

Ahmadu Bello's Philosophy of Education: A Pragmatic Approach to National Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study explores Ahmadu Bello's philosophy of education, focusing on its pragmatic approach to national development. Despite the absence of a formally published document on his educational philosophy, his speeches, writings, and policies as Premier of Northern Nigeria reveal a coherent vision for education. Through critical and logical analysis and hermeneutical methodology, this research examines Bello's views on education as a tool for national unity, economic progress, and social advancement. The study highlights his emphasis on practical skills, vocational training, literacy, and basic education, which aimed to make education relevant and beneficial to the local populace. Bello's policies had a significant impact on educational development in Northern Nigeria, including the introduction of English as the medium of instruction and the establishment of teacher training colleges. The findings reveal gaps in literature on Bello's educational philosophy, particularly in relation to its pragmatic approach to national development. This study contributes to knowledge by providing a detailed understanding of Bello's educational thought and its relevance to contemporary educational policy debates. The research recommends a renewed focus on practical skills and vocational training in educational policy, highlighting the importance of education in promoting national unity and economic progress. The study concludes that Bello's pragmatic approach to education remains relevant today, offering valuable insights for policymakers seeking to harness education for national development.

Keywords: Ahmadu Bello, Philosophy, Pragmatic, National Development, Nigerian Education

Introduction

Education as a vital instrument for national development involves acquisition of fundamental knowledge and essential developmental skills needed for technological breakthrough and socio-political development which accelerates economic growth. Education is a fundamental driver of human and national development, fostering economic growth, social mobility, and individual prosperity. It equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to navigate an increasingly complex and interconnected world (Azenabor, 2005, p. 12). Societies in ancient Greece and during the medieval as well as through the modern period had deep and fervent regard for educated citizens (Nwizarh, 2001, p.72). It is perhaps due to the essential democratic culture that education gives rise to that Plato had advocated that philosophers should assume the task of managing democracy as leaders (Plato 1978, pp.167-168). The significance of education in national development is further underscored by the philosophy of Reconstructionism, which posits that society is in need of constant reconstruction or change and education is the vehicle of change (Ozomon & Craver, 1990, p. 1528). This perspective is reechoed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which recognizes education as a fundamental human right and a key driver of sustainable development (UNESCO, 2015, p. 5). The strength of a nation is intricately linked with the quality and quantity of its human resources. Education serves as the pivot for development and capacity building, enabling individuals to acquire the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to participate fully in society and contribute to its

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development (Kneller, 1964, p. 23). Through the deliberate transmission of cultural heritage, educational institutions play a vital role in shaping individuals and societies (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013, p. 15). Ahmadu Bello's philosophy of education, though not formally documented, reveals a coherent vision for education as a tool for national development. His emphasis on practical skills, vocational training, literacy, and basic education aimed to make education relevant and beneficial to the local populace. This study explores Ahmadu Bello's pragmatic approach to education and its relevance to national development, examining his policies and their impact on educational development in Northern Nigeria. In Nigeria, the government has acknowledged the importance of education in national development, leading to the enactment of the Students Loans (Access to Higher Education) Act, No. 12 of 2024, also known as the Nigeria Education Loan Fund (NELFUND) (National Assembly, 2024, p. 2).

A Brief Articulation of the Life and Legacy of Ahmadu Bello

Ahmadu Bello was a prominent Nigerian politician who played a pivotal role in shaping the country's history, particularly in the Northern Region. Born on June 12, 1910, in Rabbah, Sokoto State, Bello's life was marked by a unique blend of traditional leadership and Western governance (Paden, 1986, p. 6). His great-grandfather, Sultan Bello, was the son of Usman Dan Fodio, the founder of the Fulani Empire, the largest in sub-Saharan Africa. Bello's early education was rooted in Islamic studies, where he learned the Quran, hadiths, and sharia law under the tutelage of Muslim masters. He later attended the Sokoto Middle School and the Katsina Teacher's Training College, where he honed his skills in modern education (Ibrahim Gambari, 2016, pp. 173-193). In 1948, Bello was offered a scholarship to study local government administration in England, which he accepted to broaden his knowledge of governance (Jibrin Ubale Yahaya, 2018, pp.249-261). Upon his return from England, Bello was nominated to represent Sokoto in the regional House of Assembly, where he became a strong advocate for northern interests. He was a key figure in the Northern People's Congress (NPC) and served as the party's President-General from 1954 (Paden, 1986, p. 12). Bello's leadership style was characterized by consultation and consensus-building with the major representatives of the northern emirates, including Kano, Bornu, and Sokoto. In 1954, Bello became the first Premier of Northern Nigeria, a position he held until his assassination in 1966. During his tenure, he implemented several development projects, including the establishment of the Northern Regional Development Corporation (NRDC), the Bank of the North, and the Broadcasting Company of Northern Nigeria (BCNN) (Ibrahim Gambari, 2016, pp. 173-193). Bello's vision for Northern Nigeria was centered on modernization and unification, and he worked tirelessly to promote economic development and cultural preservation (Zaccheus Onumba Dibiaezue, 2025).

