DEWEY'S PHILOSOPHY AND CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION

BY

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APPROVAL

THIS RESEARCH REPORT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS AKOKA, LAGOS, NIGERIA.

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DEDICATION

To HIM who is an embodiment of all wisdom and knowledge be glory forever and ever. Amen.

To my covenant friend and love: Oluwafunmilayo Adedeke STEPHEN-BOLAJI (nee OJOMO), you are part of this dream.

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To everyone that is curious to know in order to survive the treacherous trap and snare of ignorance and poverty.

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ABSTRACT

The central problem addressed in this study is the extent to which Dewey's philosophy can influence contemporary education in a democratic Nigeria. There is in recent times an outcry that the desire to build a democratic society through education has not been fully realized. This is because of contemporary issues that have plagued the Nigerian educational system such as the challenge of educational curriculum that can promote democratic education, equal educational opportunity, the issue of quota system in Nigerian democracy, the challenge of technical/vocational education and the inexplicit role of university education in internalizing tenets of democracy. This study ascertained some philosophical connotations and assumptions of Dewey's philosophy in the context of democracy and education. It critically reviewed Dewey's philosophical positions and undercurrent views of concept of democracy and education as it relates to the Nigerian educational system. This study established that the present educational system falls short of aspiration to build a democratic society as expressed in Dewey's philosophy because of the issues identified in the Nigerian educational system.

The study design employed non-empirical and non-quantitative methods but was based on conceptual analyses, hinged on the hypothetical-deductive method to ascertain that these ills are present in the Nigerian educational system. The conceptual analysis of the philosophical basis of these ills in the educational system dates back to the colonial period/ British system of education. This study, however, draws attention to the need

for a reformative and transformative education system through Dewey's philosophy. In view of these issues, this study established that Dewey's philosophical tenets as expressed in his democracy and education is a panacea for building effective democratic education in Nigeria. To effect this, some recommendations and suggestions were made.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Since the return of sovereignty, education that is to do with socio-political, ideological orientation and democratic tenets and that helps to liberate the mind and mould the individual for self-reliance has been the main national objective of Nigerian education. Today, the zeal with which Nigerians embrace education as a potent instrument for socio-economic and political transformation must have accounted for the different political slogans that have been used to qualify the Nigerian educational system. These slogans range from "democratic socialism, African socialism and pragmatic socialism", which are all geared toward achieving a democratic nation. Ekweke (2003, p.60) and Ogundowole (2010, p.111) argue that Nigeria has suffered political bruises even through democratically operated ideologies and that all these slogans are there but they seems to have nothing to offer the people in terms of education for democratic society.

The observable reality of the Nigerian society in the post independence era seems to indicate that the philosophical assumption underlying the educational system is centered on building 'a free and democratic society', a just and egalitarian society' (NPE, 2004, p.2). However, the present quality of education given its dynamics seems contrary to policy pronouncement and provision. Thus, one may claim that the implementation lapses cannot form a necessary basis for effective instrument of education for democratic society (Osokoya, 2010, p.115). While the role of education

in a democratic society cannot be over-emphasized, Ogundowole (2010, p.112) opines that a failure to offer democratic education or politically-socio orientated education to the young ones at this stage of the nation's development would amount to depriving them the right to life. Democratic education, if not properly conceived and wisely handled, according to Russell (1977, p.21) will stultify the growth and development of both the individual and the society, the culminating effect to build a self-reliant and a democratic nation will be a ruse.

In essence, there must be a relevant philosophy of education for appropriate education to be provided for every Nigerian. This is because philosophies of education articulate both the aims of education as well as the most appropriate means of achieving those aims (Cahn, 2009, p.379). No wonder the issue of education for a democratic society has gnarred lot of interest (Ekweke, 2003; Osokoya, 2010; Ogundowole, 2010). Thus, philosophy of education is considered as a potent instrument or tool for discussing issues and concerns in the determination of a sound system of knowledge development and social transformation.

However, philosophers of education differ in their understanding of the state in which of modes or methods of analysis proceed. In analyzing issues as they evolve, most especially when they involve concept clarification they tend to take different perspective. Akinpelu (2005, p.225) explained that philosophy of education in its most general senses involves a search for the basic truths, meanings, realities and principles behind the superficial and surface appearances of phenomena. Furthermore, they differ in their findings of the rationale or rational explanation of what may not be clear

to us. In its modern sense, philosophy of education has as its basic, and perhaps most important function, an analysis of the concepts, fundamental discourse and problems in whatever it is applied to. Isichei and Olufowobi (2005, p.24) seem to corroborate this claim when they explained that philosophy of education is the activity of reflecting upon, interpreting, analyzing and criticizing current educational systems and processes with the aim of improving the educational system.

Put succinctly, democracy and education are such concepts requiring clear definition if the aims and objectives of Nigerian education are to be realized. The analytical school of philosophy argues that while premium is placed on education as a potent tool at accelerating the progress and development of the individual and the nation as a whole, democracy presents the platform for human intelligence. By human intelligence we mean that human beings are not equally endowed intellectually but each person must be accorded the respect and given equal opportunity to enhance self-realization within the limits of their intellectual capabilities.

Attesting to this is the declarative statement in the Nigeria Constitution (1979 & 1999) and brought down to the National Policy on Education (2004, p.2) which stipulates that Nigeria's philosophy of education is therefore based on the "integration of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and equal educational opportunity inside and outside the formal school system". In addition to the above, the document asserts that there are five main objectives on which the philosophy is built. These are: "a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society; a strong and self-reliant nation;

a great and dynamic economy; and a land of bright and full opportunities" (NPE, 2004, p.2).

There seems to be no contention about these constitutional stipulations but one is enthused by the idea of the actual conduct of education in operational democracy. However, it may be reasonably inferred that there are principles guiding both the educational practices and classical political democracy. Such principles are generally regarded as the cornerstone of democracy and education which Kneeler (1971, p.23) enumerated to include:

- That when the people elect their government, they should be educated to live responsibly;
- That through such education, every individual is expected to develop his own talents to the fullest;
- That humans must be educated to be free;
- That such exposure should train the open mind;
- That education should develop the habit of productive cooperation as well as healthy competition;
- That whenever possible, one should adopt democratic practices in school behavior; and
- That political control over education must be kept to the minimum.

Ruwa (2007) upholds that these are necessary principles for Nigeria whose desire is to build a democratic society. In other words, these principles can be pursued to their logical conclusion in a disciplined and democratic country. It is in this regard that Dewey's idea of education and democracy has profoundly contributed to the success of

American education. Among such contributions are Dewey (1916, p.89) in which he opined that educational attainment is a prerequisite for democratic society. He stressed that education promotes democracy and development, and because it leads to greater prosperity, it is also thought to cause political development. Buttressing the position of Dewey is the modernization theory popularized by Lipset (1969 p.105); Gardner (1961, p.34); Giroux (2003) which emphasizes the role of education as well as economic growth in promoting political development in general and democracy in particular. Lipset (1969, p.105) argues that education presumably broadens men's outlooks, enables them to understand the norms of tolerance, restrains them from adhering to extremist doctrines, and increases their capacity to make rational electoral choices.

Nigeria has wisely adopted democracy as her form of government; hence there is nothing absolutely wrong if her philosophy of education is based on democratic principles, but the idea of the overall Nigerian philosophy may be queried. One may ask if there is a document that may be so called. Should the brainstorming sessions and cumulative thinking of the National Conference of 1969 and the Seminar of Experts in 1973 labelled 'the overall philosophy of Nigeria' be regarded as policy document for the nation? In fact with the ushering in of a democratic dispensation in 1999, every attraction points to a democratic society where education as a 'social and individual' process would be more pronounced; rather, education has become a political slogan. Indeed, it forms the major manifesto of many political parties and it

serves as a programme to invoke the feelings of the electorate to vote parties into power.

It is of interest to find out whether the education of all citizens is a condition for democracy in Nigeria. Or is the formal education of all citizens a logically necessary condition for the success of democracy? Aladejana and Omoteso (2003) opine that for a democratic setting to be successful, at least the majority of the people need to be educated. One of the strongest arguments for contending that education is a logical and necessary condition for democracy is that since the people themselves elect their government, they should be educated to do so responsibly. Hence education is a sine qua non to democratic realization.

Education is such an indispensable tool to man and society for sustainable development. This implies that the fundamental task of education in the society is in two folds: the social process and the individual process. The latter will help in the proper preparation of the young citizens for the roles and responsibilities that they should take on when they reach maturity. Dewey (1966, p.89) asserts that through education, society can formulate its own purpose, can organize its own means and resources and shape itself with definiteness and economy in the direction in which it wishes to move.

It is education that must channel all the individual's potentialities - intellectual, moral, physical, social, aesthetic, and spiritual-into a democratic ideal (Farayola, 2007). The

search for a good society and person has been a consistent effort of various schools of thought, individual philosophers and theologians. These include Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Illich, and Dewey. This list is not exhaustive. Similarly, the search for a good educational system in a democratic setting has been the major concern of educational philosophers.

The educational system in any nation is influenced by different educational philosophies and philosophical traditions. For instance, the two classical philosophies and their corresponding philosophical traditions that had influenced British education were Perennialism and Essentialism. These two philosophies of education have Realism and Idealism, respectively, as their philosophical traditions. In contemporary times, we have Progressivism and Reconstructionism as educational philosophies with Pragmatism as their philosophical tradition in America.

A close examination of the educational aims or objectives in developing nations reveals a kind of vagueness that must be conceptually clarified if the aims of education would qualify to act as a guide for educational endeavour. If man is the greatest value in all of created reality, then, the overriding purpose of education must be 'the making of persons' or 'to forming of persons', or rather 'to help a child attain his full formation or his completeness'. In a nutshell, education of the youths/ individuals should be the foundation of the values upon which democracy ought to be constructed (Falaiye, 2007).

If every society transmits habits of mind, social norms and culture from one generation to another, can this conscious social reproduction form the democratic education? What direct bearing has education with the building of a democratic society? What are the peculiar features of democratic education and 'what are the tasks of education in a democratic society? What skills ought such education to develop in the learner for social reconstruction and development of the human capital? Steiner (1994, p.24) stresses that democratic education should equip citizens to be "the measure of all things"; the voices of society should develop the skills of questioning, criticizing and reconstructing the language of the day in order to dissect the rhetoric of politics, economy, and culture. However, these are not the skills being encouraged neither in today's educational reform efforts nor in colleges and universities.

Since a democratic society repudiates the principle of external authority, it must find a substitute in voluntary disposition and interest that can be created only by education (Parker, 2003). In his own explanation, Dewey (1966, p.89) posits that democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, conjoint communicated experience. It could then be deduced that the goal of democratic education and government of democracy are in harmony. Both promote independent thinking ability with questioning skills, respect for evidence and logic, expression of criticism and sound judgment. Steirner's view points to the fear of Adaralegbe on the issues and problems of university education. He wrote:

> *…..if after three or four years their students, still go out ill-equipped to meet life's challenges and without having laid or discovered for themselves a true foundation of an intelligent curiosity, critical judgment, trained imagination*

> *and sharpened intuition, a social consciousness, and an understanding of fundamental principles of their chosen professions, something is basically wrong (Adaralegbe, 1972, p.5).*

Nigeria's education is no doubt at a crossroad, in a juxtaposed state, because the social malaise in today's educational system stems from her rather lopsided system where corruption is as evident as it has been in the areas of politics, law enforcement agencies and the business sector (Ujomu, 2001). To Ikuwemesi (2008), education in Nigeria has become an easy means to nescience and ignorance rather than a means to individual social freedom and a support for the germination of great societies. Education is faced with the threat of anomie, a crisis of value where virtually every cherished principle of moral integrity and concept of ideal life has nearly been eroded, if not totally already? (Ujomu, 2001). The general norms and ethical values associated with democratic principles in a society for human interpersonal co-existence are absent altogether. Unethical values, immoral attitudes and violence are more pronounced in our schools.

Rauterberg (2002) remarks that Nigerian schools looked like "ruined factories". This statement confirmed the observation of Okpara (2001), who asserts that the contemporary Nigerian youths are "the children of violence" where only the learning and internalization of violence characterized the educational system. All these immoral, unethical behaviours and attitudes, according to Ujomu (2001), serve as an indication of the deterioration and degeneration of the ethical value system that society desires for the democratic experience and intense socio-economic development

vis-à-vis peaceful co-existence in Nigeria. Rather than being a free and democratic society, Amaele (2000, p.95) submits that Nigerian has become a country where citizens are in chains, unity is far-fetched and self-reliance is yet a dream.

With the rebirth of democracy in 1999, salient issues or problems that had plagued the Nigerian educational system such as equal educational opportunity, curriculum and educational reform, vocational/ technical education, university education and democracy, democracy and quota system, and democratic education of the citizen are yet to be resolved (Akinpelu, 1981, p.207; Adewole, 2001, p.2; Okoh, 2005 p.5). Falaiye (2007) concurs that it is disheartening that the level of illiteracy is still very high. Issues presented in the democratic process are hardly understood by a vast majority of the people. An educational system that tries to avoid these indices of a democratic society will give birth to a 'miseducated' society (Ruwa, 2007). This, however, necessitates the need for the philosophers and philosophers of education to come to terms with a national philosophy with the cardinal objectives to build a self-reliant nation through democratic education contrary to what is apparent in the present system of education.

The failures of human intelligence in these social areas emphasize the social aspect of Dewey's philosophy in fostering democratic education in Nigeria. The hackneyed American slang expression, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" seems to reflect the essence of pragmatism as a philosophy which is primarily concerned with the workability of an idea or a given situation. If anything is obvious in the doctrine of pragmatism and the

progressive movement, it is the certainty that we live in a changing world and that the educational process must prepare us for the changing circumstances. It is based on this premise that this researcher seeks to understand this philosophical tradition and reconstructionism as an educational philosophy that has influenced Dewey in his analysis of democracy and education as to have advocated the 'learning by doing and social reconstruction'. Omatseye (2004) opines that the search for better alternatives in education as a process never stops; that is why the progressive movement for the African school should be drawn along the lines of education as a democratic endeavour and social reconstruction.

Dewey's love for democracy was based not only on the principle of the right of citizens to participate in decisions affecting their lives but also to tap individual resources for possible improvement of decisions already made. Both endeavours are guided by the wisdom of collective responsibility as well as the possibility of further improvement based upon new and more convincing evidence. What is not present in democracy is a situation where one individual or group lords it over others, thus giving credence to the notion of "might is right". The concept of democracy evokes images of free speech, social justice and an inclusive form of government. This is what Fitzsimons (2002) referred to as collective action. It is based on the tenets of democracy that Dewey (1916, p.56) opines that if all these tenets are adhered to men, women and young people would discover their potential and perceive the full import of their activity.

This explains why Nigeria desires to build, through education, 'a free and democratic society'. Similarly, many nations of the world aspire to build democratic societies but the African continent as a whole and Nigeria in particular have neither been comfortable nor stable in their democratic experiments. For too long, Africans have suffered deprivation in the exercise of their rights to fully determine their fortunes. This unfortunate trend which started with colonialism has continued under the leadership of successive post-independence regimes most of which have not only been repressive but have also been outright dictatorships. And if a break must be put to this unfortunate trend, the process has to begin with the younger generation of African children in school. It is on this score that Omaseye (2004, p.139) the school curriculum, the pedagogy, and pedagogy officers/teachers must be challenged to redeem the society by helping children develop not only a scientific attitude but also democratic instincts.

Democracy in some African states is better described as diarchy - a government shared by both the military and civilians. The African continent has been enveloped with partial democracy, undemocratic constitutions, leadership crises, and the military as a major obstacle to democratization. Even where it appears that all is well, for example in Egypt, a critical look reveals some deficiencies. Smith (1999, p.16) opines that if economic liberalization is now Egypt's pride, political deliberalization is its shame. In theory, Egypt is a democracy. In fact, it is almost as much under the ruling party's thumb as it was in the 1960s when Egypt was a one-party state.

According to Oladipo (2007), the unequivocal answer to this issue in African social and political thought, particularly since the 1990s, is that democracy is the answer. However, what kind of democracy? It is not that democracy is strange to Africa, but the western kind of democracy is strange to Africa. A king or a chief might ascend to the throne or power through democratic principles but rule as long as he lives. This practice is expressed in Yoruba as 'bi oba kan o ku, oba mi ko ni je', which means except a king dies no other gets to the throne. The Nigerian situation poses a big problem. Since independence in 1960, Nigeria has been under military rule for two-thirds of forty-five years. Owolabi (1994) asserts that although not the most violent country in the world, Nigeria may well be the most misruled. The main activity of the state of affairs seems to be embezzlement. Nigeria as a misruled country is characterized by electricity failure, collapse of educational infrastructure, unemployment, and crime wave and leadership imbroglio. Nigeria's struggle for democracy has not yielded favourable dividends.

The aspiration to build a democratic Nigerian society, from all indications, has not enjoyed mass consciousness and action. It is a struggle between a few knowledgeable people and a large mass of uneducated people. As Barber (1997) says, Nigeria has been criticized internationally for its abuse of human rights and its dismissal of democracy; and it has become a substantial test for the Commonwealth of Nations and how the beliefs of the commonwealth can be put into practice.

In terms of democratic education, the challenges of schools, colleges, and universities producing half-baked persons persist because the learning institutions are handicapped with under-funding and poor staffing. The problem of unpredictable and abnormal school/ academic calendar, coupled with incessant strikes and agitation for a conducive/enabling environment and lack of integrity of the examining bodies – WAEC (West African Examination Council), NECO (National Examination Council), JAMB (Joint Admission Matriculation Board)- are evident in the system (Akinpelu, 2005, p.207). All these are a big threat to the possible realization of a democratic setting. This is the reason why Isichei (1998, p.21) believes that an education structure that will meet the aspirations and the needs of Nigerians in terms of self-reliance, socio-economic exigencies, adequate provision for participation in its goodness by all its citizens on equal terms and foster national unity is essential and indispensable.

Democracy is not just a principle of governance but, as Dewey puts it, it is "a way of conjoint communicated experience"; education is therefore a rich avenue for promoting democratic living (Dewey, 1966, p.57). If the Nigerian social consciousness to build a democratic society is weak and education which is a necessary tool in democracy is not a priority of the government, then it follows that at present both educational practices and democratic governance are in crisis. It is against this background that the study is centered on Dewey's philosophy in fostering democratic education in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The central problem addressed in this study is the extent to which Dewey's philosophy can influence contemporary education in a democratic Nigeria. There is in recent times an outcry that the desire to build a democratic society through education has not been fully realized. This is because of contemporary issues that had plagued the Nigerian educational system such as equal educational opportunity, curriculum and educational reforms, vocational/technical education, the inexplicit role of university education in internalizing tenets of democracy, democracy and the practice of quota system in Nigeria. From the views above democratic education of the citizens is yet to be resolved (Akinpelu, 1981, p.207; Adewole, 2001, p.2; Okoh, 2005, p.5). The question of how to make the policy objective of building a democratic society relevant to contemporary Nigerian education remains the major concern of philosophers of education, educators and other stakeholders. For instance, in the developed nations, the system of governance has been a major catalyst in boosting education for national development. In Nigeria, the contrary seems to be the case. There are claims that not only does democracy suffer in Nigeria, education too does not enjoy the priority and the seriousness it deserves. Government's undemocratic disposition impinges negatively on education (Akinpelu, 2005, p.225).

A genuine system of education in a democratic setting should yield some distinctive value system with educational relevance. A dispassionate examination of Nigeria's educational system reveals a considerable degree of discontinuity, jarring inconsistency, and disharmony referred to as "Educational Disjunctivitis" (Brutt, 1969, p.24). Evidence of such disjunctions seems to abound in her objectives, curricula,

educational processes, pedagogy, as well as policy formulation and implementation. Democratic education, however, needs a more pluralistic view of truth. There is need to also explore and integrate ideas of other civilizations as well as knowledge of the essential works from outside the African cultural mainstream has imperative conditioning identifying possible constraints in Nigerian democracy which may affect her education.

It is against this background that this study sets out to critically review Dewey's philosophical ideology and assumptions about democracy, knowledge (education), pedagogy and curriculum, democratic education processes, as well as their functional application in order to identify the relevance or otherwise of such variables (factors) on education in a democratized Nigerian society. Simply put, the study explores Dewey's philosophy on contemporary education in order to resolve salient lapses that affect education in Nigeria. Thus, this is an exercise in transformational and reformative education. In a nutshell, this research study is to explore Dewey's philosophy and contemporary education in Nigeria: implications for democracy and education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore, in line with Dewey's philosophy, the current concern for democracy and education in Nigeria towards achieving an overall objective of a democratic society. The objective of this study is to examine Dewey's philosophical

views that can help to resolve the salient issues and challenges which may have plagued the Nigerian educational system. Specifically, the study objectives include:

i. To identify various connotations of Dewey's philosophical orientation or concept of education and democratic education;

ii. To examine the influence of Dewey's philosophy in solving the problems of equal access and opportunity to education;

iii. To ascertain the relevance of Dewey's philosophy on democracy and quota system;

iv. To assess Dewey's assumptions and ideological orientations in understanding vocational/ technical education in Nigeria;

v. To ascertain through Dewey's philosophy the role of university education in democracy.

Research Questions

The research questions driving this study in the exploration of Dewey's philosophy in solving salient/ contemporary issues in Nigeria democracy and education are:

(i) What various connotations does Dewey's philosophy have on education, democratic education and the relationships between democracy and education?

(ii) How does Dewey's philosophy help in solving the challenges of equal opportunity and access to education in Nigeria?

(iii) What is the implication of Dewey's philosophy on the quota system?

(iv) How does Dewey's view influence curriculum reforms in technical/ vocational education (TVE) in Nigeria?

(v) To what extent does Dewey's philosophy contribute to the entrenchment of democratic university education in Nigeria?

Assumptions

The following assumptions guide this study:

(i) That a human being, by nature a rational being, is potentially a free moral agent that can be educated.

(ii) That democracy is superior to other forms of government agreeable to human freedom.

(iii) That an educational system entrenched in the concept of democracy and education is not in conflict with the social order.

Significance of the Study

The findings throw light on contemporary / challenging issues in Nigerian education that may make or mar her aspirations towards the building of a democratic society. The findings of this study throw more light on the followings:

i. that the failure of the overall objectives of Nigerian education as stated in the national policy on education have not been realized.

ii. offering a clear understanding the web of relationship between democracy and education to the general public and other stakeholders.

iii. that education provides the paradigm for democracy to thrive the while democratic process facilitates equal opportunity and access to education.

In this sense, Dewey's philosophy provides a foundation for assessing the provision and focus of both the universal basic education programme and higher education in Nigeria.

Method of the Study

The study design is non-empirical and non-quantitative, based on conceptual analyses, based on the hypothetical-deductive method. The study took philosophical concept

analysis, textual discourse, critical assessment and clarifying of distinctions to form its philosophical methodology.

