learners to be intelligent, competitive, creative, entrepreneurial,

analytical and innovative while endowing them with the positive character they need for their future social life. Different cultural groups interact in different ways for different purposes, resulting in pervasive and adaptive acculturation effects that are constantly evolving in the context of a nation's social order. Under these circumstances, educational goals must extend beyond minority boundaries if students are to be prepared for the broader social realities they will have to face as students. Education, according to Obot and Essien in Obot (2020), is an important means to:

1. Produce an educated person who is a good citizen of a civilized society.
2. Develop educated people, responsible citizens of the culture and society by fulfilling their social responsibilities.
3. Provide learners with positive moral competencies and valuable life experiences in accordance with cultural and ethical standards.

Education should aim at the full development of the human personality and promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It promotes understanding, tolerance and friendship between all nations, races and religions, and promotes peacekeeping operations of the United Nations (Article 26.2, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948).

Equality

Declaration of Human Rights (1789) adopted by the French National Assembly states that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”. Despite this grandiose claim, inequality compared to equality between men is still evident in Nigerian society today. Equality in this context means that all citizens of Nigeria, regardless of caste, culture, language, ethnicity and/or religion, have equal access to social, cultural, economic and political decision-making processes. According to the Oxford English Dictionary (2020), equality means (1) the condition of having the same dignity, status, or privileges as others; (2) Comparable qualifications, competence and excellence; (3) Fairness, Equity, Proportionality. Simply put, the concept of equality devised by Johari and Rashmi (2019), is an equal right and opportunity for all members of a civilized community to obtain the best possible period of development. The authors also believe that the idea of equality has two sides, a positive one and a negative one. Equality in a positive sense means equal opportunity for all, while in a negative sense equality means no discrimination on artificial grounds such as religion, caste, wealth, creed, place of residence, ancestry, sexuality, and so on (Johari & Rashmi, 2019). Gay (1988) claimed in Fabode (2012) that if some groups do not have equal access to high-quality education, no student can attain good academic results. Tribal education disparities in Nigeria might make people who are impacted feel inferior.

The authoritarian ideologies of today's corrupt elements are met with fear and rejection when systemic change is attempted to eliminate social inequalities. Some opponents of cultural pluralism worry that the ongoing emergence and growth of groups vying for power over resources and rights will only cause the nation to descend into even greater anarchy; these worries, whether they are intended to stop further social unrest or the emergence of oppressive societies, continue to subject the people to deliberate civil, social, economic, and political marginalization. To promote equality among its diverse

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population, Nigeria should create national education policies that cogently and thoroughly prioritize both detecting pre-existing inequities in its pluralistic society and devising appropriate measures to do so. A just, egalitarian, dynamic, humane, peaceful, and tolerable contemporary Nigerian society is essential for bringing about the nation's anticipated social, cultural, economic, political, and technological transformation. This society must also realize the human rights, dignity, and capabilities of diverse groups of people.

Equality is far-fetched in African setting, particularly Nigeria, as the contemporary Nigerian society consists of small number of wealthy elites and large number of poor masses. There are serious civil, social, economic and political inequalities that over the years have left much of the impoverished population in dire straits. Equality in a pluralistic society like Nigeria aims to reduce inequality, prejudice, intolerance, suspicion, uncertainty, violent conflict and also to prevent discrimination of the minority culture by the majority culture. Equality can catalyse the development of the Nigerian educational system and achieve sustainable social, economic, political and technological progress. Therefore, building a progressive and equal society in which all citizens feels the sense of belonging regardless of caste, language, region, culture, ethnicity, or religion requires a simple “win-win” collaboration amongst the diverse people of Nigeria. Quality interactions, teamwork, networking, and dialogues are essential. Achieving sustainable educational development in Nigeria means recognizing synergies between diverse groups and working equally to find lasting solutions to increasingly violent tensions and conflicts. This will essentially help Nigeria become a country with a strong foundation to achieve national development based on equality for all.