Ahmadu Bello's legacy is multifaceted and far-reaching. He played a crucial role in shaping Nigeria's political landscape, particularly in the Northern Region. His commitment to federalism and regional autonomy helped to promote national unity and stability (Paden, 1986, p. 20). Bello's establishment of Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, one of the largest universities in Africa, is a testament to his vision for education and development. Tragically, Bello's life was cut short by his assassination on January 15, 1966, in a coup that toppled Nigeria's post-independence government. His death was a significant blow to the country and contributed to the subsequent civil war (Ibrahim Gambari, 2016, pp. 173-193). Despite his untimely death, Bello's legacy continues to inspire and shape Nigeria's development. In all, Ahmadu Bello was a visionary leader who played a pivotal role in shaping Nigeria's history. His commitment to development, unity, and federalism continues to inspire and inform Nigeria's political landscape. As a founding father of the modern Nigerian nation-state, Bello's legacy serves as a reminder of the importance of leadership, vision, and sacrifice.

Understanding Philosophy and Education: A Springboard for Development

This section aims to clarify the concepts of philosophy, education, and philosophy of education, providing a foundation for understanding their interconnectedness and significance in promoting human growth and societal progress. The concepts of philosophy, education, and philosophy of education are intricately linked, and their understanding is essential for national development as we discuss Ahmadu Bello's philosophy of education.

What is Education?

Education, a concept rooted in the Latin word "educare," meaning "to make, mold or bring out" (Oxford Dictionary, 2020), has been a subject of debate among educators and scholars for centuries. Despite its universal significance, education lacks a clear-cut definition, with various interpretations emerging from diverse perspectives. According to Akinkuotu, "education as a universal concept has a different meaning from place to place and from time to time" (2010, p. 12). This dynamic nature of education is reflected in Kneller's distinction between the broad and narrow/technical senses of education. In the broad sense,

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education encompasses the act or experience that helps to create a formative effect on the mind, behavior, or character of a person (Kneller, 1964, pp. 23-25).

Whitehead defines education as “the acquisition of the art of the utilization of knowledge” (1929, p. 10), while Azenabor describes it as “a continuous reconstruction of experience and the adjustment of the individual to the society, to nature, to his fellow human being” (2005, p. 15). Ukeje further emphasizes the societal dimension of education, submitting that education is “an investment by the society to make itself a better place to live in and make a living” (2015, p. 20). The various definitions of education converge on its three basic foci: information, formation, and reformation (Iroegbu, 2005, p. 221). Education is crucial for national development, providing necessary skills, knowledge, and values for societal growth (Iroegbu, 1994, p. 81). According to Iroegbu, development involves unwrapping inner potentialities, encompassing economic, social, environmental, human, and sustainable development. Omoregbe defines national development as a nation's ability to ensure high literacy, a strong economy, and material goods for national security and happiness (1990, p. 194). National development is a gradual growth process driven by patriotism and nationalism, implying progress in various aspects of human life (Udoigem, 2002, p. 102).

