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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PERCEPTION OF PEOPLE ON SECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE NIGERIAN AND JAPANESE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS.

**Aburime, Aminat Ozohu;
Abubakar A and Oniye M.I:**

Abstract

This paper analysed comparatively the implementation and policy of secondary education in the Nigerian and Japanese educational system. Attempts were made to find out major similarities and differences in the philosophy and objectives, curriculum content, funding and administration of secondary education of both systems. The paper also investigated the historical, economic, political and socio-cultural sources of such similarities and differences.

A descriptive survey and historical research design were employed. Two instruments were developed, a questionnaire tagged "Questionnaire on Nigerian and Japanese Secondary Education" (QNJSE) and a structured interview for personnel at the Japanese Embassy in Abuja and Federal Ministry of Education, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. An observation schedule was also used and critical analysis of documents was done by the researcher to gather necessary information. Because of the open-ended nature of the research, 25 out of 51 policy makers and Educational administrators in the state and Federal Ministry of Education and officials at the Japanese Embassy in Lagos and Abuja were selected using a purposive sampling technique.

Data collected for the study were analysed. Percentage was used to analyse the research questions. Findings showed that there was a slight difference in the philosophy objectives, curriculum content, funding and administration of secondary education in both countries. The findings also revealed that a list of political, economic, historical and socio-cultural factors were responsible for the major similarities and differences. From the findings, lessons were drawn from Japan on how Nigeria can improve upon its educational system. Practical suggestion was proffered on how to improve secondary school education in Nigeria based on lessons from Japan.

For example, it was discovered that Japan incorporates its language and tradition into its educational system and policy. The Japanese secondary school curriculum encourages vocational and technical education. It was recommended that the philosophy of education in Nigeria should lay more emphasis on scientific and technological education, vocational and technical education and that the curriculum must be functional to cater for the needs of the child and the industrial need of the nation. Nigeria as a nation must also imbibe a maintenance culture.

Introduction

Background to the Study

Education is part of life which is deliberately controlled and in which experiences are developed according to a conscious plan. That is, the pattern of education is determined by the needs of the society as a whole, and that society no matter how willingly receptive it may be to the ideas of the educational philosopher's cannot wait for the results of philosophical speculation (always changing and always mutually antagonistic to crystallize themselves out into a conscious programme that can be faithfully applied to serve immediate educational needs and interest and to meet that challenges of time. (Mallinson, 1996).

The aim of education is to lift the mind out of blind alleys. Education is securing for everyone the conditions under-which individual is most completely developed. It is the process of training the industry of man, in its manifold varieties, and in its organized totality, to the highest pitch of excellence it is capable of attaining. The purpose of education in Nigeria as spelt out by the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004 Revised) include "to use education as a tool to achieve its national objectives, to make sure education is relevant to the needs of the individual and set its goal in terms of the kind of society desired in relation to the environment and realities of the modern world and rapid social changes" (p. iv). It should be clear that not only is the problem of education a new one for each succeeding generation but also the various social system of the nation as a whole are more than ripe for a change. Again, the effective agents in this preparation for change are:

- The growth of industrial organization
- The extension of education
- The growth of science
- The growth of invention; and an
- Imperative demand for equality of opportunity for all.

As there are different education policies and manners of thinking are distributed amongst the nations, so are there different methods of approach towards problems that are common to all nations.

Ijanaku (2002) discovered that most nations especially in Africa have problems in their educational systems. Deviating from this view, the Japanese hold several important beliefs about education, especially compulsory schooling: that all children have the ability to learn the material; that effort, perseverance and self-discipline.

Just about one hundred years ago, Japan was still trying to understand western technology, although Japanese now affirm that they are developing their own traditional technology parallel to that of Europe and not understanding western technology. Japan did this successfully within fifty years and by 1939 it was already a first-class world power, disputing world monopoly of air and sea commands with the allies in the Far East. This was the result of its qualitative education nursed and brought into production within fifty years. Japan learns fast, indigenizes new ideas faster and implements them with tremendous traditional energy for the benefits of the nation.

The general goal of secondary education can be summarized into four broad areas according to (Adeyinka, and Ogunsaju, 1984). These are the goals of: Self realization on the part of the youth, good human relationship which helps the youth in building up good human relationship with others in his society, economic efficiency which demands that the youth should be familiar with the basic requirements in some occupations: and to be a broad based education for the youth so that he will be able to appreciate honest differences of opinion on basic issues, respect constituted authority, accept some civic duties and upholds the ideas of the society.