This study follows a philosophical method of exposition and argumentation, in addition to adopting critical and conceptual analyses because there are various conceptual oddities that need to be analyzed and clarified. It is a critical exposition and analysis of some major views so as to properly conceptualize the essence of democratic education.

Good (1966), cited in Isichei (1998), gives the following reasons for the use of this method:

- To secure evidence concerning an existing situation or current condition;
- To identify standards or norms with which to compare present conditions, in order to plan the next step and;
- To determine how to make the next step (having determined where we are going and where we wish to go) (Good, 1966, p.12).

Gowin (1972) buttresses the relevance and importance of this philosophical method when he states that any set of complex events can be validly described under an almost infinite number of conceptual analysis and systems. The plurality comes about because the relation between concepts and objects and events to which they refer is forever open.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

In this study educational issues that pose challenges to the Nigerian educational sector in the contemporary democratic setting such as equal access/equality of educational

opportunity, education as a fundamental right of citizens, curriculum for citizen participation, vocational/ technical education, etc, would be examined within the ambit of the philosophical framework of Dewey's philosophy. The researcher also acknowledges the fact that Dewey's philosophy or another philosophy by itself is not adequate to validate the nation's educational system; this of course is an obvious limitation.

CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The work of a philosopher is no individual affair; it requires the participation of an entire community of inquirers. Thus, it would be unfitting not to take into cognizance the effort that has been expanded by philosophers and philosophers of education in seeking to understand Dewey in his thought, erudition and idea of Democracy and Education. This literature review reflects Dewey's philosophical thoughts in the following order:

2.1 Biography of Dewey and Works of Dewey
2.2 Other people's works on Dewey
2.3 General works on Philosophy of Education

2.1 Biography of John Dewey and Works of Dewey

John Dewey is arguably the greatest American philosopher. To say that Dewey is an American philosopher is not simply to state a geographical fact: there is something distinctively American in Dewey's philosophy. In his lifetime, he was hailed as "the philosopher of American democracy". Writing just prior to Dewey's death, a historian Commager (1995) offered the following estimation:

> *so faithfully did Dewey live up to his own philosophical creed that he became the guide, the mentor, and the conscience of the American people; it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that for a generation no issue was clarified until Dewey had spoken.*

On the occasion of Dewey's death, former student and close friend Hook (1995) wrote of Dewey:

> *He leaves behind no monument in stone, no empire, for fortune or foundation. Yet his bequest is immense and imponderable. The experience of millions of American children is richer and happier for his having lived. And to*

> *every adult mind he has offered a reasoned and reasonable faith by which to live (Hook, 1995, p.2).*

John Dewey, a psychologist and progressive educational reformer, was one of the many influential American philosophers of the last century. He is associated with the pragmatic school of philosophy otherwise known as instrumentalism. John Dewey was born in Vermont, USA on 23rd October, 1859, the third of the four sons of Archibald Dewey and Luana Rich. He is a product of John Hopkins University. John Dewey officially retired in 1930, continued to teach as professor emeritus at the University of Columbia where he had been working since 1904, until 1939. He was a major figure in the philosophical firmament of liberal and progressive thought.

Most of Dewey's works were documented in form of textbooks, papers prepared and read as speeches at conferences and articles for journals which were later published in book forms. In process of this review, efforts are made to discuss only those educational theories of Dewey's that are relevant to this study: Dewey's Metaphysics, Dewey's Epistemology, Dewey's Axiology, Dewey's Social Ethics Philosophy, Dewey's Moral Philosophy, Democracy and Education, Education and Experience, The Schools and Society, The Child and The Curriculum and My Pedagogic Creed.

Dewey's concept of metaphysics is full of controversy; the emotions it excites vary in character but seldom anything but story. Walsh (1963) argued that there was a time when metaphysics was thought to be the highest form of knowledge of the most fundamental and comprehensive of all the branches of philosophy to which human

beings could devote themselves. Metaphysics belongs to the speculative and prescriptive philosophy. It speculates on transcendence. Metaphysics holds that there are entities outside the physical world. The physical world is the world of the senses but the metaphysical world is believed to be the supersensible realm, above and beyond the senses. It is prescriptive when it interprets what exist and provides the meaning that should be made of it, or how to understand it. Parmendies, the father of metaphysics, believes that material things of nature are illusions and therefore do not exist.

The concept of metaphysics is etymologically derived from the Greek words 'meta and physica' meaning things beyond the physical realm. Descartes's metaphysical assumption is that existence is subsumed in being a thinking thing. Even when he doubts that he thinks, thinking is manifested in the doubt. Plato introduces forms as stable objects of knowledge. He asserted that things that are real exist in the realm of forms and ideas. He considers forms as intelligible structures that are material. To him, materials things are mere shadows of forms and they occupy a world of their own. Aristotle on the other hand argues that the world is composed of substance, forms, matter, potentiality and actuality. He further stresses that substance is the basis of all reality which of course is the concrete and intelligible structures or forms embodied in matter.

However, since the 1930s many British and American philosophers have been greatly influenced by positivism, the philosophical doctrine which stresses that truth is best

expressed in statements of science. Dewey, like other pragmatists, rejected metaphysics as a legitimate method of ascertaining truth. Dewey believed in the reality of change, the essentially social and biological nature of man; the relativity of values; and the use of critical intelligence (Dewey, 1922, p. 56; Nwabuisi, 1992 p.72).

To Dewey, nothing was permanent, absolute and universal. He believed in change, relativity and sense experience of all beings. This is metaphysical enough. All reality, according to Dewey, must be experimented and verified. As a biological organism, man should act on his environment and be changed by his environment. Thus, man's mind cannot be separated from his experience. He held that experience is the yardstick of measuring all reality. He did not believe in any spiritual quality called 'soul'. Simply put, Dewey in his metaphysical assumption, defined man in terms of experience.

Dewey's naturalistic metaphysics first took shape in his published work *Studies in Logical Theory of Enquiry (1938),* a period when he attempted to elucidate the implications of instrumentalism as a concept of knowledge enquiry. He disagreed with James assessment that pragmatic principles were metaphysically neutral. This philosophical theory shows that knowledge is a product of an activity that is directed to the fulfillment of human purposes and that a true or warranted belief is known to be such by the consequences of its employment rather than by any psychological or ontological foundations.

Dewey's epistemological concept is in an area within professional philosophy and philosophy of education. Epistemology went through a variety of transformations in the 20th century: from traditional accounts of knowledge which favours the position of analytic philosophers to the relativists' outright rejection of epistemology as a variable area of inquiry. Aside from those professional philosophers who took up the area of epistemology as a primary focus of study, it is regarded as a buzzword to add an aura of respectability to various research, articles and agendas.

Dewey defined epistemology as "naturalistic empiricism". To him, reality is not dependent on human consciousness; he rejected central points like the absolute independence of things from thoughts. Instead, Dewey offered a theory that opposed both idealism and the variants of realism; he argued that knowledge and experience not coextensive. To Dewey, epistemology represents an area of inquiry that is relevant and useful for the philosophy of education, especially as it develops classroom practices that foster inquiry. Boyles (2004), highlighting the distinctions between traditional epistemology and Dewey's conception of knowing, shows epistemology to have values as it highlights a more useful instrumentalist theory of knowing that is applicable to classroom practice.

Dewey's disagreement of traditional epistemology or pure knowledge was informed by total reliance on ontological and metaphysical ideas entailed by traditional accounts of pure knowledge. In place of such a traditional account, Dewey crafts a new version of

epistemology – one that has a key element in the notion of warranted assertibility (Dewey, 1938 p.56). As Dewey puts it:

> *Warranted assertion is preferred to the terms, belief and knowledge because it is free from ambiguity of these latter terms and it involves reference to inquiry as that which warrants assertion. When knowledge is taken as a general abstract term related inquiry in the abstract, it means "warranted assertability". The use of a term that designates potentiality rather than an actuality involves recognition that all special conclusions of special inquiries are parts of enterprise that is continually renewed or is a going concern (ibid, p.59).*

Dewey's concept of epistemology is centered on knowing, knowledge and intelligence. The distinction between the key concepts helps us to understand the import of his warranted accessibility and its relationship to classroom interaction.

Axiology is the theory of value. The study of value embraces ethics and aesthetics. They enquire on what ought to be considered desirable or undesirable action or conduct. Desirable action could be a means of achieving certain ends. In this respect, it could become instrumental. Action could as well be an end. The properties of action include the following: 'good', 'wrong', 'bad', obligatory', 'beautiful', 'ugly' etc. Expression involving these properties are not considered as propositions, because they can neither be true nor false (Okoro, 2002, p.362). Value may be considered as good, desired or cherished by the individual or group but what is considered 'good' may appear relative in some respect.

Plato's axiological view is that since a person's mind is part of the universal mind, individual objects held to be of values are valuable only because they have their origin from God who is the source of all values. This was unlike Aristotle who believes that values exist objectively in things, whether we appreciate them or not. Values are not our reactions, tastes or desires; they exist in the object for us to discover. The example given by Isichei and Olufowobi (2005, p.42) stresses the Aristotelian concept of value: "honey is sweet". Sweetness is therefore a property that honey has whether anybody tastes it or not and regardless of whatever anybody says about it. In essence, value is objective and capable of being discovered.

Dewey's axiological view is centered on man and his needs. To him, man is the major determinant of what is valuable. To Dewey, value is relative, mutable and non-universal (Amaele, 2005, p.64). Man as a rational being depends on his rationality when he acts. Man can change his way of behaving, depending on circumstances. Therefore, human values are not based on any permanent, absolute or universal standard. He asserts that no value transcends the society for its ultimate frame of reference. A moral act is that which is good to both the individual and the public (Dewey, 1933, p.34).

Dewey's mature thought in ethics and social philosophy is not only intimately linked to the theory of knowledge in its founding conceptual framework and naturalistic standpoint but also complementary to it in its emphasis on the social dimension of inquiry both in its processes and its consequences. In fact, it would be reasonable to

claim that Dewey's philosophy of inquiry cannot be fully understood either in the meaning of its central tenets or the significance of its originality without considering how it applies to social aims and values, which is the central concern of his ethical and social theory.

In large part, Dewey's ideas in ethics and social philosophy were programmatic rather than substantive, defining the direction that he believed human thought and action must take in order to identify the conditions that promote the human good in its fullest sense, rather than specifying particular formulae or principles for individual and social action. He studiously avoided participating in what he regarded as the unfortunate practice of previous moral philosophies of offering general rules that legislate universal standards of conduct. In *Human Nature and Conduct* Dewey (1922, p.35) approached ethical inquiry through an analysis of human character informed by the principles of scientific psychology. The analysis is reminiscent of Aristotelian ethics, concentrating on the central role of habit in formulating the dispositions of action that comprise character, and the importance of reflective intelligence as a means of modifying habits and controlling disruptive desires and impulses in the pursuit of worthwhile ends.

The social condition of the flexible adaptation that Dewey believed was crucial for human advancement is a democratic form of life, not instituted merely by democratic governance but by the inculcation of democratic habits of cooperation and public spiritedness, productive of an organized self-conscious community of individuals responding to societal needs by experiment and inventive rather than by dogmatic means. It is in line with above assertion that Dewey argues in *School and Society*

(1932/1956); Democracy and Education (1916/1966) that is what must begin in the earliest years of a child's educational experience.

Dewey's discourse on moral philosophy emanated from what he experienced during the American Civil War to the Cold War, a period of extraordinary social, economic, demographic, political and technological change. During his lifetime the United States changed from a rural to an urban society, from an agricultural to an industrial economy, from a regional to a world power. It emancipated its slaves, but subjected them to white supremacy. It absorbed millions of immigrants from Europe and Asia, but faced wrenching conflicts between capital and labour as they were integrated into the urban industrial economy. It granted women the vote, but resisted their full integration into educational and economic institutions. As the face-to- face communal life of small villages and towns waned, it confronted the need to create new forms of community life capable of sustaining democracy on urban and national scales (Dewey and Tufts, 1932, p.4).

Dewey believed that neither traditional moral norms nor traditional philosophical ethics were up to the task of coping with the problems raised by these dramatic transformations. Traditional morality was adapted to conditions that no longer existed. Hidebound and unreflective, it was incapable of changing so as to effectively address the problems raised by new circumstances. Traditional philosophical ethics sought to discover and justify fixed moral goals and principles by dogmatic methods with intent of reducing the diverse sources of moral insight to a single fixed search for certainty,

stability, and simplicity. In practice, both traditional morality and philosophical ethics served the interests of elites at the expense of most people. To address the problems raised by social change, moral practice needed to be thoroughly reconstructed, so that it contained within itself the disposition to respond intelligently to new circumstances. Dewey (1932, p.48) saw his reconstruction of philosophical ethics as a means to effect this practical reconstruction.

In democracy and education (1916/1966), Dewey divides the book into four parts. The first part (chapters 1–5) considers education in general as a social need, then in particular as a democratic need, along with the general features of education. The second part (chapters 6–14) treats democratic aims in education and articulates principles of method and subject matter. Part three (chapters 15–23) begins by considering aspects of the curriculum but is mainly devoted to practical and philosophical impediments to the democratic ideal. Interestingly, perhaps oddly, the book concludes (chapters 24–26) with reflections on the nature of philosophy.

For Dewey education is the growth of mental powers, where "growth" has no fixed content but involves the increasing harmonization of individuals with society. That harmonization must respect the uniqueness of each person and his capacity for intelligence. Education aims to develop a model democratic society, which Dewey sees as similar to an ideal community of scientific inquirers such that comparison will be highly questionable. However Dewey's curricular emphases include science, geography, history, literature, and fine arts, the last two of which promote a greater appreciation

for all of human life—provided society is not too separated into classes. Related to social division is what he considers the false problems of epistemology, with its separation between mind and world. Dewey's failure to think more rigorously about the relation of philosophy to science makes his philosophy a poor bulwark against postmodernism.

Education and growth, Dewey writes, is a means toward the "social continuity of life" (ibid, p.5). It is a part of every social group because the preservation of the group is not merely a physical matter; knowledge, customs, and ways of life must also be maintained. However, more than preservation is at stake, because the fact that humans are capable of indefinite 'growth' a key word in Dewey's vocabulary as we will see, increases the importance of education over time: According to Dewey (1916, p.6), the growth of civilization, the gap between the original capacities of the immature and the standards and customs of the elders increases. Schools are one means of conducting education, which should simplify and purify the student's environment. Purification aims to create not a problem- free situation, but one in which the "trivial," "dead," and "perverse" aspects of the environment are eliminated from children's activities. Schools, however, are "a relatively superficial means" of education.

Education is present wherever there is communication, the goals of which are the formation and maintenance of the shared beliefs and practices that make community possible. All institutions have a role to play, and all are to be judged according to their "effect in enlarging and improving experience". What Dewey means by "enlarged and

improved experience" is not immediately clear, but the distinction surely depends on a separation of education from mere training in a skill. Education involves acquiring the means to take the initiative in shaping the common activities of society, which are crucial in the process of forming meanings (Ibid, p.24).

Growth has been one of Dewey's most misunderstood terms because it has no absolute content for him. "Not perfection as a final goal, but the ever enduring process of perfecting, maturing, refining is the aim in living." Growth itself is "the only moral 'end'". This implies that "the educational process has no end beyond itself" (ibid, p.54). Given the supposed failure of all absolutist philosophies to justify their ends, Dewey sees no alternative to that conclusion. Education is not simply preparation for a completed state to be arrived at in the future. Moreover, the result of a view of education as preparation is that students will be lethargic, will have no urgency in their daily lives nor is education an unfolding from within of the student's potentiality toward a certain end. That is the teaching of Hegel; and despite Dewey's great and acknowledged debt to Hegel throughout his philosophical career, by 1916 he was long past the point of relying on anything Hegelian as a philosophical foundation (Hegel, 1915, p.201). Growth must be the end of education, Dewey believed, because modern science has destroyed the ancient view of the universe as purposive and tending toward rest and finality. Dewey's opposition to those views of education result in a clear notion of what he means by education and living as growth. He is well aware of the standard objection: it is possible to grow in morally reprehensible ways as well as upright ones. Moreover, he does give criteria. Growth requires liberty, both in the

negative sense of absence of restraint and in the positive sense of ability to do. It also means that "an environment in which some are limited will always in reaction create conditions that prevent the full development even of those who fancy they enjoy complete freedom for unhindered growth."

Nicholas (1990, p.382) argued that Dewey's philosophy does not clearly distinguish growth from its opposite: when Dewey says that growth is what enables more growth to occur, he appears to rely ultimately upon the Hobbesian (1918, p.85) test of survival. Does Dewey have a good answer to Nicholas's objection? Dewey asks whether a person can truly "grow" as a criminal: "Does this form of growth create conditions for further growth, or does it set up conditions that shut off the person who has grown in this particular direction from the occasions, stimuli, and opportunities for continuing growth in new directions? What is the effect of growth in a special direction upon the attitudes and habits which alone open up avenues for development in other lines? The fact is simply put that when and only when development in a particular line conduces to continuing growth does it answer to the criterion of education as growing." Dewey's leaving those questions to the reader might be interpreted as an admission of weakness in his argument. Alternatively, he has already stated that it is not his purpose in that book to discuss in detail the philosophical justification of democratic institutions; so perhaps we should not expect an answer to the question, why be a law-abiding democrat instead of a burglar or a corrupt politician? (those are Dewey's examples).

Alternatively, the passage quoted above might be interpreted as suggesting fairly clear answers to the questions. Dewey seems to imply that a burglar or a corrupt politician is shut off from further stimuli, which include other people, for continuing growth. Perhaps he leaves us to draw the seemingly incontrovertible conclusions that we cannot all survive together as burglars or corrupt politicians, and that no one can survive alone. In the democratic conception in education, he advances the following standards for gauging the worth of a form of association: "How numerous and varied are the interests who are consciously shared? How full and free is the interplay with other forms of association (1916, p.89)? Growth, then, is the increasing harmonization of individuals within society. And this harmonization is more than is needed for mere survival; so growth is not reducible to survival.

Dewey's discussion of democracy and education focuses on aspects of the curriculum that are both theory and practice oriented in his conception of democratic education. He acknowledges the unfortunate trends in social development of education traceable to the dispensation of the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophical era. Consequent to that unfortunate social development was the separation of intellectual studies from practical studies, of social studies from physical studies, of humanism from naturalism, and of the individual from the world (ibid, p.152).

Contrary to certain intellectuals today who assert the separability of democracy from education and broader philosophical matters, Dewey argues that democracy needs to be concerned with education. Since democracy stands in principle for free interchange,

for social continuity, it must develop a theory of education which sees in knowledge the method by which one experience is made available in giving direction and meaning to another" (ibid, p.347). Dewey believed that human advancement was crucial for a democratic form of life, not instituted merely by democratic forms of governance but by the inculcation of democratic habits of cooperation and public spiritedness, productive of an organized, self-conscious community of individuals responding to society's needs by experimental and inventive, rather than dogmatic means.

The development of these democratic habits, according to Dewey in *Democracy and Education*, must begin in the earliest years of a child's educational experience. Dewey (1922, p.56) rejected the notion that a child's education should be viewed as merely a preparation for civil life, during which disjointed facts and ideas are conveyed by the teacher and memorized by the student only to be utilized later on. The school should rather be viewed as an extension of civil society and continuous with it, and the student encouraged to operate as a member of a community, actively pursuing interests in cooperation with others. It is by a process of self-directed learning, guided by the cultural resources provided by a teacher that, according to Dewey, a child is best prepared for the demands of responsible membership within the democratic community.

In *Experience and Education (1938|1997*), Dewey attempted to explain what constitutes progressive education. From the time he started to explore progressive education in practice when he established The Laboratory School at the University of

Chicago in 1896 to the time of the writing of this book in 1938, Dewey had seen both good and abysmal attempts at creating new methods of education. Dewey wrote this book in response to the educators behind those misguided attempts at reform and the purveyors of traditional education who used those blunders as a straw man to attack progressive education. It was his hope to develop the principle of education "positively and constructively" rather than just reacting against the traditional education which he viewed as failing the students (Dewey, 1938, p.20). He wanted people to stop worrying about labels, whether something is "progressive," "new," or "traditional," and focus on whether students are really receiving a good education. This book is an attempt to define what a good education looks like by defining the roles of the educator in progressive education.

Education is just a transfer to the student or discovery by the student of knowledge from the past. Dewey noted the issue was not in what education is, but in how it is done. Being a proponent of the positive educative experience, he noted that progressive education and traditional education provide experiences. This makes the issue not whether experience is provided or not but what sort of experience the educator will use to have the student acquire knowledge. According to Dewey, traditional education would just funnel the knowledge accumulated through history into the student through books and instruction from a teacher without connecting the past to the reality of the student. Acquiring the knowledge became the end goal of the education process.

Dewey expressed the view that the present should always remain in focus. By keeping the present at the core, the student and teacher would avoid the pitfalls of creating a disconnect between what is being taught to the reality of the student. "The way out of scholastic systems that made the past an end in itself is to make acquaintance with the past a means of understanding the present." This past knowledge that is to be brought into the minds of students should only be done if it is actually relevant to the student's present situations. Dewey described a "water-tight compartment" in the back of our mind where we put practical knowledge, the knowledge of which we have been taught for use in some particular future circumstance (ibid, p.48). The information in this compartment would be kept there until a circumstance that was exactly like it in the mythical future for which the information had been stored never occurs.

Wasting a student's time, and, more importantly, stifling their interest by teaching things that are impractical can be avoided if educators focus on their present situation as the basis for lessons. Dewey wrote, "It is a cardinal precept of the newer school of education that the beginning of instruction shall be made with the experience learners already have; that this experience and the capacities that have been developed during its course provide the starting point for all further learning" (ibid, p.70). In deciding what the student is going through and what he needs to learn to succeed in the process, the educator plays a major role. "A primary responsibility of educators is that they not only be aware of the general principle of the shaping of actual experience by environing conditions, but that they also recognize in the concrete what surroundings are conducive to having experiences that lead to growth". Dewey argues that providing

the student with enjoyable learning experiences motivates them to continue learning; this motivation matters just as much as the knowledge that is learned.

Dewey had to balance between two extremes, those in traditional education who just transferred knowledge to their students and those in the progressive education fields who just valued activity and experience. The former comes from the desire of an educator to make sure the student knows the knowledge he knows and understands it the way he understands it. The latter comes from an over-emphasis on freedom of movement. Dewey described both as faulty approaches. Freedom is not to be thought of as freedom to do whatever you want but as freedom to continue to learn. Dewey described the debate as "whether freedom is to be thought of and adjudged on the basis of relatively momentary incidents or whether its meaning is found in the continuity of developing experience". Complete freedom would make the teacher unnecessary and exclude him from the education of the student altogether. The exclusion of a significant role for the teacher appeared to be a trap that many adherents of progressive education were falling into.