What is Philosophy

Defining philosophy can be uncomfortable for both beginners and teachers, but this discomfort is not a significant concern. Historically, philosophers have begun exploring philosophical ideas before attempting to define the subject (Ogbinaka, 1995, p.3). The complexity of philosophy's long history, broad scope, and nuanced nature has created an intellectual environment that makes it challenging to develop a clear and universally accepted definition of philosophy. According to Akinpelu (2005), Plato and other disciples of Socrates corroborated that “Socrates preferred not to call his students wise men” but rather “lovers of wisdom.” This lends credence to the etymology of the word “philosophy,” which is coined from two Greek words: *Philo* (love) and *Sophia* (wisdom or knowledge). So, literally translated into English as ‘love’ and ‘wisdom’ respectively. Hence, a combination of both terms has led intellectuals to conceive philosophy as the love for/of wisdom. Philosophy is perceived as an attitude towards life, which makes life become more intelligent, more meaningful, and purposeful (Oroka, 2010, pp. 1-5). Akinpelu (2005, p. 167) holds that philosophy plays the role of a midwife, helping to bring ideas to birth.

Philosophy of Education

The philosophy of education is a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature, aims, and methods of education. It is concerned with the fundamental questions of education, such as what is the purpose of education, what is the nature of knowledge, and how do we learn. The philosophy of education provides a framework for understanding the complex issues in education and for developing effective educational policies and practices. The philosophy of education is essential for national development, as it provides a foundation for understanding the role of education in promoting societal growth and progress. By understanding the philosophy of education, policymakers can develop effective educational policies that promote national development. The philosophy of education also provides a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of educational policies and practices, ensuring that they are aligned with the goals of national development.

A Springboard for Development

The concepts of philosophy, education, and philosophy of education are a springboard for national development. Education provides the necessary skills, knowledge, and values for societal growth, while philosophy provides a framework for understanding the complex issues in education and for developing effective educational policies and practices. The philosophy of education provides a foundation for understanding the role of education in promoting societal growth and progress. By understanding the philosophy of education, policymakers can develop effective educational policies that promote national development. The philosophy of education also provides a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of educational policies and practices, ensuring that they are aligned with the goals of national development. Philosophy, education, and philosophy of education are interconnected concepts that play a crucial role in promoting national development. Philosophy provides a framework for understanding the complex issues in education, while education provides the necessary skills, knowledge, and values for societal growth. The philosophy of education provides a foundation for understanding the role of education in promoting societal growth and progress. The significance of philosophy, education, and philosophy of education in promoting national development cannot be overstated. Education is a key driver of national development, and philosophy provides a framework for understanding the complex issues in education. The philosophy of education provides a foundation for developing effective educational policies and practices that promote national development. The concepts of philosophy, education, and philosophy of education are essential for national development. By understanding these concepts, policymakers can develop effective educational policies that promote societal growth and progress. Ahmadu Bello, a visionary leader,

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exemplified this understanding in his efforts to reform education in Northern Nigeria. His initiatives were guided by a clear philosophy of education that aimed to empower individuals and promote national development. In the next section, we will explore Bello's philosophy of education in more detail, examining how his ideas continue to shape educational discourse and policy in Nigeria. By examining Bello's philosophy of education, we can gain valuable insights into the role of education in promoting national development and the importance of visionary leadership in shaping educational policy.

Ahmadu Bello's Quadruple Philosophy of Education

This section aims to provide an in-depth examination of Ahmadu Bello's philosophy of education, a comprehensive framework understood through four distinct yet interconnected pillars that collectively form his quadruple philosophy of education, comprising his vision on practical skills and vocational education, emphasis on national unity and development, influence on educational policy and curriculum, and promotion of literacy and basic education, thereby offering a detailed understanding of his educational thought, its underlying principles, and potential applications in promoting national development and societal progress.

First: Practical Skills and Vocational Education

Ahmadu Bello's emphasis on practical skills and vocational education reflects a pragmatic approach to education that has its roots in Africa's pre-colonial era. In pre-colonial Africa, education was informal and vocational, focusing on skills acquisition and mastery (Fafunwa, 1974:15). This traditional or indigenous educational system, which existed before the arrival of Islam and Christianity, aimed to develop the child's latent physical skills and prepare them for adulthood (Fafunwa, 1974:20). One of the key features of indigenous education is its emphasis on practical demonstration and hands-on learning, where learners acquire skills through observation, listening, and participation (Eneume, 2000:50-51). This approach to education is lifelong, with no concept of dropouts, as individuals continue to learn and acquire new skills throughout their lives (Ajuzie, 2017:9-8). Bello's pragmatic model of education, which prioritizes practical skills and vocational training, draws inspiration from this indigenous approach to education. By focusing on skills acquisition and mastery, Bello's policies aimed to make education more relevant and beneficial to the local populace. As a pragmatist, Bello's approach to education emphasizes the importance of seeking out processes and doing things that work best to achieve desirable ends (Igbiwu, 2004:35).