Education and cultural pluralism

Multicultural and intercultural education are required as Nigeria becomes increasingly heterogeneous. It should be the foundation of the nation's fundamental education, incorporating multicultural perspectives into the curricula for early childhood, primary, and secondary school. Every student is given an opportunity to thrive by incorporating a multicultural and global viewpoint into the curriculum, which also fosters a sense of belonging and empowerment. It highlights other people's knowledge and opinions while assisting students in developing proper awareness of and pride in their race, ethnicity, and cultural history. It offers the groundwork for a more comprehensive education by providing students with the knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills they need to navigate the challenges of a global society. In order for all kids to comprehend, value, and respect the many various languages and cultures represented in the classrooms, the curriculum must take into account the range of cultures, dialects, ethnicities, and religions of Nigerian school pupils. As noted by Varun (2019), cultural diversity creates a powerful force that benefits all of humanity rather than dividing people. Pratte in Iretefoju and Iretefoju (2010) identified three salient criteria for cultural pluralism in a multicultural society:

1. Cultural diversity in the form of all groups, whether political, racial, ethnic, religious, economic, or of any age, manifests itself in society.
2. Coexistence groups have equal access to political, economic and educational opportunities.

3. At the foundation of any viable system of social organization is a behavioural commitment to the values of cultural pluralism.

More importantly, as a pluralistic society, Nigeria has failed to respond to the claims that arise from the theory of cultural pluralism. Indeed, there are income inequalities, development inequalities, minority marginalization, and ethnic and religious sentiments. The fact remains that the dominant majority group is not committed to the values of cultural pluralism and does not want to share political power with minorities. Nigeria must recognize that many languages, tribes, ethnic groups and religious groups can coexist. In their view, cultural pluralism fundamentally requires that power and resources be distributed or shared equally among these groups based on democratic principles. When each ethnic group recognize that one's culture is not superior to any other culture in society, and that being different does not necessarily mean "better" or "worse" (Ukeje in Iretefoju & Iretefoju, 2010). Instead, cultural pluralism paves the way for a better understanding of the dialectical, religious, ethnic and cultural differences of others and shapes the joy of participating in cultural ideologies. Under this premise, people, not religion, ethnicity, and/or culture, are at the centre of relationships.

Goals of cultural pluralism

A society that is culturally pluralistic is said to have more love and tolerance for groups that differ from the majority groups, which results in less prejudice and discrimination against minorities in the society. It lessens ethnocentrism, the propensity for individuals to evaluate other cultures' distinctive customs, inhabitants, and beliefs using those standards. Additionally, cultural diversity encourages "intellectual duality." In other words, it presents several viewpoints to society's decision-makers and the voting public, which can enhance critical thinking when making choices about important problems (Harlick, 2017). In reality, a society that values diversity, upholds the benefits of exposing people to opposing viewpoints, and accepts uncertainties and variances is one in which cultural pluralism can flourish. It is crucial for members of Nigerian society to uphold certain normative standards in order for culturally diverse communities to function in a context of cultural pluralism. The normative values that underpin cultural pluralism has the following:

1. Being appreciative of a heterogeneous society
2. Appreciation for one's own and one's fellow person's cultural and ethnic heritage
3. Appreciation for the different and unique contributions of each group to the national development
4. Value of each individual and his/her historical and cultural background.

Ayodele (2009) expressed that developing ethnic and cultural knowledge by providing students with information about the history and contributions of ethnic groups that traditionally have been excluded from educational materials and programmes; and second, replace the distorted and biased images of these groups that appear in programmes with more accurate and meaningful information will enhance cultural tolerance. Indeed, a large number of Nigerian students know very little about the history, heritage, culture and contributions of groups in their society.

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Cultural pluralism functions to develop and promote integral social competence by teaching students to relate to, appreciate, and welcome people who are culturally, ethnically, linguistically, and religiously different. It also helps them to accept different perspectives and orientation structures, and explore how cultural conditions affect values, attitudes, beliefs, tendencies, attitudes, and behavioural patterns. Likewise, cultural pluralism as an educational construct helps to improve and stimulate personal liberation for social reform by cultivating in students attitudes, values, conducts, and skills enabling them become social change agents who are committed to reforming society in order to eliminate ethnic and religious bigotry threatening peaceful co-existence. It helps to enlighten the students' knowledge of ethnic, religious and political issues, likewise developing in them leadership capabilities, creative decision-making abilities, civic responsibility, a sense of political usefulness, and a decent commitment towards human dignity and equality. Lastly, cultural pluralism helps to preserve the unique customs, identities and languages of the many cultures within a society.