These well-intentioned yet misguided educators exalted temporary freedom, or as Dewey described it, "outward freedom", as an equal to "freedom of intelligence". Dewey emphasized the importance of intellectual freedom over just a temporary physical freedom: "The only freedom that is of enduring importance is freedom of intelligence, that is to say, freedom of observation and of judgment exercised in behalf of purposes that are intrinsically worthwhile". It should be the goal of the teacher to

help the student strive forward. Sometimes that would mean that the teacher takes away the student's temporary freedom in order to give them the important freedom of intelligence. According to Dewey, "The teacher loses the position of external boss or dictator but takes on that of leader of group activities." It is this new role of being the most knowledgeable person in the group but not overpowering the group that the teacher needs to master (Ibid, p74).

Undertaking the responsibility of an educator to guide a student to the land of intellectual freedom can be a daunting task, but that is the task that Dewey believed educators were to focus on. The teacher should be intimately involved in helping the student develop a purpose and avoid their impulses that distract them from that purpose. With regards to a teacher just sitting a child in front of blocks and letting them do whatever they want, Dewey wrote, "The teacher's business is to see that the occasion is taken advantage of since freedom resides in the operations of intelligent observation and judgment by which a purpose is developed, guidance given by the teacher to the exercise of the pupils' intelligence is an aid to freedom, not a restriction on it." The teacher must ensure that the student is tackling something they can succeed at and that the process of learning will be an enjoyable one to the student (Ibid, p.78).

Taking away the individual's temporary freedom is necessary at times when their impulses are destructive. Dewey wrote, "There can be no greater mistake, however, than to treat such freedom as an end in itself." This temporary freedom is not the goal of education. Impulses that control the individual create an "illusion of freedom" when

"he is directed by forces he has no command over." A good teacher will help the student not to treat such freedom as an end in itself". A good teacher will help the student put some distance between their impulses and action to allow the student to think through their impulses. "Natural impulses and desires constitute in any case the starting point. But there is no intellectual growth without some reconstruction, some remaking, of impulses and desires in the form in which they first show them." One of the main roles of the educator is to take away the individual's personal freedom when that freedom will be destructive and lead to their losing their true freedom of intelligence.

The educator defends the individual from their own impulses by guiding the student's development of a clear purpose and keeping them on course. Dewey described the purpose as the "end-view." Purpose "involves foresight of the consequences which will result from acting on impulse." He further elaborates, "The formation of purposes and the organization of means to execute them are the work of intelligence". It is a dangerous role to play when an educator stifles a student from pursuing their impulses in order to help them achieve their purpose. Dewey provides two ways for an educator to avoid over-stepping their boundaries: "The way is, first, for the teacher to be intelligently aware of the capacities, needs, and past experiences of those under instruction, and secondly, to allow the suggestion made to develop into a plan and project by means of the further suggestions contributed and organized into a whole by the members of the group"(Ibid, p.83). Although difficult and dangerous, the teacher should never lightly shirk their responsibility to keep their student on track for reaching

their purpose nor should they stifle learning because it is going in a direction different from their interests.

Dewey defends progressive education from the view that the responsibility of an educator is nearly insignificant in the progressive setting. Dewey argues throughout the book that this is not so; the progressive educator would have to do more work to meet each individual student's needs than a traditional educator. The new method of teaching is not done so that teachers can do less work. Dewey felt that this misunderstanding of the role of the new educator was the greatest danger to the future of progressive education. "The greatest danger that attends it (the new education) is, I believe, the idea that it is an easy way to follow, so easy that its course may be improvised, if not in an impromptu fashion, at least almost from day to day or from week to week"(Ibid, p.90). If done properly, the progressive educator must be sensitive to their students' needs, perceptive of their true desires, aware of their environment, and helpful in guiding them to their dreams.

Most importantly, Dewey emphasizes throughout the book that the educator has the responsibility of helping each individual student have a good experience in learning. He argues that the educator needs to ask the question, "Does this form of growth create conditions for further growth, or does it set up conditions that shut off the person who has grown in this particular direction from the occasions, stimuli, and opportunities for continuing growth in new directions?" Education can broaden the horizons of opportunity that the student can choose from or it can stifle them from wanting to learn further. If education is to provide good experiences that encourage the student

to continue learning, the educator has an important role to play in ensuring the student encounters situations that spur him forward.

Dewey *The School and Society 1932/1990* pointed out how haphazardly the existing school organization had developed. It was composed of oddly assorted and poorly fitting parts, fashioned in different centuries and designed to serve different needs and even conflicting social interests. The crown of the system, the university, had come down from medieval times and was originally intended to cater to the aristocracy and train elite for such professions as law, theology and medicine. The high school dated from the nineteenth century when it was instituted to care for the demands from commerce and industry for better-trained personnel. The grammar school was inherited from the eighteenth century when it was felt that boys ought to have the minimum ability to read, write and calculate before being turned out to shift for themselves.

The kindergarten was a later addition arising from the breakup of the family and the home by the industrial revolution. A variety of specialized institutions had sprung up alongside this official hierarchy of education. The normal or teachers' training school produced the teachers demanded by the expansion of public education in the nineteenth century. The trade and technical school turned out skilled craftsmen needed for industry and construction. Thus, the various parts of the educational system ranged from institutions of feudal formation like the university to such

offshoots of industrial capitalism as the trade school. However, no single consistent principle or purpose of organization unified the whole (Dewey, 1932, p.23).

Dewey sought to supply that unifying pattern by applying the principles and practices of democracy, as he interpreted them, consistently throughout the educational system. First, the schools would be freely available to all from kindergarten to college. Second, the children would themselves carry on the educational process, aided and guided by the teacher. Third, they would be trained to behave cooperatively, sharing with and caring for one another. Then these creative, well-adjusted equalitarians would make over American society in their own image. In this way the opposition between the old education and the new conditions of life would be overcome. The progressive influences radiating from the schools would stimulate and fortify the building of a democratic order of free and equal citizens (Ibid, p.30).

The new school system envisaged by Dewey was to take over the functions and compensate for the losses sustained by the crumbling of the old institutions clustered around the farm economy, the family, the church and the small town. Children were to get from the public school whatever was missing in their lives elsewhere that was essential for their balanced development as members of a democratic country (ibid, p.40). He therefore urged that manual training, science, nature-study, art and similar subjects be given precedence over reading, writing and arithmetic (the traditional three R's) in the primary curriculum. The question of how soon vocational training should begin had been under debate in educational circles since the days of Benjamin

Franklin. The immigrants, working and middle classes regarded education not as an adornment or a passport to aristocratic culture, but as indispensable equipment to earn a better living and rise in the social scale. They especially valued those subjects which were conducive to success in business. During the nineteenth century private business colleges were set up in the cities to teach the mathematics, bookkeeping, stenography and knowledge of English required for business offices. Mechanics' institutes were established to provide skilled manpower for industry.

These demands of capitalist enterprise invaded the school system and posed the question of how soon children were to be segregated to become suitable recruits for the merchant princes and captains of industry. One of the early nineteenth century promoters of free public education, Horace Mann, appealed both to the self-interest of the people and to the cupidity of the industrialists for support of his cause on the ground that elementary education alone could properly prepare the youth for work in the field, shop or office and would increase the value of labour. "Education has a market value; that it is so far an article of merchandise, that it can be turned to pecuniary account; it may be minted, and will yield a larger amount of statutable coin than common bullion," he said (Ibid, p.56).

Dewey, following his co-educator, Parker, rejected so commercial-minded an approach to elementary education. They opposed slotting children prematurely into grooves of capitalist manufacture. The business of education is more than education for the sake of business, they declared. They saw in too-early specialization the menace of

uniformity and the source of a new division into a master and a subject class. Education should give every child the chance to grow up spontaneously, harmoniously and all-sidedly. "Instead of trying to split schools into two kinds, one of a trade type for children whom it is assumed are to be employees and one of a liberal type for the children of the genuine respect for useful work, an ability to render service, and a contempt for social parasites whether they are called tramps or leaders of 'society.' "Such a definition did not please those who looked upon themselves as preordained to the command posts of the social system.

Each stage of child development, as Gesell's experiments and conclusions have proved, has its own dominant needs, problems, modes of behavior and reasoning. These special traits required their own methods of teaching and learning which had to provide the basis for the educational curriculum. The kindergarten was the first consciously to adopt the methods of instruction adapted to a particular age group. Dewey extended this approach from pre-school age to primary and secondary schooling. Each grade ought to be child-centered, not externally oriented, he taught. "The actual interests of the child must be discovered if the significance and worth of his life is to be taken into account and full development achieved. Each subject must fulfill present needs of growing children. The business of education is not, for the presumable usefulness of his future, to rob the child of the intrinsic joy of childhood involved in living each single day," he insisted (Ibid, p.58).

Children must not be treated as miniature adults or merely as means for ministering to adult needs, now or later. They have their own rights. Childhood was as much a period

of consummation and of enjoyment of life on its own terms as it was a prelude to later life. The first should not be sacrificed to the second on penalty of wronging the child, robbing him of his just due and twisting his personality development. Socially desirable qualities could not be brought forth in the child by pouring a ready-made curriculum into a passive vessel. They could be most easily and fully developed by guiding the normal motor activities, irrepressible inquisitiveness and outgoing energies of the child along the lines of their greatest interest.

Interest, not outside pressure, mobilizes the maximum effort in acquiring knowledge as well as in performing work. The authoritarian teacher, the cut-and-dried curriculum, theuniform procession from one grade to the next and the traditional fixed seats and desks laid out in rows within the isolated and self-contained classroom were all impediments to enlightened education. Whenever the occasion warrants, children should be permitted to go outdoors and enter the everyday life of their community instead of being shut up in a classroom "where each pupil sits at a screwed down desk and studies the same part of some lesson from the same textbook at the same time." The child could freely realize his capacities only in an unobstructed environment.

The child learns best through direct personal experience. In the primary stage of education these experiences should revolve around games and occupations analogous to the activities through which mankind satisfies its basic material needs for food, clothing, shelter and protection. The city child is far removed from the processes of production: food comes from the store in cans and packages, clothing is made in

distant factories, water comes from the faucet. The school has to give children not only an insight into the social importance of such activities, but above all the opportunities to practice them in play form. This leads naturally into the problem or "project method" which has come to be identified with the essence of the progressive procedure. Children soak up knowledge and retain it for use when they are spontaneously induced to look into matters of compelling interest to themselves. They progress fastest in learning, not through being mechanically drilled in prefabricated material, but by doing work, experimenting with things, changing them in purposive ways.

Occasionally children need not be alone and on their own because they will learn more by doing things together. By choosing what their group would like to do, planning their work, helping one another do it, trying out various ways and means of performing the tasks, involved and discovering what will fast-track the project, comparing and appraising the results, the youngsters would best develop their latent powers, their skill and understanding, self-reliance and cooperative habits. The questions and answers arising from such joint enterprises would expand the child's horizon by linking his immediate activities with the larger life of the community. Small children of six or seven who take up weaving, for example, can be stimulated to inquire into the cultivation of cotton, its processes of manufacture, the history of spinning devices. Such lines of inquiry emerging from their own interests and occupations would open windows upon the past, introduce them naturally to history, geography, science and

invention, and establish vivid connections between what they are doing in school and the basic activities of human existence.

Participation in meaningful projects, learning by doing and encouraging problems and solving them not only facilitates the acquisition and retention of knowledge but fosters the right character traits: unselfishness, helpfulness, critical intelligence, individual initiative, etc. Learning is more than assimilating; it is the development of habits which enable the growing person to deal effectively and most intelligently with his environment. And where that environment is in rapid flux, as in modern society, the elasticity which promotes readjustment to what is new is the most necessary of habits. Dewey aimed to integrate the school with society, and the processes of learning with the actual problems of life, by a thoroughgoing application of the principles and practices of democracy. The school system would be open to all on a completely free and equal basis without any restrictions or segregation on account of colour, race, creed, national origin, sex or social status. Group activity under self-direction and self-government would make the classroom a miniature republic where equality and consideration for all would prevail (Ibid, p.95).

This type of education would have the most beneficial social consequences. It would tend to erase unjust distinctions and prejudices. It would equip children with the qualities and capacities required to cope with the problems of a fast-changing world. It would produce alert, balanced, critical-minded individuals who would continue to grow in intellectual and moral stature after graduation. The Progressive Education Association, inspired by Dewey's ideas, later codified his doctrines as follows:

- The conduct of the pupils shall be governed by themselves, according to the social needs of the community.
- Interest shall be the motive for all work.
- Teachers will inspire a desire for knowledge, and will serve as guides in the investigations undertaken, rather than as task-masters.
- Scientific study of each pupil's development, physical, mental, social and spiritual, is absolutely essential to the intelligent direction of his development.
- Greater attention is paid to the child's physical needs, with greater use of the out-of-doors.
- Cooperation between school and home will fill all needs of the child's development such as music, dancing, play and other extra-curricular activities.

All progressive schools will look upon their work as of the laboratory type, giving freely to the sum of educational knowledge the results of their experiments in child culture. These rules for education sum up the theoretical conclusions of the reform movement begun by Colonel Francis Parker and carried forward by Dewey at the laboratory school he set up in 1896 with his first wife, in collaboration with the University of Chicago. With his instrumentalist theory of knowledge as a guide, Dewey tried out and confirmed his new educational procedures there with children between the ages of four and fourteen.

This work was subsequently popularized by the leading faculty members of Teachers College in New York after Dewey transferred from Chicago to Columbia University. From this fountainhead Dewey's ideas filtered throughout most of the teacher's training schools and all the grades of public instruction below the university level. His disciples organized a John Dewey Society and the Progressive Education Association and have published numerous books and periodicals to propagate and defend his

theories. Dewey's progressive ideas in education have had a curious career. Despite the criticisms they have received from the right and from the left, and even within Progressive circles, they have no serious rival. Today, they are the accepted and entrenched creed on education from Maine. Yet this supremacy in the domain of educational theory has not been matched by an equivalent reconstruction of the educational system. Dewey's ideas have inspired many modifications in the traditional curriculum, in the techniques of instruction, in the pattern of school construction.

In *The child and the curriculum (1902/1956/1990)* Dewey recognized that children's development and learning were anything but rational and orderly; he looks at the process of education from both perspectives: child and curriculum. Dewey leads the reader to view the curriculum, what the child must learn, from the child's present state of mind. He also considers the teacher's point of view as the vehicle that imparts and delivers the curriculum. Dewey understood that the structure of a child's mind is far different from that of an adult (Dewey, 1956, p.16). A child does not have a framework in which to classify and place all the information he is receiving. The child is still developing both the context and the framework to process information about the world around him. The child's interests lie in the world of persons and relationships as opposed to that of facts and laws.

Dewey identified the fundamental divergence between the child and the curriculum. The child's experience is narrow and personal, but the world is vast extending both in space and time. He sees a unity, wholeheartedness, where the curriculum is

specialized, and divided. The child's life is practical and focused on emotional bonds; the curriculum is an abstract principal of logical classification. The struggles the child faces when confronted with the curriculum he must learn become clear when considered from these perspectives.

Dewey, with the assistance and support of his wife Alice, developed and tested these ideas in the University of Chicago Laboratory School. John was the director and Alice the principal of the school. The philosophical educational doctrines that he concisely expressed in this book shaped the direction of American education. Dewey (1956, p. 28) knew from both personal experience and active research that the curriculum and the child must meet on the child's terms. This book explains how and why curriculum must provide the opportunity to explore, experience, and connect information, so the child truly understands and internalizes the abstract principles, the logical classifications and the space and time, constructing the worldview that is specified by the curriculum.

Dewey's *Pedagogical Creed (1897/1990)* is centered on the concept of education, what is school, the understanding of what is subject-matter, the nature of method and the school and social process. He believes that all education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race. This process begins unconsciously almost at birth, and is continually shaping the individual's powers, saturating his consciousness, forming his habits, training his ideas, and arousing his feelings and emotions. Through this unconscious education the individual gradually

comes to share in the intellectual and moral resources which humanity has succeeded in getting together. He becomes an inheritor of the funded capital of civilization. The most formal and technical education in the world cannot safely depart from this general process. It can only organize it, or differentiate it in some particular direction.

He opines that the only true education comes through the stimulation of the child's powers by the demands of the social situations in which he finds himself. Through these demands he is stimulated to act as a member of a unity, to emerge from his original narrowness of action and feeling and to conceive of himself from the standpoint of the welfare of the group to which he belongs. Through the responses which others make to his own activities he comes to know what these mean in social terms. The value which they have is reflected back into them. For instance, through the response which is made to the child's instinctive babblings the child comes to know what those babblings mean; they are transformed into articulate language and thus the child is introduced into the consolidated wealth of ideas and emotions which are now summed up in language.

According to Dewey (1990, p.35), the educational process has two sides - one psychological and one sociological and either can be subordinated to the other or neglected without evil results following. Of these two sides, the psychological is the basis. The child's own instincts and powers furnish the material and give the starting point for all education. Save as the efforts of the educator connect with some activity which the child is carrying on of his own initiative independent of the educator, education becomes reduced to a pressure from without. It may, indeed, give certain

external results but cannot truly be called educative. Without insight into the psychological structure and activities of the individual, the educative process will, therefore, be haphazard and arbitrary. If it chances to coincide with the child's activity it will get leverage; if it does not, it will result in friction, or disintegration, or arrest of the child’s nature.

He stressed that knowledge of social conditions, of the present state of civilization, is necessary in order properly to interpret the child's powers. The child has his own instincts and tendencies, but we do not know what these mean until we can translate them into their social equivalents. We must be able to carry them back into a social past and see them as the inheritance of previous race activities. We must also be able to project them into the future to see what their outcome and end will be. In the illustration just used, it is the ability to see in the child's babblings the promise and potency of a future social intercourse and conversation which enables one to deal in the proper way with that instinct.

Dewey’s psychological and social sides are organically related and education cannot be regarded as a compromise between the two, or a superimposition of one upon the other. We are told that the psychological definition of education is barren and formal - that it gives us only the idea of a development of all the mental powers without giving us any idea of the use to which these powers are put. On the other hand, it is urged that the social definition of education as getting adjusted to civilization makes of it a

forced and external process, and results in subordinating the freedom of the individual to a preconceived social and political status.

To him, each of these objections is true when urged against one side isolated from the other. In order to know what a power really is we must know what its end, use, or function is; and these we cannot know save as we conceive of the individual as active in social relationships. However, on the other hand, the only possible adjustment which we can give to the child under existing conditions is that which arises through putting him in complete possession of all his powers. With the advent of democracy and modern industrial conditions, it is impossible to foretell definitely just what civilization will be twenty years from now. Hence it is impossible to prepare the child for any precise set of conditions. To prepare him for the future life means to give him command of himself; it means so to train him that he will have the full and ready use of all his capacities; that his eye and ear and hand may be tools ready to command, that his judgment may be capable of grasping the conditions under which it has to work, and the executive forces be trained to act economically and efficiently. It is impossible to reach this sort of adjustment save as constant regard is had to the individual's own powers, tastes, and interests - say, that is, as education is continually converted into psychological terms.

In sum, Dewey believed that the individual who is to be educated is a social individual and that society is an organic union of individuals. If we eliminate the social factor from the child we are left only with an abstraction; if we eliminate the individual factor from society, we are left only with an inert and lifeless mass. Education, therefore,

must begin with a psychological insight into the child's capacities, interests, and habits. It must be controlled at every point by reference to these same considerations. These powers, interests, and habits must be continually interpreted - we must know what they mean. They must be translated into terms of their social equivalents - into terms of what they are capable of in the way of social service (Ibid, p.35).

Dewey sees the school as primarily a social institution. Education being a social process, the school is simply that form of community life in which all those agencies are concentrated that will be most effective in bringing the child to share in the inherited resources of the race, and to use his own powers for social ends. He believes that education, therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for future living. To Dewey the school must represent present life - life as real and vital to the child as that which he carries on in the home, in the neighborhood, or on the play-ground. He submits that education which does not occur through forms of life, forms that are worth living for their own sake, is always a poor substitute for the genuine reality and tends to cramp and to deaden.

According to Dewey (1990, p.56), the school as an institution should simplify existing social life; should reduce it, as it were, to an embryonic form. Existing life is so complex that the child cannot be brought into contact with it without either confusion or distraction; he is either overwhelmed by the multiplicity of activities which are going on, so that he loses his own power of orderly reaction, or he is so stimulated by these various activities that his powers are prematurely called into play and he becomes either unduly specialized or else disintegrated. He argues that as such simplified social

life, school life should grow gradually out of home life; that it should take up and continue the activities with which the child is already familiar in the home. It should exhibit these activities to the child, and reproduce them in such ways that the child will gradually learn the meaning of them, and be capable of playing his own part in relation to them. This is a psychological necessity, because it is the only way of securing continuity in the child's growth, the only way of giving a background of past experience to the new ideas given in school. It is also a social necessity because the home is the form of social life in which the child has been nurtured and in connection with which he has had his moral training. It is the business of the school to deepen and extend his sense of the values bound up in his home life.

Therefore much of present education fails because it neglects this fundamental principle of the school as a form of community life. It conceives the school as a place where certain information is to be given, where certain lessons are to be learned, or where certain habits are to be formed. The value of these is conceived as lying largely in the remote future; the child must do these things for the sake of something else he is to do; they are mere preparation. As a result, they do not become a part of the life experience of the child and so are not truly educative. He believes that moral education is centered on the conception of the school as a mode of social life, that the best and deepest moral training is precisely that which one gets through having to enter into proper relations with others in a unity of work and thought. The present educational systems, so far as they destroy or neglect this unity, render it difficult or impossible to get any genuine, regular moral training.

Dewey’s emphasis is based on the fact that the child should be stimulated and controlled in his work through the life of the community. It is imperative to state that under existing conditions far too much of the stimulus and control proceeds from the teacher, because of neglect of the idea of the school as a form of social life. The teacher's place and work in the school is to be interpreted from this same basis. The teacher is not in the school to impose certain ideas or to form certain habits in the child, but is there as a member of the community to select the influences which shall affect the child and to assist him in properly responding to these influences. Simply put, he believes that the discipline of the school should proceed from the life of the school as a whole and not directly from the teacher. The teacher's business is simply to determine on the basis of larger experience and riper wisdom, how the discipline of life shall come to the child. He believes that all questions of the grading of the child and his promotion should be determined by reference to the same standard. Examinations are of use only so far as they test the child's fitness for social life and reveal the place in which he can be of most service and where he can receive the most help.

The latter part of this book is centered on the subject-matter. This is because the concept of subject-matter is crucial to the social life of the child and is the basis of concentration, or correlation, in all his training or growth. The social life gives the unconscious unity and the background of all his efforts and of all his attainments. Dewey (1990, p.67) believed that the subject-matter of the school curriculum should mark a gradual differentiation out of the primitive unconscious unity of social life. To him, we often violate the child's nature and render difficult the best ethical results, by

introducing the child too abruptly to a number of special studies, of reading, writing, geography, etc., out of relation to this social life.