Pragmatism, as a philosophy, encourages the search for practical solutions to concrete problems, rather than getting bogged down in abstract theories and intellectual questions that don't offer practical solutions (Mercier, 2002:86-87). John Dewey, a prominent pragmatist, applied this philosophy to education, arguing that traditional educational techniques focused too much on memorization and not enough on problem-solving (Chukwuma & Ebeigbe, 2012:85). Similarly, Bello's emphasis on practical skills and vocational education reflects a pragmatic approach that prioritizes effectiveness and practicality in solving real-world problems. By linking his policies to the indigenous educational system, Bello's pragmatic approach to education seeks to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, preparing individuals to tackle the complexities of the real world. As Dewey notes, education should be instrumental in achieving its goals, and this is possible through experiences (Aggarwal Gupta, 2014:127-128). Bello's pragmatic model of education embodies this philosophy, emphasizing the importance of practical skills and vocational training in achieving national development.

Second: National Unity and Development

Ahmadu Bello, a visionary leader, strongly believed in the importance of national unity and development in Nigeria. He advocated for unity among Nigerians, emphasizing that it is the bedrock of national development. National unity is the foundation upon which national development is built. Without unity, a nation cannot achieve its full potential. As the Nigerian coat of arms states, "Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress" are essential for the country's growth and prosperity. The concept of unity is derived from the Latin word "*unitas*," meaning oneness or togetherness. Unity does not connote uniformity, but rather diversity working together towards a common goal. Thus, the unity of a country does not imply that such a country has citizens of the same racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, social and economic characteristics (Dzurgba, 2009, p.39). This implies that even in diversity, there is can still be unity. This point is reiterated by Adetoro and Omiyefa (2013, pp. 480-490) when they aver that the concept of unity implies 'oneness' 'alike', 'trust', 'mutual understanding' while diversity means 'great variety'. In Nigeria's context, unity is essential for national development, given the country's diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds. Unfortunately, Nigeria is currently facing numerous challenges that threaten national unity, including religious crises, ethnic tensions, and socioeconomic inequalities. Ahmadu Bello recommends integrating values that promote peace and stability into Nigeria's education system. To foster a harmonious environment, he emphasizes the importance of mutual respect for diverse cultures, traditions, and perspectives, and abandoning tribal superiority claims that often fuel

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divisions. By incorporating these values into education, Bello believes Nigeria can establish a foundation for lasting peace, stability, and national unity, enabling citizens to appreciate their differences and work towards a common purpose. This approach, he suggests, can help build a cohesive society where individuals respect and value one another, regardless of their backgrounds.

He avers:

Respecting the ways of life different from one's own or tolerance of other's culture and tradition; avoiding the ranking of tribes; emphasizing those things that unite in the midst of diversity rather than those that divide; tracing historical linkages; having commonly agreed goals as well as adopting the principles of equality of all individuals in addition to pursuing a policy of even development (Ahmadu cited by Enoh, 1996, p.134).

Therefore, in this context, Ahmadu Bello's vision for national unity and development is more relevant than ever. He believes that education could play a critical role in promoting national unity and development, particularly in a diverse and often fragmented society. He sees education as a tool to build a shared identity and culture among the people. By incorporating African indigenous knowledge systems into the education system, Nigeria can promote a sense of community and cooperation that is essential for national development. One such system is *Harambee*, a Kenyan concept that means "pulling together" and emphasizes the importance of collective effort in achieving development. Through *Harambee*, Kenyans have been able to raise funds for infrastructure development, education, and agricultural projects (Ng'ethe 1979, p.13). This philosophy can be applied to Nigeria's context to promote national unity and development. By working together, Nigerians can achieve great things and build a brighter future for themselves and future generations. Consequently, the spirit of Harambee can be seen as a call to action for Nigerians to come together and work towards a common goal (Irabor & Onwudinjio, 2022, pp.45-57).