The relevance of cultural pluralism and equality to Nigerian education system

As a nation, the people must recognize that cultural pluralism and equality are critically important for any sustainable educational development and common future, hence, the need to restate commitments towards ensuring all citizens' equal rights, access and opportunities for participation and leadership in the economic, social and political decision-making. Emphasizing the importance of cultural pluralism and equality with a sense of belonging, brings about variety and richness to a society by incorporating their own ideas and ways of life for the good and progress of the entire society. Possibly so, the importance of cultural pluralism and equality in the development of the Nigerian education system includes, but is not limited to:

1. **Inclusion in the public discourse:** The Principle of culture and equality stipulates that public discourse must not use exclusive theories and must allow for diverse opinions and expressions. This creates the idea that a society can be socially, economically and politically stable only if all its members participate in day-to-day decisions.

2. **Peace and harmony:** Educated society is generally a better society, and the inclusion of intercultural education in school curricula only means that individuals are exposed to, learn from, and live with more and more cultural heritage and traditions. There should be an undying resolve amongst diverse people of Nigeria to co-exist peacefully, and to live in harmony despite their differences.

3. **Maximizing human potential:** Multicultural education helps educators maximize human potential, meet individual needs, and develop a sense of personal worth, self-confidence, hard work, and competence in children. It also helps in achieving the goal of educating the whole.

4. **Belongingness:** Living in peace and harmony in a pluralistic society like Nigeria requires that everyone have a sense of belonging and have equal opportunity in the decision-making process. This can only be possible by creating a conducive environment where everyone feels welcomed and included and where their identity is recognized, and valued.

5. **Encourages respect for other cultural and ethnic groups:** Pluralistic values cultivated and instilled in young learners reflect the cultural, ethnic, religious,

socioeconomic, gender balance, and encourages acceptance, and respect of all, including linguistic backgrounds. Children need to experience a variety of educational environments at all times and every day so that the foundations built in the classroom are not undermined by conflicting experiences elsewhere in the school environment.

Conclusion

The goal of this article was to make clear how equality and cultural diversity can contribute to the growth of the Nigerian educational system. It was made clear that the general population, and Nigerians in particular, failed to show that they had the necessary skills to consider cultural elements before applying, damaging the nation's culture and room for development. Since the country's independence in 1960, it is evident that successive governments in Nigeria have taken a variety of strategic actions, including development policies and efforts that do not solely rely on traditional, native cultural capital, which ultimately determines the outcome of domestic policies. For policies and activities to support and encourage change in the countries' educational systems, it is necessary to thoroughly assess and scrutinize indigenous cultures, values, and social philosophies.

Every culture in Nigeria has distinct customs regarding cuisine, clothing, production, language, greetings, marriage, and social and political structures that can be combined to advance the nation's educational system. Values like loyalty, devotion, perseverance, bravery, compassion, and enduring solidarity are negatively rationalized as being incompatible with individuality and the quest for wealth. It holds a key position made possible by globalization. In spite of the fact that everything differs from culture to culture, modal systems can be researched and used to advance education in Nigeria. Nigeria must consequently emphasize creating an educational system that fosters social consciousness, tolerance, ethical behaviour, and a dedication to equality. It must also help students develop the political action skills necessary to improve society. Nigerians should work to develop societal perspectives that will help them become more compassionate, tolerant of cultural diversity, democratic, and morally righteous.

Recommendations

1. Nigeria as a nation should strive to develop an education system imbued with a sense of social conscience, tolerance, ethics and a commitment to equality, and to acquire creative skills for social reform that will be sensitive to cultural pluralism, democratic and morally just society.

2. It is of necessity that Nigeria develops an education system that rapidly provides students with many opportunities to practice their cultural competence, adapt, collaborate and interact deeply with different races, experiences and situations.

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