He argues that the true centre of correlation of the school subjects is not science, nor literature, nor history, nor geography, but the child's own social activities. This is to say that education cannot be unified in the study of science, or so-called nature study, because apart from human activity, nature itself is not a unity; nature in itself is a number of diverse objects in space and time, and to attempt to make it the centre of work by itself is to introduce a principle of radiation rather than one of concentration. Nevertheless, he stresses that literature is the reflex expression and interpretation of social experience; hence it must follow upon and not precede such experience. It, therefore, cannot be made the basis, although it may be made the summary of unification.

Dewey argued once more that history is of educative value in so far as it presents phases of social life and growth. It must be controlled by reference to social life. When taken simply as history it is thrown into the distant past and becomes dead and inert. Taken as the record of man's social life and progress it becomes full of meaning. According to Dewey, the primary basis of education is in the child's powers at work along the same general constructive lines as those which have brought civilization into being. Thus, the only way to make the child conscious of his social heritage is to enable him to perform those fundamental types of activity which makes civilization

what it is. This gives the standard for the place of cooking, sewing, manual training, etc., in the school.

Dewey submits that they are not special studies which are to be introduced over and above several others in the way of relaxation or relief, or as additional accomplishments. Rather, they represent, as types, fundamental forms of social activity; and that it is possible and desirable that the child's introduction into the more formal subjects of the curriculum be through the medium of these activities. The study of science is educational in so far as it brings out the materials and processes which make social life what it is. He, however, acknowledges that one of the greatest difficulties in the present teaching of science is that the material is presented in purely objective form, or is treated as a new peculiar kind of experience which the child can add to that which he has already had. In reality, science is of value because it gives the ability to interpret and control the experience already had. It should be introduced, not as so much new subject-matter, but as showing the factors already involved in previous experience and as furnishing tools by which that experience can be more easily and effectively regulated.

He observed that at present we lose much of the value of literature and language studies because of our elimination of the social element. Language is almost always treated in the books of pedagogy simply as the expression of thought. It is true that language is a logical instrument, but it is fundamentally and primarily a social instrument. Language is the device for communication; it is the tool through which one individual comes to share the ideas and feelings of others. When treated simply as a

way of getting individual bit of information, or as a means of showing off what one has learned, it loses its social motive and end. There is, therefore, no succession of studies in the ideal school curriculum. If education is life, all life has, from the outset, a scientific aspect- an aspect of art and culture and an aspect of communication.

It cannot therefore be true that the proper studies for one grade are mere reading and writing, and that at a later grade, reading, or literature, or science, may be introduced. The progress is not in the succession of studies but in the development of new attitudes towards, and new interests in, experience. He believed, finally, that education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience; that the process and the goal of education are one and the same thing. Setting up any end outside of education, as furnishing its goal and standard, is to deprive the educational process of much of its meaning and tends to make us rely upon false and external stimuli in dealing with the child.

On the issue of method, Dewey asserts that the question of method is ultimately reducible to the question of the order of development of the child's powers and interests. The law for preventing and treating material is the law implicit within the child's own nature. Because this is so, he believes that the following statements are of supreme importance as determining the spirit in which education is carried on:

- The active side precedes the passive in the development of the child’s nature; that expression comes before conscious impression; that the muscular development precedes the sensory; that movements come before conscious sensations; He believed that consciousness is essentially motor or impulsive; that conscious states tend to project themselves in action. The neglect of this principle is the cause of a large part of the waste of time and strength in school work. The child is thrown into a passive, receptive or absorbing attitude. The

conditions are such that he is not permitted to follow the law of his nature; the result is friction and waste. These ideas (intellectual and rational processes) also result from action and devolve for the sake of the better control of action. What we term reason is primarily the law of orderly or effective action. To attempt to develop the reasoning powers, the powers of judgment, without reference to the selection and arrangement of means in action, is the fundamental fallacy in our present methods of dealing with this matter. As a result we present the child with arbitrary symbols. Symbols are a necessity in mental development, but they have their place as tools for economizing effort; presented by themselves they are a mass of meaningless and arbitrary ideas imposed from without.

- The image is the great instrument of instruction. What a child gets out of any subject presented to him is simply the images which he himself forms with regard to it. He believed that if nine-tenths of the energy at present directed towards making the child learn certain things, were spent in seeing to it that the child was forming proper images, the work of instruction would be indefinitely facilitated. He believed that much of the time and attention now given to the preparation and presentation of lessons might be more wisely and profitably expended in training the child's power of imagery and in seeing to it that he was continually forming definite, vivid, and growing images of the various subjects with which he comes in contact in his experience.

- Interests are the signs and symptoms of growing power. Dewey believed that they represent dawning capacities. Accordingly, the constant and careful observation of interests is of the utmost importance for the educator. These interests are to be observed as showing the state of development which the child has reached. Therefore only through the continual and sympathetic observation of childhood interests can the adult enter into the child's life and see what it is ready for, and upon what material it could work most readily and fruitfully. These interests are neither to be humoured nor repressed. To repress interest is to substitute the adult for the child, and so to weaken intellectual curiosity and alertness, to suppress initiative, and to deaden interest. To humour the interests is to substitute the transient for the permanent. The interest is always the sign of some power below; the important thing is to discover this power. To humour the interest is to fail to penetrate below the surface and its sure result is to substitute caprice and whim for genuine interest.

- He believed that the emotions are the reflex of actions. To endeavour to stimulate or arouse the emotions apart from their corresponding activities is to introduce an unhealthy and morbid state of mind. He therefore stressed that we can only secure right habits of action and thought, with reference to the

> good, the true, and the beautiful; the emotions will for the most part take care of themselves (Ibid, p.78).

Dewey believes that next to deadness and dullness, formalism and routine, our education is threatened with no greater evil than sentimentalism. This sentimentalism is the necessary result of the attempt to divorce feeling from action.

The school and social progress of Dewey's pedagogical creed stressed that education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform. He believed that all reforms which rest simply upon the enactment of law, or the threatening of certain penalties, or upon changes in mechanical or outward arrangements, are transitory and futile. Education is a regulation of the process of coming to share in social consciousness, and the adjustment of individual activity on the basis of this social consciousness is the only sure method of social reconstruction. To him, this conception has due regard for both the individualistic and socialistic ideals. It is duly individual because it recognizes the formation of a certain character as the only genuine basis of right living. It is socialistic because it recognizes that this right character is not to be formed by merely individual precepts, examples, or exhortation, but rather by the influence of a certain form of institutional or community life upon the individual, and that the social organism through the school, as its organ, may determine ethical results. In the ideal school we have the reconciliation of the individualistic and the institutional ideals.

The community's duty to education, according to Dewey, is its paramount moral duty. By law and punishment, by social agitation and discussion, society can regulate and

form itself in a more or less haphazard way. But through education society can formulate its own purposes, can organize its own means and resources, and thus shape itself with definiteness and economy in the direction in which it wishes to move. When society once recognizes the possibilities in this direction, and the obligations which these possibilities impose, it is impossible to conceive of the resources of time, attention, and money which will be put at the disposal of the educator. Therefore, it is the business of every one interested in education to insist upon the school as the primary and most effective instrument of social progress and reform in order that society may be awakened to realize what the school stands for and aroused to the necessity of endowing the educator with sufficient equipment properly to perform his task.

Education thus conceived marks the most perfect and intimate union of science and art conceivable in human experience. The art of giving shape to human powers and adapting them to social service is the supreme one that calling into its service the best of artists; no insight, sympathy, tact, executive power is too great for such service. With the growth of psychological science, giving added insight into individual structure and laws of growth and with growth of social science, adding to our knowledge of the right organization of individuals, all scientific resources can be utilized for the purposes of education.

Dewey believed that when science and art thus join hands the most commanding motive for human action will be reached the most genuine springs of human conduct

aroused and the best service that human nature is capable of guaranteed. In the final analysis, Dewey believed that the teacher is engaged not simply in the training of individuals, but also in the formation of the proper social life. Every teacher should realize the dignity of his calling as a social servant set apart for the maintenance of proper social order and the securing of the right social growth. It is in this way the teacher always is the prophet of the true God and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God.

2.2 Other People's Works on Dewey

The works on Dewey as carried out by writers and critics were either a response to Dewey's work or a follow-up of others' critique of his works. However, the present researcher makes no claim to exhausting all the works on Dewey but at the same time in the process of selection will endeavour to review major works, particularly those philosophical and educational ideas.

Younkins's work on *Dewey's Pragmatism and Education (2004)* suggests that American pragmatism represents an activist development of Kant and Hegel's idealism. As a theory of mutable truth, pragmatism claims that ideas are true in so far as they are useful in a specific situation. This however implies that what works today in one case may not work tomorrow in another case. Thus, the standard of moral truth is expediency and ethical ideas are accepted as long as they continue to work. Dewey in his social pragmatism asserts that what is true is that which works for a society not for an individual, through the promotion of the public good.

Younkins (2004, p.10) argues that Dewey advocates a relativistic, secularized form of activism that calls for sacrificing oneself to attain the ends of the people. In this view, society, rather than the individual, passes moral judgement. Social policies are measured by the consequences instead of abstract principles of what is right or just. There are only policies and proposals for social action that must be treated as working hypotheses. The experience of consequences will indicate the need to keep or alter the original hypotheses.

He posits that pragmatists' knowledge of the world is impossible to separate from action upon it. There is no reality out there, both facts and values are products of men interacting with an environment and shaping it to their wills. Younkins, in buttressing Dewey's position on society, says society is something that free men create out of their intellects and imaginations. As an advocate of social malleability, he speaks of men reconstructing what they have experienced in order to impose a particular character on it, thereby bringing in an explicit reality of being. Men are free to choose their own way of thinking and to create whatever reality they want to embrace. However, a man's mind is conditioned by the collective thinking of other people. The mind is thus a social phenomenon that truth is what works for the group.

Younkins (Ibid, p.25) disagreed with the position of Dewey and other pragmatists on the concept of society as something that creates individual freedom. He argues that it is the participation in the common life of democratic society that realizes freedom of the individual and produces growth in him and society. Democracy expresses the

consensus of the collective society. As a moral organism with a general will, each man is to do his duty by adapting himself to the ever-changing views of the group. He opines that men simply act; they suddenly do not and need not reflect before acting. The goal of thought is to merely reconstruct the situation in order to solve problem. If the proposal, when implemented, resolves the issue, then the idea is pragmatically true. Truth cannot be known in advance of action.

On value judgment, Younkins opines that they are to be made according to desires based on feelings. The test of one's desire is its longevity, with the majority of other men's wishes, feelings, and value at that time. These, of course, can be examined and abandoned in a future context. Value judgments are instrumental, never completed, and therefore are corrigible. In the end, it is feeling that is paramount for the pragmatist while Dewey was primarily concerned with the democratic ideal and its realization in every sphere of life. He advocated education as a way to reconstruct children according to the pragmatist vision of man. Child-centered, rather than subject-centered, education treats the student as an acting being and therefore is focused on discrete, experimental projects. Dewey dismisses as irrelevant the teaching of fundamental knowledge such as reading, writing, math and science. Younkins's responses reveal that both the educator and the students are to be flexible and tentative. He rightly suggests that the purpose of education is to foster social consciousness. The child is to be taught to transcend the assimilation of truths and facts by learning to serve and adapt to others and to comply with the directives of

their representatives (teachers). To him, a disdain for reason and knowledge is thus combined with the practice of altruism and collectivism.

Like Marx, Dewey comprehended and appreciated the conflictual essence of the Hegelian dialectic. Dewey stressed the clash in the education process between the child and the curriculum and between the potential and talent of the student and the structure of an out modeled school system. The traditional curriculum, loaded down with formal subjects, was unsuited to the child's active and immediate experience. Dewey saw children as alienated from their academic work because of a contradiction between the interests of the school and the real interests of the students. There was an incongruity between the values, goals, and means embodied in the experience of a mature adult and those of an undeveloped, immature being. The teaching of abstract, general principles and eternal and external truths was beyond child's understanding and a barrier to the authentic growth and development of the child.

Younkins criticism is that Dewey's new school would be a vehicle for the dealienation and socialization of the child. The school would be an embryonic socialist community in which the progress of the student could only be justified by his relation to the group. Dewey's activity method and manual training could produce a collective occupational spirit in the school. Dewey, like Marx, was convinced that thought is a collective activity in which the individual simply acts as a cell in the social body. For Dewey, the individual is only a conduit conveying the group's influence, and a person's beliefs derive from others, through tradition, education and the environment. According to Younkins (Ibid, p.38), Dewey's notion that thought is collective, along with his enmity

toward human reason and individual responsibility, has led to his advocacy of collectivist economic planning. For Dewey, cognition is an activity of the group or society as a whole and innovations are the products of collective science and technology, rather than the creations of individual thinkers and doers.

Younkins submits that Dewey's progressive model of active learning promoted a revolt against abstract learning and attempted to make education an effective tool for integrating culture and vocation. Dewey was responsible for developing a philosophical approach to education called "experimentalism," which saw education as the basis for democracy. His goal was to turn public schools into indoctrination centers to develop a socialized population that could adapt to an egalitarian state operated by an intellectual elite. This, according to Younkins, tends to disavowing the role of the individual mind in achieving technological and social progress. Stressing the weakness in Dewey's view on education, Younkins observed that Dewey promoted the group, rather than the teacher, as the main source of social control in the schools. This in a sense is denying the ideas of universal principles, natural laws, and natural rights. Dewey emphasized social values and taught that life adjustment is more important than academic skills.

He opined that Dewey's explanation of the subject-matter and moral lessons in the traditional curricula were meant to teach and inspire, but were irrelevant to the students' immediate action experiences. The contradiction between the students' real interests and those of the traditional school alienated students from their school work.

School-age children were caught between the oppressing forces of immature, undeveloped beings and the values, meanings, and aim of subject matter constructed by a mature adult. Whereas, Dewey believed that the students' energy, talent and potential could not be realized within the structure of an archaic school system. Dewey and other members of the progressive movement wanted a predictable method for providing a common culture and of instilling Americans with democratic values. It was base on this suggestion that a centrally controlled, monopolistic, comprehensive, and bureaucratic public education system was deemed to be essential for America's future.

In Bleazby's work on *Dewey's Rejection of Individual/Community Dualism (2006),* she submits that traditional autonomy and citizenship have been conceived of in terms of rugged individualism, independency and self-sufficiency. It is argued that the concept of community implies dependency and inter-subjectivity; thus autonomy and individuality are thought to be opposed to community. This however is a reflection of the individualistic notion of self in the often antisocial and competitive nature of traditional schooling.

Since children are typically considered to be dependent, they are excluded from this individualistic ideal of autonomy and citizenship, but this issue of individualism also leads to the dominant view that schooling is preparation for the future. Bleazby (2006, p.24) argues that schooling which assumes this individualistic notion of the self counters the development of independent thinking, caring and altruistic dispositions, and collaboration. Consequently, such will promote undesirable notions of the self, society and citizenship.

In respect of the problems of individualism, Bleazby stresses that some schools accept a notion of the self as socially and culturally embedded. Such schools emphasize the importance of community and shared cultural meanings. Thus, these schools she referred to as communitarian schools. However, this kind of school also has the potential to be homogeneous, oppressive, and exclusive and may also counter the development of independent thinking. Thus, she argues that both individualistic and communitarian schools are problematic because they accept an illegitimate community/individual dualism which leads to impoverished and problematic notion of the self, society and citizenship.

She argues that the rejection of community or individualism in philosophy for children is based on Deweyan notions of the communal self and democracies, which reject the community/individualism. Dewey argues that thinking is the internationalization of social processes. Bleazby, however, proposes a community of inquiry as a model for a democratic community. To her, this model will be able to facilitate the development of reflective, reasonable and autonomous individuals who also recognize their interdependence and interconnectedness with others. Such individuals are citizens who are able to engage in communal inquiries with others so as to reconstruct their environment and produce personal, as well as social growth and freedom. In agreement with Dewey, her philosophy for children's ideals rests solely on the self, society and democratic citizenship against the traditional education of community and individualism.

The first part of her treatise discusses the Hobbesian concept of the individual in education. Here, the individualistic notion of the self implies that children and young people cannot be autonomous citizens by virtue of their dependency (Hobbes, 1958, p.67). Thus, it often leads to schooling that prepares students for future autonomy and citizenship. This dominant educational assumption is reflected in Marshall's (1950, p.299) writings on citizenship which argue that right to education is a genuine social right of citizenship, because the aim of education during childhood is to shape the future adult. Fundamentally, it should be regarded not as the right of the child to go to school but as the right of the adult citizen to have been educated.

However, as White and Wyn (2004, p.23) argue, schooling focused on preparing students for the future is problematic because it ignores and devalues the current experiences, understandings and interests of the students. Such schooling conceives of the categories of adult and child as dualistic, in that they are considered to be radically polarized opposites. This actually means that it is only when students finish school and become fully autonomous adults that they will find the knowledge acquired by adult and child as dualistic, in that they are considered to be radically polarized opposites. This means that it is only when students finish school and become fully autonomous adults that they will find the knowledge acquired at school useful, which would explain why many students find schooling meaningless and boring.

She opines that schooling based on futurity is also associated with rote learning because the aim of such education is to get students to store away content for future

use. The presumption is that when students are autonomous enough to decide what they really want, having an abundance of content will maximize their options. The quickest, most efficient way to get students to memorize content is to systematically deposit facts into their heads and then examined students to make sure that they remember contents. However, Dewey argues that rote learning actually mitigates the development of independent thinking because students never have to think for themselves. They are merely receptacles for other people's ideas. As such, far from preparing students to be confident, autonomous agents, such schooling renders students passive, uncritical, and uncreative, which makes them easy targets for manipulation and control (Dewey, 1916 p.78). Therefore, Bleazby submits one response to the problem of futurity in education is to reject the adult/child dualism by arguing that children should have the same freedom and rights as adults.

The second aspect of bleazby's work is centered on the dualistic concept of community in education. Young (1986) argues that in order to be untied and cohesive, communities must suppress individual differences and define themselves in opposition to some excluded other. Butressing a similar position, Abowitz (1999) argues that school community can signal an escape from the public sphere to islands of like-minded (like-classed, like-raced) ideological spheres of sameness and security. Community rhetoric can conceal erasure of difference in the narrowing and purifying of public domains. Thus, while communitarian schools may emphasize collaboration and care for others who are like oneself, they may encourage intolerance for differences

because students may feel that they have the right to force others to assimilate or to exclude them.

Bleazby reiterates Dewey's position on community and individualism. She discusses extensively the concept of Dewey's autonomous self which Dewey simply saw as the self developing through reconstructing experience. Dewey's notion of experience is based on Darwin's idea of an organism adapting itself to its environment in order to flourish and survive. When an individual is unable to respond to a situation in such a way as to have their needs or desires met, Dewey argues, they must construct the situation into a meaningful, useful experience. Bleazby (2006, p.43) shares the same view with Dewey on the 'autonomous self'. To her, the self is not merely determined by external forces; neither is it able to completely transcend its environment so as to choose and act in accordance with some essential, authentic self. Since habits are the product of the self's interaction with its environment, such a transcendental self would bear an empty self or not a self at all. This gives rise to what Bleazby (2006, p.38) and Dewey refer to as dialogue or communal inquiry as a means to working through diverse and conflicting perspectives so as to construct common meanings and practices that are inclusive of the perspectives of many people.

Bleazby buttresses her position based on Dewey's notion of the social origins of thinking that is similar to Vvgotsky's theory of self-development (Vvgotsky, 1986 p.56). The theory rejected the traditional psychological theories that investigate individual psychological processes- otherwise known intra-psychological function as basic. He emphasized the importance of what he called 'inter-psychological' functions which are

the dynamics that occur when individuals engage in concrete, social interaction, especially language.

Vvgotsky (1986, p.58) believed that the participants in social interaction internalize the functions and processes of the interaction. Thus, when trying to solve problems, young children talked to themselves in the same way that individuals talk to each other in conjoint activity, to give each other directions, encouragement, discouragement and to coordinate their actions. By so doing, children are able to more purposefully control their thinking and actions. In a nutshell, Bleazby agrees with Dewey and other pragmatists that thinking is the internalization of the processes that characterize the communal inquiry or dialogue that is crucial for development of a democratic education in the citizen.

In Talisse's *Reconstructing Society (2005),* restoring integration and cooperation between man's beliefs about the world in which he lives and his beliefs about the values and purposes that should direct his conduct is the deepest problem of modern life (Dewey, 1966, p.67). Talisse (2005, p.12), quoting Dewey, reveals the accounts of experience and knowing form as the fulcrum of Dewey's philosophy. To him, the development of this philosophical idea is to tour the most arduous territory seen in philosophy. More important is Dewey's insistence that philosophy must address the 'problems of man'. Hence, with the essential in place, the intent, however, is to examine the moral and political implications of Dewey's reconstructed philosophy of society.

In Talisse's moral theory, he repeatedly encountered a basic dualism between a non-material, unchanging realm of perfect-being known through Reason and an imperfect, material, and perishing world accessed through experience. To him, this function disjunction finds an analogue in moral theory. Modern philosophy has produced two rival theories of morality corresponding to the metaphysical and epistemological dualism previously met. Dewey accordingly discusses the traditional moral theory in terms of a basic dualism between the 'inner' and the 'outer'. To the point of discerning, Kant (1724-1804) is the principal proponent of what we shall call the 'inner' strand in traditional moral theory.

According to Kant, the human will in line with the principle of volition the source and generator of action is the ultimate object of moral evaluation. Kant claims that nothing in the world or indeed nothing even beyond the world can possibly be conceived which could be called good without qualification. He further argues that the goodness of the will consists not in its ability to direct action towards the correct ends; rather the good will is good "in itself". Kant writes that the good will is not good because of what it effects or accomplishes or because of its competence to achieve some intended end: it is good only because of its will. To put it simply, it means that the goodness of the good will is derived not from the consequences of the action it produces, but simply in virtue of the character of its willing. In another word, the will is good if its willing is determined by the correct kind of motive.

Hegel, however, argues that we should be suspicious of a moral theory that places the object of moral evaluation out of the reach of observation, especially since it implies

that one cannot know the character of one's will, one's own "inner principles". Thus, such a theory could not offer sufficient guidance in action. Dewey posits that neither style of moral theory is acceptable. He argues that reconstruction begins once it is realized that both the "inner" and the "outer" varieties of moral theory rest upon common premises. He asserts that behind the underlying traditional theories are assumed dualism between the 'inner' psychological world of motives and the 'outer' physical world of actions. This dualism led the 'inner' theories to locate the object of moral evaluation within the unobservable, non-empirical world of a transcendental faculty of reason; it led the "outer" theories to associate moral value with the satisfaction of existing desires, whatever they may be. Consequently Dewey's moral philosophy oscillates between a theory that, in order to save the objectivity of judgements of value, isolates them from experience and nature, and a theory that, in order to save their concrete and human significance, reduces them to mere statements about our feelings.