Similarly, *Ubuntu*, an African philosophy, highlights the interconnectedness of human beings. It emphasizes the importance of community, mutual respect, and caring for one another. Ubuntu can be seen in the concept of "I am because we are," which underscores the interdependence of individuals within a community. As Desmond Tutu (1999, pp.31-32) notes, "A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good; for he or she has the proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole." This philosophy is echoed in the Christian scripture, which emphasizes the importance of unity and love among believers. In John 17:21, Jesus prays, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." The importance of unity is further emphasized in *Ujamaa*, a socio-political theory formulated by Julius Nyerere. Ujamaa emphasizes the importance of familyhood and cooperation, encouraging people to work together for the benefit of all members of society, promoting social justice and equality. Ujamaa can be applied to Nigeria's development context to foster unity and cooperation. As Nyerere notes, "People were not to be judged by skin colour, material wealth or intellectual ability, but 'each individual should be assessed by her or his worth as a person'" (Mulenga, 2001, p.15). This philosophy is in line with the principles of *Ubuntu* and *Harambee*, emphasizing the importance of unity and collective effort in achieving development.

Furthermore, *Igwebuike*, an Igbo concept, means "number is strength" or "number is power." It emphasizes the importance of unity and solidarity in achieving development. *Igwebuike* can be seen as a call to action for Nigerians to come together and work towards a common goal. According to Kanu (2017, pp.165-8), *Igwebuike* provides a socio-political platform for leadership of inclusivity, promoting unity and solidarity. This concept is closely related to the idea of Belongingness, which emphasises the importance of community and inclusivity. Belongingness, a concept developed by Pantaleon Iroegbu, highlights the need for individuals to feel a sense of belonging and to be part of a larger community. Belongingness can be seen as a key aspect of national unity and development. As Iroegbu (1995, p.374) notes, "Belongingness is the synthesis of the reality and experience of belonging...Belongingness comes from the verb to belong, meaning to be part of member of, in the group of." This sense of belongingness is essential for national unity, as it promotes a sense of shared identity and culture among the people. National development is the next logical step after national unity. Without unity, national development is impossible. As Ahmadu Bello noted, national development encompasses various dimensions, including economic growth, social progress, and cultural advancement. According to Joseph Omeregbe (1990, p.194), national development is "the ability to define the frontiers of a nation, high percentage of mass literacy, a buoyant economy, and possession of material goods that guarantee national security and better life." Udoidem (1992, p.124) adds that national development is a gradual process of growth and

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progress that affects the nation as a whole. Therefore, national development requires a multifaceted approach that involves government, civil society, and individuals. It requires a shift in mindset and a willingness to work together towards a common goal. By working together, Nigerians can build a brighter future for themselves and future generations. Education plays a critical role in promoting national unity and development. By incorporating African indigenous knowledge systems such as Harambee, Ubuntu, Ujamaa, Igwebuike, and Belongingness into the education system, Nigeria can promote a sense of community and cooperation that is essential for national development. Furthermore, education can promote a sense of shared identity and culture among the people, which is critical for national unity. As Ahmadu Bello noted, education is the key to unlocking the potential of Nigerians and promoting national development. By investing in education, Nigeria can build a brighter future for its citizens and promote national unity and development. In the words of Psalm 133:1, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" This biblical passage emphasises the importance of unity and cooperation in achieving development.

The current state of disunity in Nigeria is a major obstacle to national development. Religious crises, ethnic tensions, and socioeconomic inequalities are all challenges that need to be addressed in order to promote national unity and development. Ahmadu Bello's vision for national unity and development is more relevant than ever, and it is essential for Nigerians to work together towards a common goal. By embracing African indigenous knowledge systems and promoting education, Nigeria can achieve national development and build a brighter future for its citizens. Ultimately, national development requires a commitment to unity and collective effort. By working together, Nigerians can overcome the challenges facing the country and build a brighter future for themselves and future generations. As the saying goes, "United we stand, divided we fall." Unity begets national development, and it is essential for Nigerians to work together towards a common goal. By embracing African indigenous knowledge systems and promoting education, Nigeria can achieve national development and build a brighter future for its citizens.