Statement of the Problem

The aim and purpose of secondary education in Nigeria focus on how to prepare those who are capable for higher education through the West African Examination Council (WAEC), National Examination Commission (NECO) and University Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) also through the curriculum. Osokoya (1995) observed that Nigerians inability to indigenize the educational policy and system has greatly affected the educational system and development. Japan places value on its traditions and language and incorporate these into its educational system. Thus, Japanese language is compulsory and students must take two subjects in Japanese language. One of the most persistent criticisms of secondary education is that it's not geared to the realities of the employment market. In a study conducted in 1995, it was discovered that out of the 50,000 students terminating their course at the secondary level, only 6,000 or 12% were from institution designed for terminal courses. The implication is that 88% of those terminating their educational career at the secondary level were ill-equipped for the labour market in terms of the acquisition of relevant skills (Adeshina 2005).

Thus, there is the need to fill this gap by analyzing the major similarities and differences in the implementation and policy of secondary education in Nigeria and Japan and what specific historical, economic, political and cultural factors are responsible for the broad similarities and differences in the two sub-systems

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out major specific differences and similarities inherent in the implementation and policy of secondary education in the Nigerian and Japanese educational systems. The study specifically ascertained:

1. The similarities between secondary school education in Nigeria and Japan in the areas of philosophy and objectives.
2. The differences between secondary school education in Nigeria and Japan in the area of curriculum content.
3. The historical, economic, political and cultural sources of the differences and similarities.
4. Whether or not there is any significant difference in the philosophy, curriculum contents and funding.

Research Questions

The study aimed at finding answers to the following questions:

1. What are the similarities and differences in the philosophy of secondary education in Nigeria and Japan?
2. What are the similarities and differences in the curriculum content of secondary education in Nigeria and Japan?
3. What are the similarities and differences in funding and administration?
4. What are the historical, economic, political and cultural sources of the differences and similarities?

Methodology

In this study, the historical and descriptive survey method of research were employed. According to Osokoya (1995), the historical research is the systematic research for facts relating to questions about the past which aids current decision making. Verma and Bond (1981) hold the view that survey method seems to have the advantage of being an effective way of collecting data from a large number of sources. Survey research requires systematic collection of data, personal interview and scale opinion questionnaire (Durosaro, 1985).

The population of this study consisted of policy makers and educational administrators in the state and Federal Ministry of Education and officials at the Japanese Embassy in Lagos and Abuja. The target population were the officials at

the Federal Ministry of Education in Kwara State and the officials at the Japanese Embassy in Abuja and Lagos. Twenty-five (25) out of fifty-one (51) educational administrators at the Federal Ministry of Education in Ilorin Kwara State and Japanese embassy in Abuja were selected using a purposive sampling technique.

The study was carried out through the use of questionnaire and structured interview.