Talisse agrees with Dewey's position that dualism that generates this state of affairs is the product of a psychological theory that is no longer acceptable for reconstructed moral theory must begin with the live creature. Accordingly, he asserts that we cannot maintain a dualism between 'inner' factors in behaviour and their 'outer' expressions; rather, we begin with the continuity of motive and act, the integration of the organism and its environment. To Talisse, the so-called 'inner principles' which determine action are not independent of or prior to action; they are habits and dispositions which have arisen in the course of prior experience, previous action. As such the supposed

dualism of the "inner" and the "outer" is misguided; there is a continuity between habit and act within the experience of the live creature. Again the behaviour of live creatures exhibits the character of a circuit; habits are customary modes of response that have been generated in previous action, present actions are guided by habits. Habits, however, are not fixed and static, they are mutable, and they are altered in action.

The aspect of philosophy of reconstruction of society that Talisse identified in Dewey's rejection of traditional theories is the traditional ethical theories that philosophers call the "summum bonum", the highest good. According to Kant, this good is the will that is obedient to reason; Mills (1998, p.46) sees it as the satisfaction of desire. For both, the *summon bonum* is fixed and final. Talisse argues that the idea of 'summon bonum' is just another example of philosophy's search for the immutable, an attempt to protect tradition from science. In agreement with Dewey, Talisse (2005, p.34) insists that ethics cannot begin with some theoretical conception of a fixed and final *summon bonum*; rather, it must start with the actual experience of the live creature. To Talisse, a moral theory that begins with experience, with interaction of the organism and its dynamic surroundings, abandons the project of establishing a *summon bonum*- a final moral aim or end and takes as its objective the examination of the ways in which the live creature, through its interactions with its surroundings, realizes i.e. constructs goods out of existing conditions. Put most simply, a reconstructed ethics must become experimental if it must bring the methods employed in science to bear upon problems of human value (Talisee, 2000).

Talisse agrees totally with Dewey on experimental moral theory centered on the adoption of methods of science in moral philosophy. The idea of actively adopting experimental method in social affairs strikes most persons as a surrender of all standards and regulatory authority. This reaction is evidence that beliefs about values are pretty much in the position in which beliefs about nature were before the scientific revolution. The argument that moral philosophy cannot be based upon science falls once it is recognized that an experimental method is a regulative process. To Talisse, experimentalism does not signify random and aimless action; it implies direction by ideas and knowledge.

He acknowledges the role of Dewey on this position. To him, Dewey's concept of epistemology in the concept of a problematic situation forms the basis of Dewey's moral theory. To Dewey, an experimental theory recognizes that moral thinking arises within situations that are morally problematic. Such situation can be physically disturbed and in-determinate; there can also be situations in which the moral factors, the values, are disordered. Thus, like physically problematic situations, morally problematic situations call for inquiry. Dewey characterizes the phases of moral inquiry thus:

> …*observation of the detailed make up of the situation; analysis into its diverse factors; clarification of what is obscure; discounting of the more insistent and vivid traits; tracing the consequences of the various modes of action that suggest themselves; regarding the decision reached as hypothetical and tentative until the anticipated or supposed consequences which led to its adoption have been squared with actual consequences.*

Moral inquiry, according to Dewey, is the process of resolving conflicts within morally problematic situations. Just as each physically problematic situation is unique, every morally problematic situation is unique; every moral situation has 'its own irreplaceable good'. Consequently, 'moral is not a catalogue of acts or a set of rules to be applied like 'a drug store prescription or cook-book recipes'. To both Talisse and Dewey morality is a continuous process, not a fixed achievement. Talisse concludes that Dewey's view on morality has to do with refining, revising, and correcting habitual patterns of behaviour inherited from the society. The agent is said to have 'grown' in the degree to which present inquiry has helped solidify and enable habits that contribute positively to future behaviour. Moral inquiry thus involves the gradual reconstruction of social practices and customs. Such inquiry, he suggested, can be practiced only within a community that is itself committed to growth as a progressive ideal.

Mustain's *Decentering for Dewey Studies (2006)* book discusses the interaction and influence between Deweyan philosophical thought and educational ideas emerging in contemporary Germany. Mustain (2006, p.12) acknowledges the influence of American pragmatic thought more importantly with the newly opened Dewey centre in Koln-Germany. The question stressed by Mustain is, In what way does German thinking provide a similar influence and impact on the pragmatic tradition in America?

He posits that in recent year, some thinkers such as Kersten Reich and Stefan Neubert have sparked a new dialogue between constructivism and pragmatism. They assert

that the implications of Deweyan philosophy to constructivist philosophies of education are numerous. One of such is in shifting the locus of pedagogical concern from a purely cognitive notion of creating meaning to a transactional and participatory co-construction and co-reconstruction of meaning, which makes education a matter of dialogue within a community of discourse and included in the community of discourse are the voices of students, teachers, as well as the society at large with its various cultural traditions. This active process of making and remaking meanings together, according to Riech and Neubert, is at the heart of educating for democracy. It is through an infusion of Deweyan theories of democracy and education, communication and experience that Reich and Neubert undertake to reconstruct constructivism for an increasingly multicultural world (Mustain, 2006, p.34).

The basis of Mustain's (2006, p.40) thought is on the progressive education tradition of Deweyan philosophy. His progressive suggestion for education had been adopted largely for what they were (or could be). He asserts that many criticisms against progressive education and Dewey's techniques were employed without the crucial understanding of the educational philosophy they derive from. Accordingly, for Lisbook (2004, p.34) experience and education is in large part a dual project: a rejoinder to critics of progressive education and a thorough going criticism of many of those who were employing it reactively. The activities clearly show the evidence of completely unmonitored teachers and subject-matter presented arbitrarily for fear of imposing any structure on learning from the outside.

To Mustain (2006, p.56), what this tells us is that the problem that Dewey spent so much time attempting to deal with is still here. Dewey's own critiques did not hit home. And we might ask why perhaps Dewey's voice fell short because his very name had been dragged through the mire in many circles. Perhaps his terminology had been co-opted. Regardless, the practical failure of his attempts to ameliorate the situation is lacking a critical voice strong enough to deal with the real problems facing progressive education today. He, however, stresses that Deweyan's philosophy is a panacea for interactive constructivism.

In Westbrook *work on Dewey and American Democracy (1991),* refers to Dewey as unquestionably the 20th century's most eminent defender of the liberal democratic tradition, as Robert Westbrook carefully documented. This to him is an excellent introduction to Dewey's thought in general and to democracy and educational practice in particular. Westbrook explores Dewey's philosophy in the light of the latter's central claim that 'democracy is freedom' and draws relevant connections between Dewey's theoretical investigations and his involvements in political activism. While Dewey's interests are far-reaching indeed spanning everything from educational theory to aesthetics, logic and metaphysics- Westbrook points out that questions of political issues and education were always at the forefront of Dewey's concerns and it is primarily with an eye to the bearing of such issues that he decided to investigate Dewey's work in these fields (Westbrook, 1991 p.23). To Westbrook, democracy on this account is:

> *an ethical ideal (which) calls upon men and women to build communities in which the necessary opportunities and resources are available for every individual to realize fully*

his particular capacities and powers through participation in political, social and cultural life (Westbrook, 1991, p.97).

Thus, democracy is not only a form of government; democracy for Dewey primarily represents "a form of moral and spiritual association". It is a way of life which strives to develop the capacities of individuals within the context of a community understood as itself "a complex, organic work of art (ibid, p.150). Westbrook points out that Dewey was a thoroughgoing reformer within the liberal tradition. While attempting to rehabilitate liberal virtues, Dewey sought to rid liberalism of its connection to free market economies, as well as to an atomistic theory of society. Organic metaphors, seldom apparent in more orthodox liberal writings, pervade Dewey's work. So too does a commitment to overhauling the notion of liberty itself. Dewey developed a conception of positive freedom which he believed, could remain invulnerable to the charge that positive liberty gives rise to authoritarian form of social engineering.

Westbrooks's (1991, p.165) countered certain criticisms brought against Dewey, including the charge that his pragmatic mode of thought shows a predilection for scientism. He points out that the notion of "scientific intelligence" which pervades much of Dewey's writings was never construed merely as a form of technical rationality. Rather, he argues that normative theory on this view plays a role in the area of human conduct which is similar to that of 'methods in scientific practice' that is being advocated by Dewey. Therefore, the normative task of Dewey's theory is neither to generate formal decision procedures nor rigid sets of rules to be followed; nor is it to determine particular judgments or replace the need for personal decisions

on ethical questions. It is a task he holds as the more modest one of providing means for the analysis of social practices and forms of conduct.

Westbrook (1991, p.173) writes that Dewey's programme for democratic education became apparent in the arguments he advanced in the debate over vocational education. He opines that the issue of vocational or what he termed as industrial education was of great importance for the future of democracy. Its right development will do more to make public education truly democratic than any other agency. He also acknowledges the role of philosophical basis for any meaningful development of democratic education in any society. To Westbrook, the principal obstacle to democratic education was the powerful alliance of class privilege with philosophies of education beginning with Plato. He submits that the price that democratic societies will have to pay for their continuing health is the elimination of unequal educational opportunities in the society or

> *what Dewey referred to as elimination of an oligarchy: the most exclusive and dangerous of all that attempts to monopolize the benefits of intelligence and of the best methods for the profits of a few priviledged ones Dewey (1916, p.341).*

One criticism Westbrook does level at Dewey's social theory concerns the ambiguity of his conception of socialism. What was lacking was a more definite account of what "socialism when attained" is and what it would look like. The critics of both "laissez-faire liberals and state socialists who limited their remarks to criticisms of opposing theories, fail without offering a description of how their own views would cash out in practice.

2.3 General works on Philosophy of Education

According to Pythagoras (C.571-479B.C) the term philosophy comes from the ancient Greek noun 'philo' and 'sophia' meaning 'love of wisdom'. To Wiredu (1980, p.41) a wise man in the African society:

> *must be a man deeply learned in the traditions and usages of his society, a man of ripe judgment matured in careful reflection and enlarged by keen observation. He must be in the values and ideals of his society but also in the general principles underlying them. If one wants to understand traditional society, there are, of course, a few ways of going absolutely, but one of the most rewarding ways must be to go to their sages for they can inform not only about norms but also the reason behind them (p.56).*

This in a nutshell is to buttress further in the strict sense that there are several other conceptions of philosophy that are considered appropriate for our discourse. Russell (1979, p.9) sees philosophy as something between theology and science. Like theology, philosophy consists of speculations on matters about which definite knowledge has yet to be ascertained, but like science, it is an appeal to human reason rather than authority, whether that of tradition or that of revelation. In other words, philosophy is seen as a interplay of rational as well as emotive elements in human society. Hirst[36] believes that philosophy is concerned with clarification of concepts and propositions through which the human experience and activities become more intelligible; it is also a second-order area of knowledge, concerned above all with the

necessary features of man's understanding and awareness in the sciences, in morals, in history etc. Essentially, philosophy is conceptually a value system which encompasses man's experience, thought and imagination in a dynamic world shared with others, a world out of which he seeks meaning.

Wittgenstein (1922) submitted that philosophy is based on the principle of verification, which states that all propositions must be verified by either logic or sense perception statements. This implies that critical-mindedness in its practical or linguistic position is the hallmark of any philosophical inquiry. To Okeke (1991), philosophy study basic issues of life, knowledge and values which emphasis conceptual and linguistic analysis. Plato described a philosopher as the only one who has wisdom as well as experience. The word wisdom is closely associated with knowledge, thinking, reasoning and understanding. What is it to act wisely? To act wisely, one has to know, think, reason and then understand. Garforth (1985, p.35) put it in almost the same way when he said, "to philosophize is to engage in a strenuous activity of thought (thinking) and to pursue it with no other aim than to satisfy the important questioning of the mind".

Okoro (2002, p.1) sees philosophy as an intellectual activity that has some attributes which include serious concern for meaning and thus necessitates analysis as the method of philosophy. Akinpelu (2002, p.2) defined philosophy as a matter of rational argument aimed at improving on the existing stock of knowledge on any subject whatsoever. Of all the conceptions held of philosophy, none is as widely known as Dewey's dictum which asserts that philosophy may be defined as the general theory of

education (Dewey, 1920, p.56). This affirmation of the ultimate relationship between philosophy and education has over the years authenticated the legitimacy of educational philosophy as a discipline.

Education on the other hand is the dynamic side of philosophy but it is also viewed as the practical way of realizing the ideals of life. One important function of a philosopher is to philosophically examine what others have said or written about a concept or phenomenon so as to bring to light the truth contained in them or refute their assertions, in their places posit the truth. There are deluge of definitions. Ezenwu (1981) identified two major factors that inform the diverse definitions of the concept of education. These are that education is often married or linked up with concepts such as schooling, training, certification etc., and some philosophers define it in terms of these other related concepts. The second factor is that apart from being a discipline of study, education is also a transmission of the cultural heritage of a given society. So, as the cultures of these societies vary or change from one society to another, so does the concept of change.

Education can be defined as a process of socialization, enculturation and transmission of what is worthwhile to those who are committed to it, be they children or adults. Peters (1983, p.31) described education as a family of morally legitimate procedures which aim to develop an intrinsically worthwhile state of mind with wide-ranging cognitive content. Thus, education should arm the individual with knowledge, skills and sound morals so as to be able to function effectively in society as a productive citizen.

Plato, one of the earliest moral philosophers, defined education as the training which is given by suitable habits to the first instinct of virtue in the children when pleasure and pain are rightly implanted in rational souls. As a moralist, Plato conceived education in terms of moral training which however was in tune with the then Athenian concept of education, which emphasized the development of right conduct.

In view of Aristotle, education is the development of a sound mind in a sound body. Aristotle, being a moralist like Plato, argued that there is a common relationship between the body and the mind. To him, the mind and the body should be trained to be sound. This concept of education was also consequent upon the Athenian view of education which combines physical training popular in Spartan education with character training of the Athenian educational system. Rousseau (1994) sees education in light of the development of the individual from within by interacting with the natural environment with the aim of fitting him properly into society. This definition strengthened the etymological foundation of the word *'educere'*, which means to lead from within. Jeffreys (1972) defined education as nothing other than the whole life of a community from the point of view of learning to lead that life. This definition fits the practice of traditional, especially pre-colonial, African education.

The idea of African education is what Majasan (1972) referred to as the concept of 'omoluabi,' which implies the utilitarian goal of education should be to prepare its beneficiaries to be of good behaviour. This view is also reiterated by Steinberg (1976) in saying that people have aims and purposes. Education is not a person; it is not a

thing. However, like a thing it has uses. The purposes of education are the uses that people would have for it. He submits that we can give several uses of education at a time but we cannot give a true meaning of the concept and we should not seek to give one meaning for it. He concluded that education has no more true meaning than it has true purposes. And it has no true purpose. It is in line with this thought that A.S Neil believed the aim of education should be to make people happier, more secure, less prejudiced.

Locke (1912) claimed education must aim at virtue and teach man to deny his desires, inclinations and appetite and follow as reasons directs. These various aims and type of education motivated the existentialist, who is concerned principally with liberal education, freeing his mind from confusion that prevents him from seeing his solution and his situations and power. That is, whatever form of education to be given to an individual should prepare him to be free, freely make choices and be responsible for any of such actions so taken so as to be an authentic and rational personality.

Hackling (2006) sees education as a process, as a long path of becoming. It is usually conceived as a transformation, from ignorant to knowledgeable, from animal to human, child to adult, naïve victim to politically active agent, subject to citizen, provincial to cosmopolitan. Education involves the idea of a pre-established potential in every one of us that needs to be fulfilled and maximized, and roles into which each one of us is to grow even when such roles are about challenging particular roles and situations (Popkewitz, 2008). To Bamisaiye (2009) the education process is man-

oriented and since man himself is dynamic in nature, his education should be equally dynamic. An educated person, irrespective of tribe, sex, place and status, must be able to develop the three main domains of life: cognitive, psychomotor and affective.

Philosophy of education is centered on the application of philosophical concepts to solve and clarify issues in the field of education. Reid (1981, p.45) defines philosophy of education as the application of philosophical instruments, philosophical methods to questions of education, as well as the relation to education of the relevant results of philosophical thinking. Therefore, any philosophy of education that attempts the task of interpreting the signs of time and sets a future course must utilize as many of the resources of knowledge and art as possible. Suffice to say that philosophy of education is an intellectual activity and must be pursued for its own intrinsic intellectual interest and not because one is thinking always of the reform of education.

Onigbinde (2000, p.3) proposed two theses in understanding the nature of philosophy of education and of its relation to other areas of knowledge, especially to educational disciplines. He asserts that:

> *Philosophy of education is a branch of social ethics directed to the establishment, preservation and direction of the educational society, whether at the level of the nation, the state, the system, the school, or the classroom. Philosophy of education also applies a combination of more general moral knowledge and such particular disciplines as educational psychology, and leads to conclusions which in turn serve as principles for the arts of teaching and administration in the sense that it sets up general directives at which the teacher and the administrator should aim (Onigbinde, 2000, p.3).*

In a similar vein, Ogungbemi (2007, p.3) submits that philosophy of education can be defined as the application of philosophical instruments and philosophical methods to questions of education, as well as the relation to education of the relevant results of philosophical thinking.

Pragmatism as a traditional school of philosophy is expressed in the American slang, "if it aint broke, don't fix it" the saying would seem to reflect the essence of pragmatism as a philosophy which is primarily concerned with the workability of an arrangement or situation. The word 'pragmatism' was carried by Charles Sanders Pierce (1839-1914), who used it to describe his philosophy. It is derived from a Greek root 'pragma' which means "work". While the idea of practicability which it conveys goes as far back as the day of Heraclitos and the sophists in classical Greece, it is generally considered to have been given meaning and impetus by the American experience of the frontier era.

To the pragmatists, ethical ideals are acceptable as long as they continue to work. Foremost in the minds of pragmatists is the notion that ideas have practical consequences, that is, an idea cannot be devoid of some effect on an existing situation. Much of what we know today as pragmatism was developed by John Dewey. In fact, Dewey best represents the philosophy of pragmatism applied to education. Three alternative names which are often used to describe the pragmatic philosophy of John Dewey are Instrumentalism, Empiricism and Experimentalism (Omatseye, 2004, p.141).

Epistemology is the centre of the philosophy of pragmatism. At the heart of their theory of knowledge is the belief that knowledge is nothing but human experience processed and refined. To the pragmatist, because man lives and interacts with other living and non-living things in his surroundings, he inevitably acquires some experience as a result of that interaction. He acquires this experience as he tries to master and solve the problems that the environment raises for him in process of living which means knowledge is a product of interaction of a living organism with its environment. Sometimes, too, man also suffers whatever new consequences that may arise from his own action on the environment. As Dewey puts it, when we experience something we act upon it, we do something with it; and then we suffer or undergo the consequences. We do same thing to the thing and the thing does something to us in return (Onigbinde, 2000, p.46).

Since knowledge comes through the processing of experience by intelligence using the problem-solving method, the aim of education is therefore the development of the learner's ability to deal with future problems, that is, the development of his intelligence to solve problems. Thus, education is the process of developing the habit of problem-solving, and there is no limit to the development of this ability. In summary, the pragmatist agrees that the more varied and the more complex the problems that he solves, the greater the growth of intelligence.

Democracy emanated from Greece in the 5th B.C. The Greek gave us the word but did not provide us with a model. The assumptions and practices of the Greeks were very

different from those of modern democrats. The Greeks had little or no idea of the right of the individual, an idea that is tied up with the modern concept of democracy. The ancient Greeks practice granted the right of political participation to only a small minority of the adult inhabitants of the city. The concept of Greek democracy was poorly regarded by all the Greek philosophers and historians whose writings have survived, including Plato, Aristotle and Thucydides. They depicted it as government by the ignorant or government by the poor. It was subsequently held in general disrepute for over two thousand years. Up till then democracy had been portrayed by Marxists everywhere as a kind of sham, devised by the ruling class in capitalist societies to give the workers the illusion that they could improve their position substantially without a revolution if they exerted pressure through the electoral system.

Birch (1986, p.23) refers to democracy as the rule of the people. Ancient Greek democracy referred to a socio-political system where all the male adult members of the society reached decisions concerning the various aspects of the people's lives. Democracy is the politics in which the politically active members of the citizenry decide, by various means, what principles should govern society (Akinpelu, 2005, p.24). Thus, it embraces the mechanisms, the process and the institutions, through which individuals and groups express their interest, exert their rights and carry out their obligations.

Philosophers are not generally concerned with details of democracy as in problems and criticisms but focus on the central, crucial, or essential features of democracy.

Philosophers are also concerned with comparing democracy to other political systems, to see how, in general, a democratic system would determine and achieve the proper goals of a human community. This comparison is needful to understand the intricacies of electoral democracies whose governments repress civil liberties and otherwise breach the principles of a free society (Stepan & Robertson, 2003, p.30). For example, Nigeria can be regarded as one of such countries with semi-democracy where election is not devoid of irregularities and where the society is not free (Baradat 1988, p.43). Nigeria's democratic experience has been more of ruse than a reality. The question has always been: "Is it that the democratic system is faulty, or that the people involved are incapable?" Put in proverbial form, "Can we say that the problem is that the razor is blunt, or that the barber lacks the necessary skills?" The issue then is how to sharpen it if it is blunt, and on the other hand, how to empower the barber with necessary skills if those are lacking.

Several other terms that are often used to describe democracy are: liberal democracy, representative democracy, parliamentary democracy, participatory democracy, deliberative democracy, direct democracy and cosmopolitan democracy. These concepts have frequently been complicated by researchers over the precise model of democracy that can describe an ideal democratic society. There are many models of democracy such as representative democracy, procedural democracy, liberal democracy, substantive democracy, participation, freedom and equality, which Jega (1981) explains have been experimented with in the world. Amaele (2004), justifying the use of representative democracy in Nigeria because of the present-day population,

writes that it made of various multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic groups. This necessitates upholding the basic principles of democracy through representation. Babarinde (1997) concurred that democracy is about representation and participation, but with the objective of equitable distribution of resources, fair play and justice, the institutionalization of the rule of law and the national revenue and effective mobilization and utilization of societal resources. It is also about accountability. That is why in this conception, popular empowerment is central to the issue of participation, involving not just casting votes in the choice of representatives and leaders but also making inputs to the critical decisions which affect their daily life and survival.