Third: Promoting Literacy and Basic Education

Ahmadu Bello was a strong advocate for basic education and literacy, recognizing its importance as a foundation for further learning and social advancement. Literacy is a crucial factor in national development (Omeregbe, 1990, p.194), as it enables individuals to participate fully in their community and wider society. In fact, national development is often characterized by a high percentage of mass literacy, which in turn contributes to a buoyant economy and improved standard of living. With this understanding, Ahmadu Bello supported initiatives to expand access to primary and secondary education, particularly in rural areas, to promote literacy and empower individuals for social and economic advancement. But what exactly is literacy? According to UNESCO (2004), literacy is defined as "the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts." Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, develop their knowledge and potential, and participate fully in their community and wider society (UNESCO, 2004). In the context of Nigeria, the National Policy on Education (2013) defines literacy as the ability to read, write, and compute, with emphasis on functional literacy, which enables individuals to engage in activities that promote economic and social development. Basic education, on the other hand, refers to the foundation of education, which includes primary education and junior secondary education. According to the National Policy on Education (2013), basic education is designed to provide learners with functional literacy, numeracy, and life skills, enabling them to function effectively in society. The Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme in Nigeria, launched in 1999, aims to provide free and compulsory basic education for all children of school-going age, with the goal of achieving Education for All (EFA) by 2015 (Federal Ministry of Education, 2004).

Ahmadu Bello's efforts to promote literacy and basic education in Northern Nigeria are noteworthy. During his tenure as the Premier of Northern Nigeria, he introduced several initiatives to expand access to education, including the establishment of primary schools and teacher training colleges. He also encouraged the recruitment of teachers from other parts of Nigeria and abroad to support the development of education in the region (Tukur, 2003). Ahmadu Bello's vision for education was not limited to formal schooling; he also emphasized the importance of adult education and literacy programmes to empower adults who lacked formal education (Ahmadu Bello, 1962). Ahmadu Bello's philosophy of education can be grouped into eight aims, as discussed by Sani Tunji Umar, Ayuba Muhammad Kagara, and Muhammadu Abubakar. These aims include education for enlightenment, moral development, preservation and transmission of local culture, quality education production, societal values development, creating conducive environment, academic and moral development, and teachers' quality production. According to these authors, Ahmadu Bello's education ideas are centered on promoting holistic development, which encompasses

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intellectual, moral, and cultural growth. The first aim, *education for enlightenment*, is critical in promoting literacy and basic education. Ahmadu Bello proposed education for enlightenment, which equips recipients with the power to appreciate their environment, become well-informed about issues affecting their lives, distinguish between truth and falsehood, and develop skills (Tuni Umar, Ayuba Kagara, and Muhammadu Abubakar, 2019, pp.146-155). This aim is consistent with UNESCO's definition of literacy, which emphasises the importance of literacy in enabling individuals to achieve their goals and participate fully in their community and wider society. Under his education objectives, Ahmadu Bello (1962. p.121), conceptualized education as;

By education we did not mean that we are going to make all the members of the public literate, but we are trying to give them the enlightenment in cultural minds, we wanted the public to be able to sit and discuss among themselves.

The second aim, *education for moral development*, emphasizes the importance of moral values in education, while education for preservation and transmission of local culture highlights the need to conserve and transmit cultural heritage through education. These aims demonstrate Ahmadu Bello's commitment to promoting holistic development, which is critical in achieving national development and improving the quality of life for Nigerians. Ahmadu Bello, as cited by Enoh, emphasized the importance of balancing academic development with moral training. Bello believes that education should cultivate both mental and moral character, producing individuals who are intellectually and morally sound. According to Enoh (1996, p.98), Bello's vision for education prioritized the development of a "sound mind in a sound body," enabling individuals to value peace and avoid disruptive behaviour.