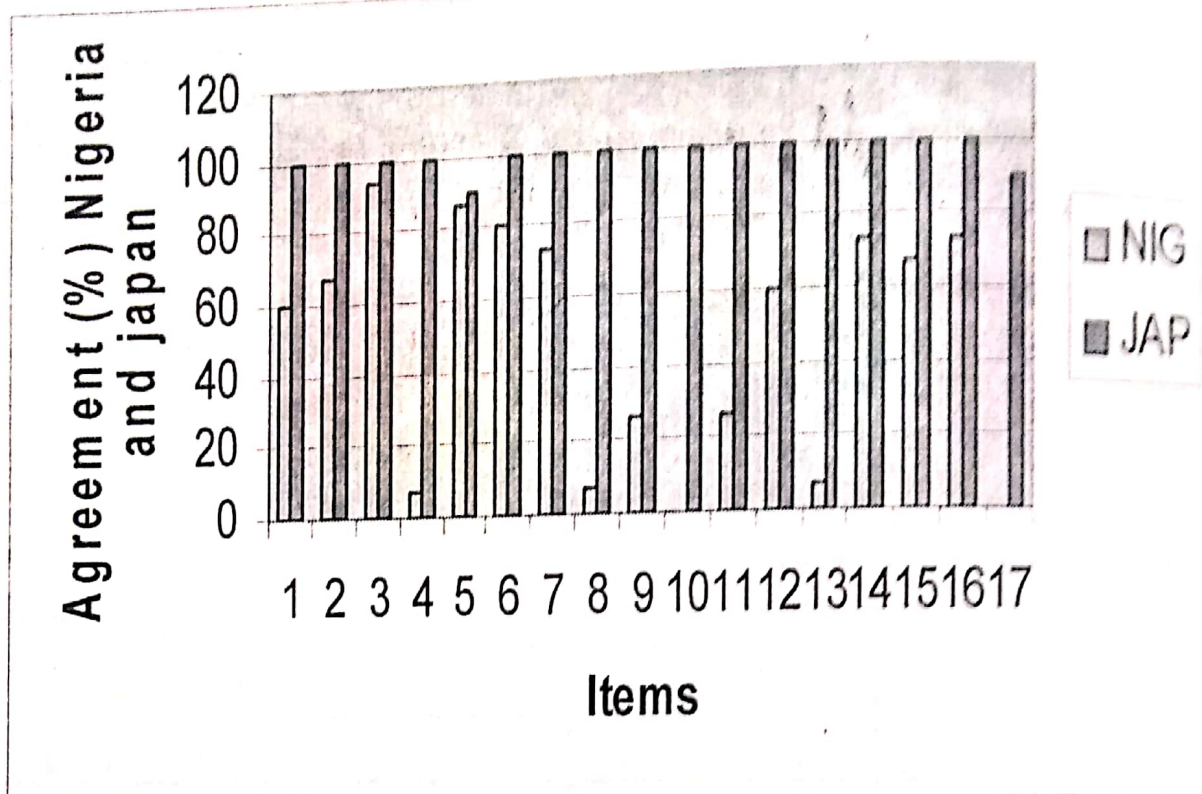
The study involved the comparison of two educational systems i.e. Japan and Nigeria. Quantitative and qualitative techniques were carried out. Percentage was used to answer the general questions with support of Bar Charts.