Handelman (2005, p.24) offers an even higher standard for democracy that he calls substantive democracy. True substantive democracy requires that citizens have equal access to public schooling and health care regardless of their social class or ethnicity. This concept negates the procedural democracy that is being practiced in countries such as India, Brazil, Nigeria, etc which tolerates gross economic inequalities, ethnic prejudices, or other major social injustices. The position of the critic is justifiable because procedural democracy alone does not guarantee a just society; it is merely a step in the right direction and a more important step than they acknowledge. Governments in substantive democracies are accountable to the people; they are less vulnerable to revolution and other forms of civil unrest. Democracy has taken a number of forms, both in theory and practice. The following kinds are not exclusive of one another: many specify details of aspects that are independent of one another and can co-exist in a single system. The list is not exhaustive. However, philosophers of

education are not generally concerned with details of democracy as in problems and criticisms but focus on the central, crucial, or essential features of democracy of which education is an essential (Cohen, 1995).

In the dialogue, Plato identified five forms of government as follows: oligarchy, aristocracy, monarchy, tyranny and democracy. He defined oligarchy as a government by the minority of the society, a minority that is not necessarily distinguished by aristocratic title or privilege. Aristocracy, according to Plato, is a government by a few who rule for the interest of all. Nwankwo (1990, p.38) writes that aristocracy is a form of government that is opposite of oligarchy which is named after Aristotle the founder. Plato explained monarchical form of government as a system that is ruled by a king or queen. He referred to as a tyranny system of government where one person rules for his own benefit or selfish interest. Aristotle also stresses that it is a bad form of government and opposite of monarchy where one person rules in the interest of all.

Plato referred to democracy as a system which gives periodic opportunities for the masses to choose their leaders. It is a form of government in which the will of the majority of the qualified citizens prevails. He asserted that democracy, whether rigidly observing the law or not and whether the multitude rule over the men of property with their consent or against their consent, is always in the ordinary language the best form of government. Cahn (2009, p.380), in support of Plato's position, believes that democracy is the best form of government because of its democratic features that are based on equality and individual freedom.

Democratic education is essentially concerned with equipping people to make real choices about fundamental aspects of their lives and happens *within* and *for* democracy. It is a process where teachers and students work collaboratively to reconstruct curriculum to include everyone. In at least one conception, democratic education teaches students to participate in consciously reproducing their society and conscious social reproduction. This role necessitates democratic education happening in a variety of settings and being taught by a variety of people, including parents, teachers, public officials, and ordinary citizens. Democratic education begins not only with children who are to be taught but also with citizens who are to be their teachers. Another definition is noted for its controversy because it views democratic education as "an education that democratizes learning itself" (Page, 2003, p.67).

There is a variety of components involved in democratic education. Polito (2005) identifies those elements as being a problem-solving curriculum, inclusivity and rights, equal participation in decision-making and equal encouragement for success. The Institute for Democratic Education identifies the principles of democratic education as the interaction between democratic philosophy and education, pluralistic education, school administration by means of democratic procedures, education based on respect for human rights, dialogic evaluation, dialogic relationships and critical social thinking. The strongest political rationale for democratic education is that it teaches the virtues of democratic deliberation for the sake of future citizenship. This type of education is often alluded to in the deliberative democracy literature as fulfilling the necessary and

fundamental social and institutional changes necessary to develop a democracy that involves intensive participation in group decision making, negotiation, and social life of consequence (Palmer, Bresler, Cooper, 2007, p.177).

Portis (2009) and Laver (2009, p.95) argue that the fact that a group of individuals- students and teacher- must live, learn, and work together in the same space requires a system of governance. This system, as it is the case in most countries and communities respect principles of human equality, freedom, and the pursuit of happiness is a form of direct democracy. It is in line with this discourse that Aristotle contends that values, social justice, and democracy included, must be learned through experience. He asserts: *"For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them."* They adduce that for this purpose schools must be institutions in which all persons possess, at the point of entry and from the moment they enter, all the individual rights adults have in the country and encourage ethical behavior and personal responsibility. In order to achieve these goals schools must allow students the three great freedoms- freedom of choice, freedom of action and freedom to bear the results of action that constitute personal responsibility.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODS OF PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH

The field of educational research has developed through the contributions of philosophy. This discipline called philosophy has influenced the pursuit of knowledge in educational research in terms of theorization as well as method adopted in the pursuit of knowledge. It is based on this premise that philosophical studies in education aim at assessment of the status of knowledge through analysis of meaning and relationships of different concepts and exposition of underlying assumptions and a fruitful synthesis of ideas from different fields concerning educational theories and practices.

In other words, philosophy is first and foremost, the act of doing philosophy. In the words of Griffiths (2009), philosophy is different from many other Arts subjects in that to study it you need to do it. He asserts:

> *To be an art historian, you needn't paint; to study poetry, you needn't be a poet; you can study music without playing an instrument. Yet to study philosophy you have to engage in philosophical argument (reason or evidence leading to a conclusion). This is not that you have to operate at the level of the great thinkers of the past; but when you study philosophy, you will be doing the same sort of thing as them.*

Smeyers and DePaepe (2003) stressed that philosophy's goal is nothing less than a systematic and analytical worldview in that other fields study particular kinds of things. Philosophy asks how it all fits together. They argue for example that:

> *if you want to learn about bodies, take a course in physics or biology. If you want to learn about minds, take a course in psychology. But if you want to learn about how minds are related to bodies, or how physics is related to psychology, then philosophy (of mind) is for you.*

Simply put, educational philosophical research aims at analyses of meaning nature of different educational concepts and the relevance of different kinds of educational practice. This is just as Helshe (2003) identifies appropriate norms and standards for educational practices through cross-examination of ideas reflected by different thinkers in the field of education. This chapter is to contribute to the understanding that indeed there are methods of doing philosophical research in education.

3.1 Methods of Philosophical Research in Education

The triumphs of science in the modern world have been so overwhelming that our entire consciousness is controlled and dominated by it. Everywhere around it is the

language of science that is heard. This is so for a simple reason: scientific research has been profoundly influenced by the need for discoveries for breaking new grounds in knowledge. For example, the use of atomic power in recent times has been in a real sense the culmination of long years of research and development. A great dimension to this research has been the development of space exploration, which has given a new horizon to man's environment and while still in its infancy it has provided insight into the future course of man's accomplishments. Hence, every other activity not patterned along these tenets of sciences is seen as hollow and without purpose. This is the travail of philosophical research in a world once controlled by imagination and speculative wonder. Nevertheless, a reversal of this position is imminent as philosophical research labours for its freedom from the scientific model.

When the systematic pursuit of knowledge began in what was then known as philosophy there were no distinct disciplines as we have them today. Enoh (2009) argues that all forms of knowledge at that time were subsumed under the umbrella of philosophy. The other forms of knowledge became separated from philosophy only because of their limited concerns and the different methods they developed along the way to pursue such concerns. As it is true of all separations, the initial phases are usually characterized by close affinity.

Since the pre-Socratic dispensation philosophy has been essentially characterized by the use of speculative and normative precision or flavour of the respective disciplines. At that period philosophy earned the title "queen of science" or "mother of all disciplines". As things are at the moment the other disciplines no longer see

themselves as descendants of philosophy to which they should remain indebted. They have long proclaimed their independence and are asserting very forcefully their non-allegiance to philosophy. The productive combination of the speculative and scientific methods has not only been rejected by the new comers; they look at the philosophical method with extreme disdain. More importantly, because of their numerical advantage, the philosophic method and its adherents have become increasingly inferior and timid. It is, however, the that philosophy is so inescapably inclusive, there is little that cannot be uncovered under the eagle eye of the philosopher. Although some doubt and even deny that philosophy has a method, the fact that we are able to speak of it acknowledges its existence in some form. This therefore prompted Akinpelu (2005, p.118) to ask, Is there a philosophical research method in education? If there is, is it only one or many? Or finally that if there is, what exactly is it?

Babarinde (2006, p.41) attests to this argument, insisting that this problem of finding a distinct method of inquiry in that sense has made natural science to cast aspersions on philosophy. Isichei (1998) gives recognition to the philosophical research when he and other contemporary philosophers assert that there is indeed a philosophical research method. He opines:

> *…the application of philosophical research methods to education is, therefore, not to hold forth a panacea for the practical difficulties attending the schooling of the young. Rather philosophical research methods aim explicitly at improving the understanding of education through clarification of conceptual apparatus, assumptions and judgments…*

Enoh (2009) agrees with the position that there is a philosophical research method. To him, philosophy is distinguished by its critical, speculative, prescriptive, analytical, logical and dialectical nature which taken together guides all philosophical writing. He asserts:

> *to know a philosophical writing in other words the six-test of philosophical writing/research are: (i) Is it critical? (2) Is it analytical? (3) Is it logical? (4) Does it adequately integrate all the facts, opinions or issues? (5) Does it speculate and prescribe or move beyond the given by making a projection? (6) Is it dialectical?*

Taken together, the six-way test is a clear indication that indeed there is a philosophical research method. It is within the purview of this study that the chapter examines the notion of philosophical research methods with the context of what is philosophical method itself respecting the practicing of philosophy. It is in line with this that the issue of distinction between philosophical research and scientific research is raised. The three (3) most commonly used philosophical research methods (speculative, prescriptive and analytical) are also discussed extensively in this study.

Philosophers offer various definitions for method. Philosophers offer various definitions for method. Collingwood (1952), views it as an activity of the mind in contrast with scientific method as observation of facts. Reichling (1996, p.117), relying on the *Greek methodos,* views it as pursuit of a path in which one is concerned with both the quest itself and the manner in which the journey is undertaken. Kant describes method as procedure in accordance with principles. Whitehead considers method a way of dealing with data, data in the broad sense to include anything that we can think of or speak

about. Abraham Schwadron, following Robert Petzold, holds that research method is a creative activity requiring intelligent examination of significant issues.

There seems to be little agreement in the literature regarding what constitutes philosophical method. Some writers disdain method and believe that philosophical research methodology is not subject to articulation. Others suggest that while it may be articulated, doing so is of no appreciable consequence; others appear to rebuff the notion without complete rejection. Jorgensen (1922) for example, prefers to describe various "symptoms" that allow one to recognize when philosophy is being done. Langer (1995, p.653) writes that philosophy has an ultimate aim but does not dictate technique. Cady (1967) emphasizes the importance of argumentation and identifies philosophical research method as one of rationally constructed arguments that move from clearly defined premises to logically defensible conclusions. Swanwick (1988, p.4) points out that establishing a conceptual framework through the use of analysis and synthesis does not suggest a methodology specific to a certain type of research but is central to all research and constitutes a criterion of merit for good research. Such a variety of definitions regarding method suggests that no one simple answer is possible. Nevertheless, this does not discharge philosophy of education researchers from the task of grappling with the problem especially in understanding the dichotomy between research in educational philosophy and science.

What is it that distinguishes philosophical research in education from a research in science or in mathematics education? Some of the assumptions underlying scientific method that seem incompatible with philosophy are the pursuit of a clear and secure

field where the absence of randomness and chance are valued. Scientific method mechanizes effort, prescribing hypotheses, prediction, formulation, observation, and results. It seeks the concrete, definable, delimited, and testable, to the extent that for Dewey the perfecting of method is the thing of supreme value. Practical results follow without need of a clearly articulated theory. Replication of studies is common where the same methods are applied to the same things in an attempt to achieve the same results. Scientific method sanctions objectivity, authority, linearity, and the readily quantifiable. It prides itself on being value-neutral; facts are accepted over feelings, emotional expressions, and personal attitudes.

Doing philosophy, on the contrary, means embracing the possible as well as the actual, the messy, cluttered, confused, and untidy as opposed to the neatness of the sciences, and concern for what ought to be as well as what is. Randomness and chance lead to discovery and to development of new bodies of ideas. Descriptions and definitions need not be complete or even adequate to be correct. Philosophy brings nearly everything within its purview, especially questions of value and beauty. It favour abstraction and conception over concreteness and the readily observable and replicable. Even subjectivity may be valued as well as an examination of alternatives and presentation of choices.

Philosophy is not expected to furnish "irrefutable proofs" but rather to provide concepts that lead to further insights and discoveries. Philosophical method itself constitutes a limitation in that a philosophical study cannot provide empirical testing or micro-level, ex post facto analysis. Neither is a philosophical study evaluated

necessarily or primarily on pragmatic considerations. Rather, criteria on which it is adjudicated include consistency, coherence and correspondence. It is apparent that many assumptions essential to the scientific research paradigm contradict and therefore necessarily eliminate qualities that philosophy prizes most. Whitehead (1933) warned against the "entrenched orthodoxy of scientific method which he held to be comparable to the dogmatism of religion in an earlier age. He viewed any method as having three stages: the honeymoon period, the time of enrichment and entrenchment, and the stage of mere thought less repetition in speaking of scientific method. Bacon (1922) stated that method suffers significantly from the virtue of stability and poses the greatest danger when it reaches the peak of its worth.

It is because the scientific method has so dominated research in education that we have accepted many of its assumptions without sufficient criticism as we forge a research model for philosophy. Attempts to articulate philosophical methodology following the scientific model are fraught with peril. We need a more expansive view of method emancipated from the notions of method currently held. In a nutshell, any philosophical writing is a study in method. In fact, method may exist in no concrete formulation. Bamisaiye (2006, p.29) reiterates the same position that a research in philosophy of education aims at clarifying problems or resolving issues in education, bearing in mind our educational needs as a society. Problems of human existence, problems of knowledge or lack of it, and general problems of social life are examined along the patterns of philosophical inquiry. This reveals that research in philosophy of

education delves into issues, concepts and problems aimed at resolving these issues, problems and concepts through education.

The point is that philosophy indeed has methods. Coleridge (1995, p.653) submits that methods evolve out of the idea. What is told, the content or substance, may be shown in different ways, the form or method used. On the other hand, what philosophers tell may differ even though some show in similar ways. One philosopher's method may employ a strict schematic device such as that of Thomas Aquinas. Another may follow no scheme but relies on paradox and reflections on personal life and feelings, such as Kierkegaard and Nietzsche's. Yet another, Plato, uses dialectic as a conversational question and answer method among dramatic characters and also uses analogy and allegory. Hegel's is another form of dialectic which proceeds through a resolution of contradiction by p resenting thesis, antithesis, and then synthesis. Friedrich Schiller offers dualities or opposing concepts from which a third or synthetic concept emerges. Benedictus Spinoza exemplifies a highly personal style. Some philosophers develop a technical vocabulary, such as Kant, Spinoza, and Husserl; others do not.

Method in respect of philosophy is not something apart from the substance of philosophy itself, an entity that one is able to have at hand ready to apply and use as needed. It is through study and careful reflection o n the works of a particular philosopher that one comes to learn the methods such a philosopher employs. Content determines method and method emerges from it. Therefore, it serves no useful purpose to dichotomize content and method. Method is comparable in a sense to form in that it is the intelligible structure something has when fully developed.

Consequently, the writing of philosophy is not a simple process for which a clear-cut method can be articulated. As researches in philosophy of education address many issues, problems and concepts related to education, such researches use the analytic, prescriptive and speculative methods, sometimes with the analytic mode being the dominant one, but usually side by side with the speculative and prescriptive.

3.1.1 Speculative Research Method

Given the array of facts from science, history and other disciplines, philosophy tries to get an overview of the whole field of knowledge. Some call this function of philosophy synthetic rather than speculative. Speculative philosophy tries to sketch a map of the universe and man's place in it. For instance, Hume while agreeing with Berkeley, that there is nothing in nature that lies beyond the reach of our senses, concluded that our understanding is very limited and that skepticism is the only reasonable attitude towards attainment of knowledge. Thus, where experience fails to afford the necessary data about the ultimate nature of reality, philosophers fill in the gaps with speculation.

Metaphysical speculation about man provided the impetus for the scientific psychology of man. For instance, Leibniz's metaphysical speculation leads him to the discovery of binary arithmetic and the infinitesimal calculus. Kant's doctrines of space and time provoked Frege's logicist programme and inspired Brower's institutionistic mathematics. Plato and Hegel both described the ideal or rational state. The 4^{th} century neo-platonic academics indeed largely owned and administered Athens, thus

realizing Plato's conception of the philosopher-king. Hegel's speculations on the relationship between master and servant in the phenomenology of spirit inspired Marx's notion of class struggle. Philosophical speculations about aims and how the aims should be realized helped to give focus and direction for education. To Bagudo (1996, p.78), the speculative method of inquiry is adopted in the philosophy of education where the issues, problems and concepts in focus are metaphysical in nature. Problems and issues which cannot logically be examined by appeal to sense experience are subjected to speculation.

3.1.2 Prescriptive Research Method

In performing its normative function, educational philosophy may draw on other areas of the culture just as it does in fulfilling its speculative function. Researchers in ethics and education usually prescribe an educational process or action intervention strategy to solve pertinent educational problems. In sharp contrast between science and philosophy, it can be seen that by limiting its varieties, science is able to win wide and almost universal support for its conclusions. By refusing to limit variables, especially normative ones, philosophy has become almost notorious for its disagreement. If philosophy of education speculates on matters of metaphysical nature, and it resorts to prescription on issues of ethics, what does philosophical analysis do in education research? How will conceptual analysis be used in this work and why?

3.1.3 Analytic Method

Educational philosophy subjects the terms and propositions underlying education thought and practice to rigorous scrutiny as to the form in which they are stated. Firstly, philosophical analysis examines the logical premises on which educational conclusions rest. Secondly, it closely examines the language used to be sure that its meaning is clear and unambiguous. Thirdly, analytical method takes a penetrating look at the kind of evidence which will be acceptable for confirming or refuting statements about education, that is, critical examination of assumptions (Max, 1966). Hence, in using philosophical analysis as the major tool or method in this study, the researcher is not unaware of the disdain with which the method is held in certain philosophical circles, especially among those who belong to the prescriptive school. According to Nash (1966, p.3), some of these philosophers condemn this form of philosophizing as a "timid, petty, hairsplitting, fruitless intellectual game". Wile (1963, p.3) for example has criticized the method as a "detachment from the actual concerns of everyday life in which many analysts seem to take great pride". Thus, according to him, "they are not so much concerned with ethics, the making of value judgements, as with metaphysics, and the objective analysis (in itself neutral) of the meaning of such judgements.

The researcher does not share this condemnation of the analytic philosopher on the grounds of its moral neutrality; rather such condemnation it is argued confuses the role of the analytic philosopher as a philosopher with that of his role as a member of the society. Although a philosophical analyst may analyze value, claim and logically evaluate moral arguments, he does not try as a philosopher to persuade others to

accept a particular moral position or commitment. He prefers to retain at least explicitly a morally neutral position in philosophy. The researcher believes that in his professional task of philosophizing, a philosopher has the right to narrow or extend his range within reason in any way that seems to him fruitful. To confirm oneself as a philosopher to the logical analysis of concepts and arguments is a perfectly defensible procedure. What would be indefensible of course would be for the analytic philosopher to claim that all philosophers must adopt this mode of restriction on their philosophical endeavours. The researcher finds it most productive to adopt the analytic philosopher's goal of clarity but to add to it the further goal of commitment. This is because the investigator prefers such an inclusive, rather than exclusive, approach to the study of educational problems; he therefore finds the analytic method invaluable but inadequate. This position is reinforced by Nigeria's peculiar situation as a developing nation whose many problems, particularly educational ones, can hardly wait for solutions. As Akinpelu (1981) puts it, "While the method of analysis has a way of clarifying issues and dissolving pseudo-problems, the issues in education can hardly wait for arguments to be secured on the concepts and terminologies…" It has been the researcher's disposition to go into analysis for this study and where it is appropriate to venture into prescription thereby committing himself to a moral position. The researcher believes like Scheffler (1958, p.6) that:

> *the assignment of value-determination to the philosopher on one hand absurdly exaggerates his moral wisdom and good judgement, whereas on the other it underestimates the contribution he can make by his professional striving for generality and system, clarity and logical vigour.*

In making value judgements and giving prescriptions where necessary in this work, the researcher does not intend to make converts but to stimulate others to sharpen their own minds and justify their own commitments by criticizing and evaluating his. Now having surveyed in brief the roles of speculative, prescriptive and analytic research methods in the philosophy of education, the question then is: What is the acceptable method of doing research in the philosophy of education? Bagudo (1996, p.70) posits that all the modes of doing philosophy, i.e. speculative, prescriptive and analytic, are acceptable methods of doing research in philosophy of education depending on the problem and issue under investigation. It is in this light that an attempt will be made in this chapter to answer the 'how and why' of the use of philosophical analysis as a method of inquiry in this study. It is however important to stress that what appears to be plausible on the whole is that a combination of speculative, prescriptive and analytic modes of philosophy of education has the prospects of restoring the nature of philosophy as an attempt to establish coherence throughout the whole realm of experience, especially in the realm of thought.

Philosophy of education otherwise referred to as philosophical analysis sprang up from the mid 20th century. It was spearheaded by R.S. Peters, P.H. Hirst, J.F. Soltis and I. Scheffler. According to Peters (1966, p.30), the distinctive character of philosophy is that it is a second-order pursuit and this accounts for the role of the philosopher as a spectator. Within this framework, the role of the philosopher is to map the logical geography of concepts like instruction, teaching, and education and so on, and to expose conceptual confusions in the work of psychologists and others on learning,

motivation and other concepts. For instance, the concept of learning is as important to the psychologists of education as it is to the philosophers of education.

Psychology of education is an important and rapidly developing science with rewarding applications in many different fields. In so far as psychology merely confirms common human opinion on man's nature, it serves three important scientific ends. In the first place, it makes this common knowledge precise. Secondly, it gives us an orderly account of the evidence for it. Thirdly, the experimental psychologists can often show how the different ways in which we behave can be related together. Thus psychology introduces into our everyday knowledge of human nature, the characteristically scientific note of precision, evidence and system and justifies its claim to be the science of experience and behaviour.

Based on this scientific study of human nature, psychologists put forward learning theories to guide our understanding of how man learns. A typical example of such learning theories was the one put forward by Jean Piaget in which he identified and categorized cognitive developmental stages in children as sensor motor, pre-operational, concrete operational and formal operational stages. Similarly, Akinpelu (1981, p.185) observes that learning in education is a major concern of psychologists who even have a special branch known as psychology of learning. Hence, learning is especially a psychological term. However, he observes that psychology deals with only certain aspects of learning; it deals with what factors do influence learning, how each individual actually learns, and how we measure learning. All these areas psychologists have investigated empirically using experiments especially with animals such as dogs

or rats and they have arrived at some tentative findings which they then transfer to the education of man, although not always with happy consequences.

It may be wondered then, the researcher observes, where philosophy comes in if the psychologists have so monopolized the field. The questions which the philosophers deal with are typical: they ask for the meaning of the concept of learning, that is, What is it to learn? What criteria do we use to recognize an activity as learning? Or what is implied when someone is said to have learned something? The second task of philosophy is to examine critically some of the findings of the psychologists and try to define the limits of and appropriateness of the application of such findings. A close examination of the psychologists' work in human learning reveals some conceptual confusion. For instance, Akinpelu (1981, p.187) observes that behaviourist psychologists agreed that learning is a change or modification in the behaviour of an organism as a result of experience or as a reaction to stimulation in the environment. However, when we look more critically at human learning, we find that learning may take different forms and some of these may not even involve changing one's behaviour.