The third aim, *education is for preservation and transmission of local culture*. Education and culture are intertwined instruments for national development. Ahmadu Bello underscored education's significance in preserving and transmitting Nigerian cultural heritage, promoting a peaceful society through gradual, orderly social progress (Tuni Umar, Ayuba Kagara, and Muhammadu Abubakar, 2019, pp.146-155). He emphasised preserving Nigerian cultures, fostering national unity and a sense of shared identity. According to Bello, as cited by Enoh (1996, p.151): Education to him (Ahmadu Bello) cannot therefore mean the introduction of wholly new concept of people. It must consist first and foremost of transmitting inherited tradition of the people, and only alterwals can new ways be accommodated where old ways cannot adequately meet. R.S Peters (1966, p.182) supports this, stating that "education implies the transmission of what is worthwhile to those who become committed to it." Education preserves and transmits cultural heritage, including customs, traditions, language, and values (Shotude & Irabor, 2018, pp.246-257). Education should teach Nigerians to remain Nigerian, preserving their cultural identity. By adapting foreign education to Nigeria's cultural context, prioritising local culture, education can become a powerful tool for preserving and transmitting local culture, ensuring a conflict-free society. Ahmadu Bello opines that one of the roles of education should be preservation and Transmission of culture for ensuring peaceful atmosphere in the country. He advises that

If the society aims at having only gradual, piecemeal,-and orderly social change, the role of education becomes that of ensuring that this is the case by conserving and transmitting culture and only permitting such new ideas that, while solving some key problems do not disrupt the base of society.

The fourth aim is *quality education production*. Ahmadu Bello emphasized producing high-quality education to promote peace and stability in Nigeria, enabling Nigerians to possess the skills to resolve conflicts and violence (Umar, A.M. Kagara, and M. Abubakar, 2019, pp. 146-155). He advocated for maximum efficiency and competence in education, maintaining high academic standards, and warned against automatic admissions and promotions, emphasizing the need for qualified teachers and adequate teaching materials. In one of his speeches, he says:

In a country such as ours, where the number of trained men and women is still small, maximum efficiency and competence is expected of them. These people are the spearhead of our advance into modern nationhood, and it is our duty to keep the spearhead sharp. Let there be no mistake, the challenge of the future will require the highest academic standards and achievements that we can attain. They cannot be inferior to the standard of any country in the world (Amune, 1986, p.124).

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Bello stressed that government should provide quality education with infrastructural facilities, well-paid teachers, and entrepreneurial courses to ensure national development, adding that indiscriminate expansion of schools without proper resources would be detrimental to progress, and instead, prioritized investments in education that would yield long-term benefits for the nation, fostering a culture of excellence and merit.

Furthermore, he says:

We have no intention of encouraging indiscriminate expansion of senior primary education in order to gain cheap popularity. It is of course much cheaper, quicker, and in the short-run more popular, to open primary schools without insisting that the teachers who will teach them have a proper training. But in the end, of course, such policy would be fatal 'to our development. I wish that others thought the same way. (Amune, 1986, p.128).

The fifth aim is *education for teachers' quality production*. Ahmadu Bello emphasized producing high-quality teachers, citing their significant impact on students' academic success (Liesveld and Miller, 2005, p.42). He noted that poor-quality teachers contribute to subpar education, leading to graduates who may promote conflict and unrest. Bello stressed that teacher quality encompasses not only academic qualifications but also teaching methods and moral character. He warned that low-quality teachers can have a negative impact on the education system, creating a "vicious circle" of poorly trained individuals. To maintain quality, Bello advocated for adequate teacher training, a view supported by Enoh (1996, p.130), who highlighted Bello's emphasis on equipping teachers to effectively educate others.

Fourth: Educational Policy and Curriculum

Ahmadu Bello's policies and actions had a profound impact on the development of education in Northern Nigeria, a region that has historically faced significant challenges in providing quality education to its citizens. His introduction of English as the medium of instruction in schools and establishment of teacher training colleges were pivotal in standardizing and improving education, thereby laying the foundation for future educational development in the region. To fully comprehend the significance of Bello's contributions, it is essential to define key terms and concepts that underpin the discussion of educational policy and curriculum implementation. Policy, as defined by Okoromo (2006), refers to an overall guide that provides direction for administrative actions. In the context of education, policy determines the direction of an educational system, outlining the goals, objectives, and strategies for achieving them (Okoroma, 2000). Curriculum, on the other hand, is a plan for providing learning opportunities to achieve educational goals, encompassing the content, methods, and materials used in the educational process (Saylor & Alexander, 1974). Tyler (1963) further emphasizes that curriculum is all of the learning of students which is planned by and directed by the school to attain its educational goals.