Results

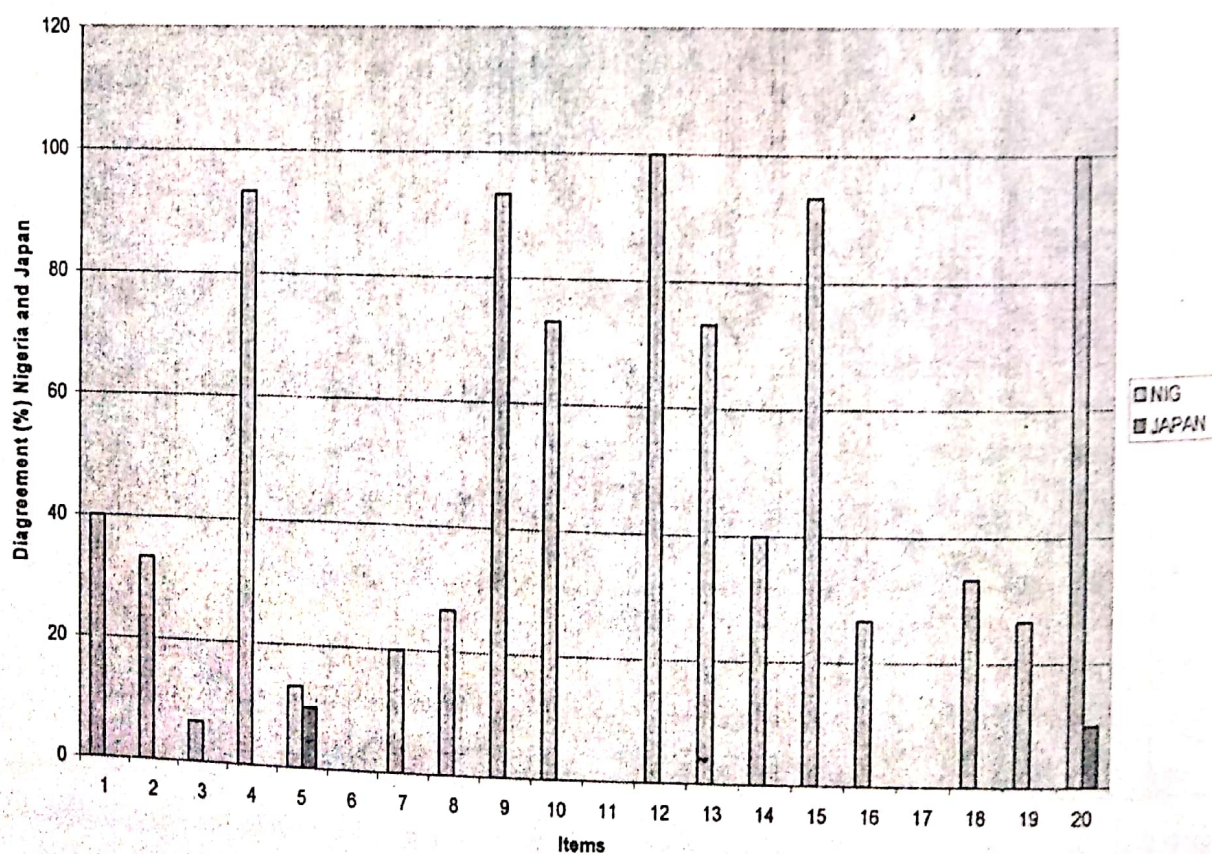
Philosophy And Objectives

S/N	Aspect of Education	Responses				Total Responses	
		Agreement		Disagreement		Nigeria	Japan
		Nig. (Prop)(%)	Japan (Prop)(%)	Nig. (Prop)(%)	Japan (Prop)(%)		
1	Self-reliance	60	100	40	0	15	10
2	Science & technology	66.7	100	33.3	0		
3	Moral values	93.3	100	6.67	0		
4	Science education	6.67	100	93.3	0		
5	Implementation	86.7	90	13.3	10		
6	Practical	80	100	20	0		
7	Relevance	73.3	100	26.7	0		
8	Appropriate instruction resources	6.67	100	93.3	0		
9	Products contribution	26.7	100	73.3	0		
10	Remuneration	0	100	100	0		
11	Status of teaching	26.7	100	73.3	0		
12	Quality textbooks	60	100	40	0		
13	Supervision	6.67	100	93.3	0		
14	In-service training	73.3	100	26.7	0		
15	Hardworking	66.7	100	33.3	0		
16	Indigenous medium of instruction	73.3	100	26.7	0		
17	Free boarding system	0	90	100	10		

Fig 1: Bar Chart of Positive Responses on Aspects of Secondary Education in Nigeria and Japan



Bar Char of Negative Responses on Aspects of Secondary Education in Nigeria and Japan



Summary of Findings

From the data analysis, the following is a summary of the major findings. It was discovered that there are differences in the implementation and policy of philosophy and objective, curriculum content, funding and administration of secondary education in the Nigerian and Japanese educational systems. It was also discovered that secondary school teachers in Japan are very hard working and diligent while poor remuneration of teachers hinders teachers' efficiency in Nigeria.

The data collected showed that Japan uses one of its dialects as a medium of instruction at all levels and this makes learning very easy. This however depicts that a lot of political, historical, economical and socio-cultural factors had made for the differences in secondary education in Nigeria and Japan. These differences have no doubt affected the products either positively or negatively in their academic abilities.

From the information gathered on the oral interview conducted, it was discovered that indigenous science and technology elevated Japan to what it is today. This is because of the attention given to it at all educational levels and has affected all sectors in Japan.

Above all, Japan has licensed teachers that are well equipped, there is proper in-service training for secondary school teachers, funding is appropriate, the secondary school curriculum is geared towards the needs of the society, education is to make individual child functional and creative. To crown it all, there is proper implementation of policies and a maintenance culture in the Japanese educational system.

Conclusion

What a nation makes out of its educational system determines the level of development in that nation. It was discovered that Japanese secondary school philosophy on education emphasizes functionalism and the curriculum is tailored to the needs of the child and the industrial needs of the nation. Funding of education is adequate and administration is superb. This is not true of Nigeria as witnessed from the findings of the study. Japan incorporated its culture into the educational system and indigenizes idea to make her move forward. It also uses one of its dialects as a medium of instructions at all levels of education which serves as the lingua-franca.

Also, the Japanese pays attention to technological education. Home making is compulsory for Japanese girls while industrial arts are also compulsory for Japanese boys at all levels. This is to make them skilful, creative and self-reliant should they terminate their education at the secondary school level. There is what

the Japanese called Licensed Teachers i.e. if you are a professor and trained as a primary or secondary school teacher, you remain in this educational ladder and you are paid a professional salary. This enhances specialization and makes the teachers resourceful, skilful, creative and able to perform optimally the task of teaching. As a developing nation, Nigeria can assume these responsibilities too and watch her secondary school in particular and education system in general becoming a success story.