Our first point is that if learning is relatively permanent change in behaviour, it means that it is a product of learning or evidence that learning has taken place; but we shall still not be told simply what its result is. The definition only makes use of the achievement sense of the concept in which 'what I learn means I have acquired knowledge or skill' but what of the task sense of learning in which learning means that the process of acquiring knowledge is taking place but has not yet been completed?

Learning has both task and achievement connotations. Thus, I may have information that the Nigerian National Volleyball Team qualified for the final of the 28th All African National Tournament on 4th January 2008.

This is just a piece of information/knowledge that I can retrieve from my memory but without noticing any change of behaviour in me. So learning may take place without necessarily involving a change in behaviour in the learner. A philosophical analysis of concepts like these exposes some conceptual confusion in the works of psychologists, and indeed other disciplines of knowledge. This implies that the first task of philosophical analysis in education is the analysis of concepts which appears in everyday discourse in education.

DEWEY'S PHILOSOPHY OF DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION

4.1 Dewey's Concept of Democracy

Various theorists and philosophers have shared different views on the concept of democracy, some of whom are Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Calhoun and Dewey.

However, none of their contributions is completely perfect or incorrect about democracy. Democracy has no unique definition; it has also been defined by many schools of thought.

Like Plato, Aristotle had a pessimistic view of democracy. In ancient Greece, there were very few good people and since democracy allows the many to rule, the uneducated and the poor, it resulted in the tyranny of the majority. In other words, the Aristotelian concept of democracy means *ochlocracy* – meaning the 'mob rule'. The strength of Aristotle's position was that he recognized democracy as a good form of government only if the many rule for the good of all. However, he prefers oligarchy as the best possible form of government. Aristotle refers to oligarchy as similar to representative democracy because a number of elitist representatives can represent the needs and wills of the people in the whole society.

Hobbes's view on democracy was that the government is derived from the people, which is one of the most important characteristics of today's democracy. Hobbes propounded this theory that government is an artificial creative brought about by the voluntary association of the governed (Shann, 1998, p.35). When questioned who should be the ruler, Hobbes proposed the creation of a sovereign authority power that would exercise unquestioned authority. This point strongly showed the weakness of Hobbes in the sense that he places much trust on absolute monarchy, which easily leads to dictatorship due to lack of separation of powers. Though he was pessimistic about the state of nature, he realized that people are smart enough to give up their

rights and powers to the absolute monarch to govern, and to provide peace and security among the people within the society.

Locke could be described as the most influential philosopher/ theorist on democracy. Like Hobbes, he believes that the government is established by the people. While Hobbes wanted absolute power, for the ruler, Locke preferred limited powers for the ruler. The specific functions of the government according to Locke are to provide external security, international tranquility and the protection of the social contract. He defined his idea of democracy as representative democracy. Calhoun sees democracy as a way of limiting the government power. The instrument of government's limitation is what Calhoun referred to as a constitution (Baradat, 1988, p.24). He also posits that another way of limiting the power of the government is by voting. The vote is necessary, he says, because it gives the people control over the length of time the ruler could rule. Thus, by exercising the voting power of the people, they can get the oppressive ruler out of power. Perhaps the most important theory of Calhoun is the concurrent majority. Calhoun's doctrine of democracy is a system of pluralism democracy which allows many interest groups to fulfill the needs of their group members. The idea of concurrent majority with different majority interest groups portend negative impact, in that it may therefore create many political cultures divided in terms of ideologies, which may cause the whole society to be unstable. Nevertheless, two most well known schools of thought are discussed below, namely the process democrats and the principle democratic.

The first school simply defines democracy as a way of making decisions. It believes that democracy is nothing more than an agreement among citizens that the majority vote will carry the issue or that a branch of government will not reach too far into the functions of another branch (Baradat, 1988, p.48; Ranciere, 2004, 297). And the second school of thought defines it as a system in which every individual is basically equal to all other individuals, and that each has certain inalienable rights (Baradat, 1988, p.48b). Such inalienable rights, for example, are stated in the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America (USA). Among these rights are the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The center of this discourse is on the view of Dewey's an American theorist of social democracy. Unlike the conservatives who believed in the status quo, he advocated political institution change for the good of the society. Dewey (1922) asserted that people should study the society and not hesitate to make institutional changes that would improve their lives. Put in different words, if there is anything that people are dissatisfied with in the existing system change should be made to increase the happiness of the society but not fundamental and extreme change like the radical and the reactionary.

Dewey proposed change, but he did not want extreme change which could lead to the disruption and destruction of the whole society. He was optimistic about people's ability to solve their problems. However, people find it hard to realize that something is incorrect in the status quo and seek for change. To him philosophy remains a tool

to provide a template or yardstick by which to gauge, whether as individuals or collectively, we are progressing or regressing. According to Dewey:

> *There are plenty of negative elements, due to conflict, entanglement and obscurity, in most of the situations of life, and we do not require a revelation of some supreme perfection to inform us whether or not we are making headway in present rectification…progress is a present reconstructing (Dewey, 1922, p.187).*

On a conventional definition of democracy, he opines that it is a system of government that honours equity and freedom. In a democracy we are taught that every adult has one vote, and all may speak freely. For Dewey, however, such rules were merely tools that happened to be in current use. No institution (including free elections and civil rights) could claim "inherent sanctity". There were no general principles, no antecedent universal propositions that distinguished just institutions from unjust ones. The nature of the good society was "something to be critically and experimentally determined" (Dewey, 1927, p.74). Dewey's approach to democracy is much more profound, more complex, more demanding and more rewarding. Dewey's notion of democracy is based on a philosophical-anthropological outlook on man and his approach to democracy addresses virtually all kinds of relations between human beings in society (Wegmarshans, 2008, p.2).

Dewey's ideas of democracy present a stark contrast to today's research mainstream in political science. The understanding of democracy in political science, at least in the tradition of realistic political theory, is predominantly focused on government process, parliamentary representation, and party systems, on voting behaviour and public

opinion. This notion of democracy is oriented on the execution of state power and this understanding of democracy addresses procedures of political decision-making, serving as the basis for analyzing structures and functions of political bodies (Amaele, 2005, p.64).

Dewey's approach does not reduce democracy to forms of government. He does not regard democracy merely as a convenient instrument of choosing and electing the ruling political and administrative elites in a given society. On the contrary, Dewey, according to and consistent with his philosophical pragmatism, insists on a notion of democracy that reaches far beyond the political rules regulating the activities of state authorities and public administration.

Dewey sees democracy as a form of life, as a form of associational behaviour of men and women. Hence democracy – as an approach, understood as a certain spirit, as an array of methods and procedures- may be found in each sphere of organized social life; moreover, democracy and its method of organizing social behaviour may be applied to every structure of society. Dewey is very clear on this point:

> *…Democracy is much broader than a special political form, a method of conducting government, of making laws and carrying on governmental administration by means of popular suffrage and elected officers…the political and governmental phase of democracy is a means, the best means so far found, for realizing ends that lie in the wide domain of human relationships and the development of human personality. The keynote of democracy as a way of life may be expressed it seems to me, as the necessity for the participation of every mature human being in formation of the values that regulate the living of men together: which is necessary for the standpoint of both the general*

> *social life/welfare and the full development of human beings as individuals (Dewey, 1946, p.57).*

Dewey's democratic creed rests on two assumptions: the belief in the equality of man and in capacities of human nature. To him this equality is a political one. He acknowledges the biological diversity/the genetic diversity of human beings as organic creatures living in different environments and the social differentiation of men and women including their educational, cognitive, emotional, behavioural, religious and economic backgrounds and status. He therefore argues that assuming a sheer 'mathematical' numerical equality of human beings would mean denying the richness of human variety. People are of course different by their natural talents and by their social positions. In Dewey's formulation:

> *Belief in equality is an element in the democratic credo. It is not, however, belief in equality of natural endowments. Those who proclaimed the idea of equality did not suppose they were enunciating a psychological doctrine, but a legal and political one. All individuals are entitled to equality of treatment by law and its administration. Each one is affected equally in quality if not in quantity by the institutions under which he lives and has an equal right to express his judgement, although the weight of his judgement may not be equal in amount when it enters into the pooled result to that of others. In short, each is equal as individual and entitled to equal opportunity of development of his own capacities, be they large or small in range. Moreover, each has needs of his own, as significant to him, as those of others are to them. The very fact of natural and psychological inequality is all the more reason for establishment by law of equality of opportunity, since otherwise the former becomes a means of oppression of the less gifted (Dewey, 1946, p.60).*

The second assumption is a belief in the capacities of human nature. Dewey puts trust in the ability of man to arrive at cooperative, intelligent behaviour addressing and solving common problems. Two moments are important here: one is that Dewey

starts from the assumption that man is a social being and that human beings are naturally driven to each other; they "cling" together. Dewey opposes the liberal view (or fiction) of the self-centered, self-assured, atomistic individual. The other is that Dewey is convinced that men and women, not withstanding their differing views and positions, are intellectually and morally able to come to terms with each other. This attitude of cooperativeness gives rise to societal frameworks supporting public discourse, deliberation and decision-making. Dewey argued that the foundation of democracy is faith in the capacities of human nature, faith in human intelligence and in the power of pooled and cooperative experience.

Departing from this broad, complex notion of democracy as a cooperative, skillful and intelligent way of organizing social life, Dewey comes to the conclusion that democracy is sustained both by human behaviour to be learned and by social knowledge to be required.

4.2 Dewey on Education

In a social reality of change, what must be the place and role of education? Dewey's philosophy of education is an integral part of his general social philosophy. To Dewey, education should be based upon the premise that all genuine thought grows out of real problem situations. Dewey rejects the practice of subjecting the child to a traditional learning that is centered on 3Rs- reading, writing and arithmetic. The focus of education in Dewey's philosophy should be to develop the ability of the child to invent hypotheses, think out their consequences and test them in actual practice. Hence,

emphasis is on the real problem as felt by the child not what the teacher preconceives as the gospel truth. This is the clue of Dewey's educational theories. Education is rated very high in Dewey's thought. In remoulding the society, nothing to Dewey, is more important than education. Since man is a creature of character, Dewey asserts that the conditions for developing the most useful and creative character/habits should be the primary concern of education. To him rather than wait for a revolution to alter habit, Dewey recommends a kind of education that will skillfully alter habits. Dewey believes that the primary aim of education is the cultivation of character. To him, a philosopher who takes cultivation of character seriously and thinks deeply about teaching and learning is also likely to be aware of what we might call the multivalent nature of learning. He points:

> *Perhaps the greatest of all pedagogical fallacies is the notion that a person learns only the particular thing he is studying at the time. Collateral learning in the way of formation of enduring attitudes, of likes dislikes may be and often is much more important than the spelling lesson or lesson in Geography or History that is learned. For these attitudes are fundamentally what count in the future (Dewey, 1938, p.48).*

Not only does Dewey believe that the cultivating of character is the ultimate aim of education, he also shares his strong commitment to the normative autonomy of education, that is, the thesis that education ought not to be subservient to the masters outside itself. He writes:

> *…that the educative process is its own end, and that the only sufficient preparation for later responsibilities comes by making the most of immediately present life, applies in full force to the vocational phases of education. The dominant*

> *vocation of all human beings at all times is living intellectual and moral growth…To predetermine some future occupation for which education is to be a strict preparation is to injure the possibilities of present development and thereby to reduce the adequacy of preparation for a future right employment (Dewey, 1916 p.326).*

Dewey stresses the need for a new philosophy of education in order to realize the aims of education. The new philosophy of education he says is to help give direction to practices that break with those of the traditional school. According to Dewey, it needs to give way to activities in which students become experimenters and fabricators. He asserts that the educator's challenge is to capitalize on the interests and motivations children bring to the classroom. To him, educational importance resides in both the physical environment and in what he calls the "total social set-up" (Dewey, 1938, p.45). Dewey advocates the idea of connection between the school and broader society. He believes that there should be a natural connection of everyday life of the child with the business environment and that it is the affairs of the school to clarify and liberalize this connection and bring it to consciousness. He however calls for 'a purified medium of action' i.e. urges schools to discard dead wood from the past.

4.3 Dewey's Pedagogy and Curriculum

The intent of Dewey's work on education is to explore the implications of his functional pedagogy. Dewey was convinced that many of the problems with prevailing educational practices grew out of their foundations in a faulty pedagogy. Having spent a good deal of time observing the growth of his own children, he concludes that there is no difference in the dynamics of experiences of children and adults. He however also asserted that both are active beings who learn by confronting the problematic

situation that arises in the cause of their activities. To Dewey (1956, p.30) for both children and adults thinking is an instrument for solving the problems of experience and knowledge is the accumulation of wisdom that such problem-solving generates.

A child, to Dewey, does not enter or arrive at school as blank slates upon which teachers might write the lessons of civilization. At the point of entry, he is already intensely active, and the question of education is the question of taking hold of his activities, of giving them direction (Dewey, 1956, p.25). Dewey contends that when children begin their formal education they exhibit four basic nature impulses: the impulses to communicate, to construct, to inquire and to express in finer form (Dewey, 1956, p.30). However, it is the task of the teacher to make use of this raw material by guiding their activities at school toward 'valuable results' (Maylew and Edwards, 1966, p.41).

It is this position of Dewey that places him at odds with both the proponents of a traditional 'curriculum-centered' education and the romantic reformers who advocated a 'child-centered pedagogy'. Deweyan pedagogy is centered on occupational subject-matter. He clearly refers to occupational subject- matter like all human knowledge as the products of man's efforts to solve the problems that confront him in experience. He also regarded this method as an experimental problem-solving method in which when introduced to children, makes mistakes an important part of learning. This act of providing children with 'first-hand experience', the problematic situations largely of their are the key to Dewey's pedagogy. He believed that until the emphasis changes

to the conditions which make it necessary for the child to take an active share in the personal building up of his own problems and to participate in methods of solving them (even at the expense of experimentation and error), the mind will not really be freed (Dewey, 1956 p.37). The traditionalist argues that knowledge should simply be imposed on the child in a sequence of steps determined by a logic of abstract body of truth. To Dewey:

> *when knowledge is presented in this fashion of the traditionalist, the material will be of no interest to the children. Moreover, it will not allow them to discover knowledge on their own by doing activities in which it will be necessary for them to have certain types of knowledge (Dewey, 1956, p.39).*

To Dewey, education through occupation, not for occupations, would make the child and introduce the child to processes involved in an industrial setting. Thus, the child becomes 'more industrial', 'more impregnated with science', more in touch with the world, imbibes the sense of community service, and acquires power of re-adaptation to changing condition. Education is therefore a continuous reconstruction of experience, an idea which marked off from education and as preparation for a remote future, as unfolding as external formation, and as recapitulation of the past (Dewey, 1956, p.58). Dewey however advocated a curriculum by constructing an environment in which the activities of the child would include problematic situations. In order to solve problems, children would have to call on their knowledge and skills of science, geography, history and art. In effect, it is the curriculum that should instruct the teachers that such and such are the capacities, the fulfillments, in truth, beauty and behaviour as open to the children (Dewey 1956, p.91).

The teachers are to teach in this fashion so as to direct and guide a child's development. Dewey acknowledged that such teachers have to be highly skilled professionals, thoroughly knowledgeable in the subject matter that they are teaching, trained in child psychology, and skilled in the techniques of providing the necessary stimulus so that the subject- matter would become part of a child's growing experience. That is to say the would-to-be teachers must be capable of seeing the world as both a child and adult see it. Maylew and Edwards put it simply:

> *that such individual/teachers must be able to step with the children behind the looking glass and in imaginative lesson to see all things with their eyes and limited by their experience; but in time of need, such teacher must be able to recover his/her trained vision and from the realistic point of view of an adult supply the guide posts of knowledge and the skills of method (Maylew and Edwards, 1966, p.312).*

Dewey indeed admits that most teachers do not possess the knowledge and skills necessary to teach in this fashion but he believes that they could learn to do so.

4.4 Dewey's Democratic Education

For Dewey, the relation between democracy and education is a reciprocal and mutual one. He defined democracy as a way of life in an educational principle, an educational measure and policy. This definition constitutes an insightful and original theory that remains relevant and is especially illuminating for those concerned about public deliberation and civic education. Dewey sees learning in a democratic setting as an active process of social involvement, of gaining experience, of broadening one's mind,

of developing habits and skills of cooperatively and intelligently interacting with other persons and groups. Dewey uses:

> *experience rather than the word 'knowledge'; this is because knowledge to so many people means 'information' – information is knowledge about things and there is no guarantee in any amount of 'knowledge about things'. Unlike experience the spring of intelligent action will follow from it. Knowledge about things is static. There is no guarantee in any amount of information, even if skillfully conveyed, that an intelligent attitude of mind will be formed (Dewey, 1946, p.48).*

Dewey's idea of learning in democracy, therefore, has a broad meaning, covering virtually all those activities in society that lead to intelligent and cooperative problem solving, be it in state politics, in community affairs, in workplace relations or in family life. Following this idea there is also the specific aspect of learning in the educational sector of society, i.e. first and foremost in the school system. Dewey points out that democracy and education bear profound and mutual relations, for it is not merely that democracy is itself an educational principle, but that democracy cannot endure, much less develop, without education in that narrower sense in which we ordinarly think of it- the education that is given in the family, and especially as we think of it in the school (Dewey, 1946, p.57).

Dewey held that the object and reward of learning is continued capacity for growth (Dewey, 1916 p.41). However, in order that all people may be allowed the opportunity to expand their capacities for growth they would have to live in a democratic society. Dewey believed that mass education, at least in terms of this definition of education,

can take place only in societies where there is mutuality, and where there is adequate provision for the reconstruction of social habits and institutions by means of wide stimulation arising from equitably distributed interest (ibid, p.58).

Dewey's vision of education is thus directly connected with the question of preparing people for active citizenship in a participatory democracy. In view of this, his concept of democratic education is not concerned with subordinating education to goals other than what he calls 'educative process'. Education for democracy addresses itself to the evenly distributed interests of the whole.

> *…a government resting upon popular suffrage cannot be successful unless those who elect and who obey their governors are educated. Since democratic society repudiates the principle of external authority, it must find a substitute in voluntary disposition and interest; these can be created only by education (ibid, p.59).*

In Dewey's assessment of democratic education, he says that an educated populace secures the necessary freedom upon which a democratic society is built. By his definition, a democratic society may be measured, firstly, by the extent to which the interest groups are shared by all its members, and secondly, by the extent to which groups may freely interact with each other.

In Dewey's estimation, the uneducated populace cannot, obviously, offer the challenges to thought, or the novelty which are the basis of any society's regeneration. He stresses:

> *…diversity of stimulation means, novelty, and novelty means challenge to thought. The more activity is restricted to a few definite lines as it is when there are right class lines preventing adequate interplay of experiences, the more action tends to become routine on the part of the class at a disadvantage, and capricious, aimless and explosive on the part of the class having the materially fortunate position… (ibid, p.62).*

A society which ensures and provides for the participation of all of its members equally, that is, through the preparatory processes of education may be considered to be democratic (ibid p.83). To Dewey, the kind of education that democracies offer thus gives the individual a personal interest in the societal processes which organize her/his life, as well as control over her/his own destiny. To do so, democratic societies need to equip the individual with the habits of the mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder; this, he says, is achievable through education.

The social nature of education is the focus of Dewey's philosophy. Societies renew themselves through the education of their young and education, according to Dewey, is a transformative social force. It is the act of 'fostering', nurturing, and cultivating process that is relational to the 'conditions of growth'. In this regard, Dewey's vision is closely akin to the view of Plato and Confucius. For Dewey, as with Confucius, the education of children cannot be taken simply through the transmission of beliefs, emotions, or even knowledge alone. It needs to take place, instead, through the intermediary of the environment.

Dewey defines environment as "the sum total of conditions which are concerned in the execution of the activity characteristic of a living being". The environment consists of

those conditions that promote or hinder, stimulate or inhibit the characteristic activities of a living being. In this model of the environment, Dewey emphasizes the importance of conjoint activity where individuals or groups may be involved with others in matters particular to himself/herself. He asserts:

> *…A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity. These more numerous and more varied points of contact denote a greater diversity of stimuli to which an individual has to respond; they consequently put a premium on variation in his action (ibid p.89).*

Dewey, however, emphasizes the fact that mental and emotional factors have much to do with the overtly social aspects of behaviour as cooperative actions. To him, in complex societies, special environments need to be created for the education of the young to nurture the capacities of children. He identifies three aspects of those environments that address the education of children:

> *simplification and ordering of the factors of the disposition that a particular society wishes to develop; purification and idealization of existing social custom and the creation of a wider and better balanced environment than that by which the young would be likely left to themselves, to be influenced (ibid p.90).*

An appraisal of Nigerian education in democracy is needful for this study so as to understand the position of Dewey on education and democracy.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN NIGERIAN DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION

5.1 The Philosophical Foundations of Nigerian Education

Education has been a means of transmitting culture from one generation to another. It is the process of bringing about relatively permanent change in human behaviour. As the oldest institution, it is the main instrument used by society to preserve, maintain and upgrade its social equilibrium. A society's future depends largely on the quality of its citizen's education. Isichei (1998, p.114) submits that a philosophical foundation of any educational systems hinges on some basic principles such as school, their nature and demographic distribution, the environment, the circumstances of the people and what they have been struggling to achieve, their adaptable evolutionary relevance or adequacy, their parental and social background etc. In light of the above statement, Majasan (1997, p.85) reveals that the philosophical foundation of Nigerian education is an amalgam of over five different types of education which include the entire indigenous unit within the Nigeria borders plus the British, the American, the Western and the Arabic.

In a nutshell, education as a process is an essential need for all beings and is everywhere influenced by the philosophical, social, economic, political and religious tendencies of time and space. For instance, the ancient world-the Spartan and the Athenian formulated their different philosophical ideologies for bringing up their young ones. Therefore, historically, societies, whether simple or complex, have their distinct

systems of education considered adequate for the survival of the groups or for the provision of what each group may understand or tag to be the good life. In this chapter, the researcher presents a critical appraisal of education in Nigeria within the context of democracy and education.

5.1.1 Western/ Formal Education

The formal education in Nigeria is traceable to the efforts of the European Missionaries around 1842. Education at this time was regarded as fundamental important to the spread of Christianity. Thus, the education introduced at this early stage was interwoven with Christian Evangelism. The Missionaries established and ran the early schools in Nigeria. They also designed the curriculum and devoted their meager resources to the opening of schools for young Nigerians. All the Missionaries who came to Nigeria combined evangelical work with education. Consequently, early mission schools were founded by the Methodist Church of Scotland Mission, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the Roman Catholics. By 1882, the CMS had seventeen elementary and infant day schools for boys and girls in various parts of Lagos. Nine of these schools were under the direction of the Lagos Church of England School Board while others were managed by the local board of the Church Missionary Society.