Implementation, or putting policy into practice, is a critical phase of the policy process. It involves the actions and decisions taken by individuals and organizations to carry out the policy, requiring adequate resources, effective communication, and a supportive bureaucratic structure (Edwards III, 1980). However, policy implementation is often fraught with challenges, including inadequate resources, poor communication, and bureaucratic structures, which can hinder the effective implementation of policies (Edwards III, 1980). In Nigeria, the state of education has been a subject of concern for decades. Despite various policies and initiatives aimed at improving the quality of education, the system continues to face significant challenges. According to Agagu (2010), policy implementation is often affected by erratic budgetary allocations, which can have far-reaching implications for the development of educational programs. The lack of qualified teachers, inadequate infrastructure, and poor learning environment are some of the challenges that hinder the effective implementation of educational policies in Nigeria (Abdullahi, 1982). Ahmadu Bello's thoughts on education remain relevant today, as his emphasis on practical skills, vocational training, and national unity continues to resonate with contemporary educational debates. His vision for education as a tool for national development and social progress is echoed in the National Policy on Education (2004), which outlines the federal government's commitment to building a free and democratic society, a just and egalitarian society, and a united, strong, and self-reliant nation.

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In the context of Nigeria's educational system, Bello's ideas on the importance of adapting education to the needs of the local environment and promoting national unity through education are particularly pertinent. The challenges facing the implementation of educational policies in Nigeria, including inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, and lack of qualified teachers, underscore the need for innovative solutions and effective policy implementation. The relevance of Bello's thought can be seen in the ongoing efforts to reform the educational system in Nigeria. For instance, the National Policy on Education (2004) emphasizes the importance of science and technology education, entrepreneurship, and vocational training, all of which are areas that Bello's policies and actions sought to promote. Furthermore, Bello's emphasis on the need for education to be relevant to the needs of the local environment and to promote national unity continues to resonate with contemporary educational debates. Ahmadu Bello's policies and actions had a significant impact on the development of education in Northern Nigeria, and his thoughts on education remain relevant today. The challenges facing the implementation of educational policies in Nigeria underscore the need for effective policy implementation, adequate resources, and a supportive bureaucratic structure. As the country continues to grapple with the complexities of educational development, Bello's vision for education as a tool for national development and social progress serves as a reminder of the importance of prioritizing education and ensuring that policies are implemented effectively to achieve their intended goals.

Recommendations

1. Integration of Practical Skills and Vocational Training: Educational policies in Nigeria should prioritize the integration of practical skills and vocational training to equip students with the skills needed to drive national development and economic progress.
2. Contextualized Education: Educational policies should be designed to address the specific needs and challenges of local communities, making education more relevant and beneficial to the populace.
3. Promotion of National Unity through Education: Educational policies should emphasize the importance of national unity and promote values of inclusivity, diversity, and social cohesion to foster a sense of shared citizenship and national identity.
4. Renewed Focus on Literacy and Basic Education: There should be a renewed focus on improving access to quality literacy and basic education, particularly in underserved regions, to empower individuals and communities with the foundational skills needed for personal and national development.

Conclusion

Despite Ahmadu Bello's significant contributions to educational development in Northern Nigeria, there is a notable absence of comprehensive research on his philosophy of education, particularly its pragmatic approach to national development. Existing literature often focuses on his political legacy, but a detailed analysis of his educational thought and its impact on national development is lacking. This gap in literature limits our understanding of the historical context and relevance of his ideas to contemporary educational policy debates. Thus, this study has provided a comprehensive analysis of Ahmadu Bello's philosophy of education and its pragmatic approach to national development in Nigeria. The research highlights the significance of practical skills, vocational training, literacy, and basic education in driving national progress. The study's findings are well-supported by historical evidence and offer valuable insights for contemporary educational policy debates. The study's strengths include a thorough examination of Bello's educational thought and policies, a clear analysis of the impact of his policies on educational development in Northern Nigeria, and relevant recommendations for contemporary educational policy. However, potential limitations include the study's focus on historical context, which may limit its generalizability to other contexts. Further research could explore the applicability of Bello's educational philosophy to other regions or countries. Overall, this study demonstrates the relevance of Ahmadu Bello's pragmatic approach to education for national development in Nigeria, and his emphasis on practical skills, vocational training, literacy, and basic education remains pertinent today, offering valuable lessons for policymakers seeking to harness education for national progress.

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