The questions that readily come to mind and which educational authorities in Nigeria should ponder are:

- a. Who must benefit from the nation's secondary education system?
- b. How should the system be planned and organized so as to respond to community needs?
- c. What is to be thought to reflect individual and community needs?
- d. Who will teach in the secondary schools?
- e. How shall the school be best managed?
- f. In which way will the schools be financed?
- g. What will the products of the schools do after graduation?

Thus, much of the official school life should be devoted directly or indirectly to acquisition of practical skills, teaching correct attitudes and moral values and developing character with the aim of creating a citizenry that is both literate and attuned to the basic values of culture and society. The trail of human history is marked by the wreckage of those nations which have used their education merely to perpetuate what existed. Dynamic and progressive nations demand more of their education than more perpetuation of the status-quo ante. Hence, we should demand an education system which takes leadership in piloting and manning a present and a future which will assure a better life for all.

Lesson from Japan

1. Japan has a strong democratic and egalitarian system where citizens have equal rights and equal educational opportunities.
2. In Japan the law takes precedence over any educational matters. The legal and political sectors weigh the policies before taking any educational decision.
3. Japan has a multi-track system of education: a kind of education that paves way for diversification.
4. Japan is mono-ethnic i.e. it has one major ethnic group. Its mono-ethnic nature gave rise to cultural homogeneity; this makes uniformity possible among the citizenry. Hence, Japan is uni-cultural in nature.
5. Japan is unilingual. It makes use of one indigenous language which is used as a Lingua-Franca and a medium of instruction in schools.

6. Japan has a special curriculum which is both terminal and preparatory.
7. Secondary education in Japan is geared towards the need of the society and the industrial need of the nation.
8. Subjects which are pluralistic in nature are taught pluralistically. For example;
 - Arithmetic
 - Mathematics
 - Geometric
 - Civil Education
 - Social Studies
 - Sexuality Education
 - Graphics
 - Fine Arts Sculpture
 - Painting
9. Home Making is compulsory for Japanese girls and fisheries and Industrial Arts for boys. Education in Japan is based on two things – Science and Japanese language.
10. Education in Japan is scientific and empirical. Japanese education emphasizes functionalism.
11. Artist in Japan relate all their ideas, imagination and artistic work to science and this helps for the technological advancement in the country.
12. Japan encourages indigenous science and technology.
13. In the automobile industry, there is the convergence of science and art, nature and human creativity in balance. The liberal arts are given a scientific touch; empirism is applied in all facets of the educational system.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion drawn in the study, the following recommendations are put forward:

Policy Makers

Policy formulators on education should ensure that secondary school philosophy on education emphasize functionalism. The philosophy should be realistic and practicable. The philosophy should emphasize mass education without compromising quality. There should be periodical review of the philosophy and objectives for relevance.

Curriculum Planners

The curriculum planners should make secondary school curriculum relevant to meet the needs of the child and the industrial needs of the nation, the curriculum must be child-center. The curriculum should be constantly reviewed to reflect changing trends both nationally and globally.

Federal Ministry of Education (FME).

There should be proper implementation of education policies. There should be a maintenance culture in the nation's educational policies. Effective in-service training for secondary school teachers would help boost their morale.

Government should provide adequate infrastructure and instructional resources for effective training. Learning facilities and instructional resources in schools should be improved, and standard libraries should be provided in schools.

Instructions in secondary schools should be skill-oriented to help make the product skilful and creative. Science Laboratories, Home Economics Laboratories, Art and Technical Workshops should be made available in secondary schools.

Teachers

Secondary school teachers must recognize that functional education is fundamental to all areas of academic endeavours, so the teachers must always make teaching interesting to motivate the students.

Teachers should lay emphasis on the teaching of basic skills in the secondary level so as to have concrete foundation to build upon and thus enhance creative skills. This will lead to the development of the students in post secondary and later in life.

They should endeavour to select those textbooks that would enhance teaching and learning and good performance among others.

They should be resourceful, attend seminars and workshops to get them equipped. They should give assignment on daily basis. Students should also be encouraged to read science story books, magazines, comic and dailies.

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