However, the spread of western education in the North was not as smooth as it was in the South. This was because the North had enjoyed the Islamic system of education for many years before introduction of western education. However, efforts were made by different missions to open primary schools in the North but not quite successful.

The subjects taught in majority of the elementary schools included Scripture, English compositions, English Grammar, Arithmetic, Geography, Music, Singing, Reading, Writing, Dictation, and for girls Sewing (Fafunwa, 1974, p.56). The emphasis in the infant classes was on the teaching of the 3 Rs (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic). The growth of schools was, however, limited by lack of funds and sometimes parents' unwillingness to send their children, especially, girls to school.

The philosophy of Christian Missionary Education was to convert the "heathen" to Christian faith through the instrumentality of education (schools). The converts were to be literate in order to be able to read the Bible. For the Missionaries it was through the reading and understanding of the Bible that man was assured of his eternal salvation. The concept of a good Christian, according to the early Missionaries, was one who was versed in reading the Bible, singing from hymn books and reciting from the catechisms and generally one who could read and write. Bolarin (1994, p.45) highlights the position of the early missionaries whose practice showed that they African culture including African religion as inferior to theirs, and as such they were all out to change the entire way of life of the Africans they came in contact with. Fafunwa (1974, p.57) notes that the schools in those days were places where pupils went to as pagans and Muslims, and came out as converted Christians. This accounted for the resistance of the Northerners in embracing the new found faith. They resisted the interference and refused to send their children to the Christian mission schools. The issue of eternal salvation which remained the dominant philosophy of Christian education had to be gained through the Bible.

For a long time the school was left in the hands of the church missions. The complementarity role of the church and the world of work became so obvious that all the secular businesses of the society which required the highest learning for its performance fell as a matter of necessity into the hands of the churchmen. The ineffectiveness of Missionary education and the lack of requisite skills led to the colonial intervention in education in the year 1882. The first educational ordinance achieved little or no success except for the general awareness of the intention of government to control the development and growth of schools in Lagos and its environs. The ordinance was greeted with some criticisms.

In the first place, the 1882 ordinance was structured with the English Board of Education to suit the local conditions not considering the indigenous cultural peculiarities of the colonized community. And the books used were those written for English children in England. There was no provision for the teaching of a local language in spite of the spade work already done by the missions and the fact that English, the main subject and the medium of instruction, was foreign to the colonial child. It was also observed that the form of education current at that time was 'bookish' (Illo & Bolaji, 2007, p.68).

Between 1887 and 1926 there were effective attempts by colonial government to promote education and control the sporadic expansion of education by the missions. The ordinances at this time are believed to have laid down certain principles which

have become the foundation of the education laws of Nigeria. The Education Ordinance of 1887 was significant in so many ways; in 1886, Lagos was separated from the Gold Coast and became the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos. This separation necessitated the enactment of the first purely Nigerian Educational Ordinance of 1887.

According to Taiwo (1980, p.57), this was the first effective attempt by the government to promote education and control sporadic expansion of education by the missions. The area of operation of the ordinance was the Colony of Lagos which comprised Lagos Island, Ebute-Metta, Yaba, Badagry and the Islands of Palma and Lake, corresponding to parts of the former Colony Province and now Lagos State of Nigeria. It is important to note that in 1887 the name Nigeria was not in existence and the area which is now known as Nigeria had not been defined.

5.1.2 Nigerian Policy on Education

Having provided the chronological details of how the educational system in Nigeria emerged from the pre-colonial dispensation to the introduction of western/formal education and the series of commissions that were set up to fine-tune the processes of education it becomes imperative therefore to discuss the policies that were developed basically for education in the post independence era. The Curriculum Conference of 1969 was the first event under the period of study. The calls for review and restructuring of the educational policy were characterized by a political change from democracy to military dictatorship, the emergence of Nigeria as a Republic, civil war, creation of states from the existing regions and the need for a new philosophical

ideology if Nigerian education was to have a better surrender cash- value benefit (Illo & Bolaji, 2007, p.85).

It was a general notion in Nigeria that the British system of education that was handed over to us did everything humanly possible to change our orientation and belief system but the only thing it could not achieve was to turn a black man into a white man. In other words, the British made us to believe that there was nothing good about the system; hence the need to break from these shackles, made the call for the conference a welcome ideal. The conference was well attended by both professionals and non-experts; it comprised the representatives of trade unions, farmers' unions, women's organization, religious bodies, teacher's associations, administrators as well as ministry officials, youth club organizers, businessmen, and the representatives of government from the twelve states of Nigeria.

The aim of the conference was to review old and identify new national goals for Nigerian education with consideration to the needs of the youths and adults in the task of nation-building. Also, attention was called to the duty of education in preparing Nigerians for the task of living in the twentieth century. Arising from the above points are three statements of belief about the role of Nigerian education.

> *The belief in the value of individual and in the development of all citizenry for the development of the society. The belief in giving each child equal educational opportunity so that he can develop according to his ability. The belief in functional education and promote the development of effectively informed Nigerians (Illo & Bolaji, p.89)..*

Another point of reference of the conference was the need to promote a foundation for a scientific and reflective thinking. The conference recommended the age of 6+ as the school age, and stressed the importance for mother tongue as a means of imparting knowledge apart from English. The basic educational philosophy was in the area of development of the individual and equal educational opportunities to all Nigerian children irrespective of the age, sex, any form of disability and functional education for the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria. The conference, which Fafunwa (1974, p.210) acknowledged was a type that had never been held in any part of the world before, came close to affirming the yearning for Nigerian philosophy of education, but never produced one. Admittedly, the conference brought together people from all walks of life but failed to evolve any educational philosophy for the nation as evident in Fafunwa's observation that the conference was not too concerned with preparing a national curriculum, nor recommending specific content and methodology for the Nigerian educational system. Isichei (1998, p.165) argues that the conference was not concerned with formulating an educational philosophy and so, even when one of the themes of the conference was ambiguously titled "a philosophy for Nigerian education," it could not be taken that the Conference had in mind a philosophy of education for Nigeria.

The state of education in Nigeria today reveals the consequential effect of lack of an educational ideal. O'Connor (1957, p.107) writes:

> *Most of the catchwords and slogans of educational reformers are fossilized value judgments: 'education according to nature',' education for democracy',' equality of opportunity', 'education for citizenship' and the rest. It is of*

> *the greatest importance that directives of this sort should be explicitly formulated, related to practice and recognized for what they are. An undiagnosed value judgement is a source of intellectual muddle.*

To avoid baseless abstraction or what O'Connor calls 'intellectual muddle,' there is the need for a nation to identify first the ideals of the society that is desired before a formulation of the goal of education. It is clear then, why the noble ideals the conference had in mind of education being the means of meeting the needs of the youths and adults in the task of nation-building and national reconstruction for social and economic well-being of the individual and the society have not been realized in present-day Nigeria. Dewey (1916, p.3) puts it in its broadest sense when he says that education is the means of the "social continuity life". Thus, the great social importance of education is underscored by the fact that when a society is shaken by crisis, this often is taken as a sign of educational breakdown.

The aftermath of the National Curriculum Conference of 1969 initiated another seminar at the instance of the Federal Government headed by Chief S.O Adebo, the former Permanent Representative of Nigeria at the United Nations and the Chairman of the National Universities Commission (NUC), with the aim of reviewing the recommendations arrived at, at the conference. At the seminar the 6-3-3-4 system of education proposed was adopted. This, however, formed the genesis of the Nigerian educational blueprint called the National Policy on Education, first published in 1977and revised in 1981, 1998, 2004 and 2008.

The blueprint on education was divided into 12 sections. The first section dealt with the philosophy of Nigerian education. The second section dealt with pre-primary education. The third extensively discussed primary education, now called basic education. The rationale behind secondary education was spelt out in the policy document. The new policy presupposed that every eligible child would spend full six years of primary education, followed by a three-year junior and a three-year senior secondary education, and a four-year university course (6-3-3-4). The document also mentioned the issue of higher education that covers post-secondary schooling-universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, and federal advanced teacher training. Technical education was not left out in the policy. Emphases were also placed on special education, teacher education, educational services, administration, planning and financing education. It's a well detailed and comprehensive document for every individual and stakeholder in the field of education (NPE, 2008, P.4).

However, what the overall philosophy of Nigerian education should be was not stated. This issue has attracted philosophers of education from ancient times and modern ones are still battling to tackle the question of what the Nigerian philosophy of education is. Is it the philosophy of Idealism, of which Perennialism is the educational philosophy? Could it be Realism that has Essentialism as its educational philosophy? Or is it Pragmatism that has both Progressivism and Reconstructionism as its educational philosophy. We may then conclude that since we cannot lay claims to any of the traditional schools of philosophy, it means that the term philosophy of education used at the curriculum conference is questionable and sounds ambiguous.

The universal Primary Education of 1976 remarkably marked another landmark in the history of education in Nigeria. It was the year before the National Policy of Education was made public, witnessed the re-launch of free and compulsory education by the Military Government of General Gowon/ Obasanjo but the scheme was not new to Nigeria as the old Western and Eastern regions had embarked on it in the 1950's. Two reasons were deduced why the scheme got national attention. The first was that it was the greatest social scheme ever embarked upon by any African government, even the much talked about Arusha Declaration of Tanzania under Julius Nyerere could not be compared to it.

Secondly, it had a national coverage and grand design aimed at alleviating, if not totally removing, the lopsidedness in the geographical distribution of educational facilities across the nation. According to Legunm (1977, P.76), the scheme was originally designed to solve the problem of educational hiatus between the north and south, a gap which was regarded as a major source of political conflict. The programme was solely funded by the Federal Government through revenue from the oil boom. Consequently, primary education was transferred from the residual list to the concurrent legislative list (Ajayi, 1983, p.142). In 1977 the Federal Government's budget allocation for the scheme was #515 million, out of which the sum of #300 million naira was earmarked for capital expenditure for the provision of additional classrooms all over the federation. In additions efforts were made to produce 163 teachers for the scheme. Despite the huge investment of resources in the universal

primary education of 1976, it was not without its shortcomings. A review of the programme in 1977 showed over-enrolment due to lack of planning as well as the use of inaccurate statistics.

Another reason why the lofty idea failed was that strict financial control was not enforced by the government because the economy was buoyant. Thus the state government got more than what was needed by presenting inflated figures of pupil enrolment in the case of teacher's college and primary schools. The quality of instructors was another problem the scheme was faced with. For instance, of the 195,750 serving primary school teachers engaged for the scheme, about 70,000 were neither qualified nor trained for the job. This was a serious setback for the successful implementation of the programme

Despite the fact that the commission set up to advise the military government on how to implement the programme recommended that the programme should be launched in 1979 and an installmental approach utilized in the training of its teachers, these suggestions were all jettisoned by the military government because the government in power wanted to claim credit for the scheme, having regarded it as greatest achievement. More significant was the fact the Federal Government failed to learn a lesson from the past efforts and achievements of the states which had once launched UPE schemes and the findings from the various reports. This made Ajayi to conclude by saying that there was shortage of everything except the pupils.

Between 1979 and 1999, we have had both military regimes and democratically elected governments in Nigeria. From the angle of historical studies in education nothing more could be said about the efficiency, effectiveness and progress of education even with the formulated blueprint document called NPE. This did not mean that some laudable efforts were not made as to repositioning the educational system for efficiency but a lot was left undone.

1999 ushered in a new democratic dispensation with the emergence of Chief Aremu Olusegun Obasanjo, a former military Head of state as the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The necessity to save Nigerian education from the doldrums led to launching the Universal Basic Education within four months of assumption of office, even before it was discussed at the Parliament House. This showed the urgency in reviving the educational system at that time. The UBE scheme launched in 1999 was in consonance with the vision of World Conference of Education For All (WCEFA) at Jomtien. The challenge of the newly introduced scheme was how to provide free and compulsory qualitative education on equal access to Nigerians at all levels of the educational system.

Suffice to say, that it is over a decade now since the programme was introduced, yet it has left nothing worth desiring by Nigerians. The policy has been beset by implementation chaos, which invariably "left behind" many school attending boys and girls nationwide (Denga, 2004). The hope of meeting the United Nations' Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs), which aim to achieve compulsory universal basic education for all children by 2015, is a serious doubt because of the issue of access.

The above discourse presents the philosophical foundations of Nigerian education while the subsequent discussions critically examine the contemporary issues that threaten the aspiration to build a democratic society the through educational process in Nigeria.

5.2 Democracy and Education in Nigeria

At independence there were great hopes for education in Nigeria. In spite of the inadequacies of the inherited colonial system, available evidence shows that the first two decades of independence witnessed some concerted efforts by Nigeria to evolve genuine national systems of education (Obanya, 1999, p.24). The school was opened up to a wider section of the populace and access improved considerably: free, compulsory primary education was even tried in some places for example, the Old Western Region of Nigeria. Schools of all categories increased in number, in response to increased social demands; this period was regarded as the school boom but it began to burst in the mid 1980's.

Even though education in Nigeria and other parts of Africa still faces a great number of problems, gains especially in the quantitative dimension were made in the early days of independence. These gains were, however, not capitalized upon in many cases. Thus exercabating and aggravating the problem of access, lack of relevance, poor resources allocation and general degeneration in quality coupled with a general apathy

towards schooling, a phenomenon that Obayan (1999) referred to as desalinization in its various dimensions. The problem of education in African countries in general and Nigeria in particular since independence has been impeded by a combination of internal and external forces, political instability, and various forms of unfavourable conditions of international trade, internal crisis, demographic, environment and economic problems.

Democracy and education operate in close interaction in a number of ways. Since democracy deals with power play for the governance of human societies, educational systems tend to reflect the politics of the nations they are designed to serve. Babarinde (1997, p.23) stresses the symbiotic relationship between education and democracy, arguing that education really connotes the practice of democracy. They assert that it is education that really prepares individuals for their total induction into the social institutions of a society and the political needs of such a society. It does contribute significantly to the political socialization of the child. Political socialization, according to Babarinde (1997, p.25), refers to the transmission of values, beliefs, ideas and exercise of power. Buttressing this point further, Babarinde (1994, p.24) opines that

> *Both education and democracy are generally regarded as desirable. The pursuit of education as well as democracy evoke positive responses and argument abound that tend to justify both concepts on utilitarian grounds on one hand, and as constituting desirable ends worth pursuing for their own sake on the other…Education denotes intrinsically worthwhile activities. It is a process of being initiated into knowledge and understanding which in turn regulate the recipient attitudes, emotional wants and actions…the recipient the knowledge has to alter his view of the world,*

> *that is, the interpersonal world of social economic and political institutions (Babarinde,1994, p.24).*

By and large, in serving the course of nation building political actors evolve policies which determine the practices of education. Political developments in most African countries have been hindered by a number of factors already mentioned before and this explains in large part the inappropriateness and failure of educational policies over the years. Internal crises and military regimes have prevented many countries from settling down to think of development activities, including educational development and also prevented the thriving of ideas which could have led to creativity. The overall climate of political instability led to conformity in education policies and projects, including frequent changes in the education sector.

Since the 'wind of democracy' blew in early 1990s, the political situation in Nigeria, people's consciousness in defense of their rights which resulted from the newly found freedom of expression, in its turn led to greater social demand for education. Democracy implies access to basic human rights and education is one of these fundamental rights. Democracy also implies participation by all, and students and their teachers have thus been exercising their right to question government policies, especially educational policies. In turn, responses to this attitude of discontent have shown clearly that new democratic regimes in Nigeria have not accepted dialogue as a means of conflict resolution. 'The clamp down' syndrome in Nigeria and some African countries has remained in vogue and students have responded by resorting to more violent demonstrations.

Student discontent has in most cases been compounded by discontent among teachers and also the entire working class. As neither government nor teachers or the students yield ground, prolonged school strikes become a feature of our educational system. The outcome of this as a phenomenon is what Obayan (1999, p.124) refers to as 'Annee Blanche' (Black academic year) which is now a common occurrence. In Nigeria, schools are closed for three consecutive years while in other countries in Africa the school year has been interrupted every month. The most striking feature of Annee Blanche is that it now affects all levels of formal education system from primary to tertiary. It thus also becomes an instrument for political power play, with opposing parties taking sides with teachers' unions polarized between government and opposition parties.

Some impacts of the Annee Blanche phenomenon on the educational system include throwing children out of school, which has its social and economic costs; it has increased the number of 'street children' with multiple psychological and social problems for the children and their families. The long period of waiting for schools that never re-open is an invitation to delinquency, even the learning time lost slows down the training of brainpower needed for the development. Physical facilities that are left ideal during the long strikes are therefore subjected to further deterioration. It suffices to say that educational indices such as enrolments, dropout rates, sacking of school principals by Federal and State governments because of poor performance of students in internal and external examinations and admission rates into higher education, creates a picture of an educational system that is operating at a dysfunctional level.

The democratic experiment in Nigeria is characterized by devotion to our old ways of behaviour such as excessive ethnic allegiances, indiscipline and religious bigotry. The education that is appropriate to a democracy must be a discipline of the individual for effective participation in a democratic society: to cultivate an individual democratic character whose growth the schools should promote. In a nutshell, the fundamental traits of the democratic way of life which should be cultivated in the individual are respect for self and others; discipline judgments and religious attitudes. On contrary, these are evident in our lives in the worst negative form. In effect, our democracy is dangling and swaying dangerously because it is not anchored on these traits in a positive manner.

By and large, the democratic principle has not exerted a beneficial influence on the development of education in our country. Nor has education had the desired impact on the development of democracy, which is the ultimate goal of politics. Likewise, the failure of policies formulated for education in the 70's and 90's is not simply due to Nigerian internal problems as some may suggest but lack of democratic principles and the resultant effect is the inadequacy in knowledge of an educational philosophy for the nation. In Nigeria today our education is therefore given in a vacuum in that it is not related to any defined national goal, but rather is serving as a tool for the personal aggrandizement of the individual. In a democracy such as ours, the task of education should be to provide a distinctive discipline, which would enable us to function effectively in a democratic society. How possible is it to achieve a functional and effective education for democratic living without a philosophical ideology for the

nation? For instance, some African countries that have a socialist idea were able to evolve radical educational reform measures which eventually assist them in creating a worldview for their citizenry such as Arusha Declaration (Nyerere, 1964; Bagudo, 2004). What can we regard as Nigerian philosophy?

An essential aspect of any educational system is its educational philosophy; thus it is the foundation of any educational system. The philosophy of education is couched in very agreeable language that cannot be faulted for its nationalistic stance and its advocacy for the inculcation in people of the right attitudes and values for national development, national unity and democratic tenets. One may then ask if there is a document that may be so called Nigerian educational philosophy. According to Farayola (2007), a careful look at the national policy on education would be illuminating. That little document is an encapsulation of what our educational system should be, the aims to achieve and how these should be achieved. In effect, it spells out the objectives behind ideal educational practices. The document stresses the overall philosophy of Nigeria:

- live in unity and harmony as one indivisible, indissoluble, democratic and sovereign nation, founded on the principles of freedom, equality and justice;
- to promote inter-African solidarity and world peace through understanding.

The document stresses the crucial importance of democracy in the body of politic of the nation. In actual fact, apart from mention of the word democratic, virtually the rest of the description of what the nation intends to achieve amounts to democracy. The

term,' founded on the principles of freedom, equality and justice' is implying what democracy stands for. In effect, what the document is stressing is that the nation intends to be run purely on democratic principles. This is further reinforced in the document's next statement. The five main national goals of Nigeria, which have been endorsed as the necessary foundation for the national policy on education, are the building of:

i a free and democratic society;
ii a just and egalitarian society;
iii a united, strong and self-reliant nation;
iv a great and dynamic economy;
v a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens.

Apart from the very direct declaration, of 'free and democratic society', the other stated intentions in ii-v are each predicated on the practices of democracy. To attain each of the goals set out in ii-v, democracy should be in place. Another pertinent part to us in this exercise is the very next section of the document that says that all these ideals can only be realized through education. The policy stipulates thus:

i. education is an instrument for national development; to this end, the formulation of ideas, integration for national development, and the interaction of persons and ideas are all aspects of education;

ii. education fosters the worth and development of the individual, for each individual's sake and for the general development of the society;

iii. there is the need for equality of educational opportunities to all Nigerian children, irrespective of any real or imagined disabilities, each according to his or her ability;

iv. there is need for functional education for the promotion of a progressive, united Nigeria; to this end, school programmes need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive; while interest and ability should determine the individual's direction in education (NPE, 2008, p.4).

The items most crucial and important to the present study i.e. in pursuit of the attainment of democratic society through education are particularly i, ii and iv. The essence of what the policy attempts to present is that education is the pivotal tool to actualizing democracy and achieving an egalitarian society. What we are yet to come to terms with is the fact that achieving the stated objectives is premised on developing and formulating a distinct 'world view' for the Nigerian education for its citizenry. It is very important to mention that identifying the overall philosophy and objectives of a nation is not the same as identifying the educational philosophy.

In the western philosophical tradition, there are three major philosophies- Idealism, Realism and Pragmatism and their respective theories on education, namely, Perenialism, Essentialism, Progressivism and Reconstructionism. On which of these does Nigeria base the understanding of the 'worldview' and the 'way of life' of the citizenry? As Isichei (1998, p.175) observes, throughout the document on the National Policy on Education are found ontological, epistemological, and axiological statements. These statements logically are required to be identified with a particular philosophical statement and with a particular educational philosophy but it was never the case. However, the major concern of this investigation is democratic education and what

constitutes ideal democratic education and proposing a virile philosophical and ideological base for the nation's education from the Deweyan perspective.

It has been observed that all the educational reform efforts in Nigeria, particularly in the area of policy formulation and implementation, were purely on educational management as a discipline e.g. administration, funding, planning, methodological/pedagogical issues, supervision, infrastructures, curriculum development etc. There seems to be no obvious evidence of any educational reform based on or that incorporates educational philosophy. Hence, the study of Dewey's philosophy becomes imperative for nation-building in terms of its relevance to democracy and contemporary education in Nigeria.

5.3 Equal Educational Opportunity in a Democratic Nigeria

Equality as a concept has always proved difficult to explain because of its diverse and different connotations. However, the search for equality of man, which consequently informs the idea of equality of educational opportunities, has been, at least in principle, a global concern. The difficulty in providing clarity on the concept prompted Scholfield (1972, p.234) to argue that it is merely an emotional expression and people hardly have defined ideas about what it means. Since 1945 in San Francisco, the concept has gained the concern of the United Nations. God himself is not left out in this campaign for equality; he says *'that there may be equality' (ICor 8:13C KJV).*The conviction of it made Mandela, a prisoner of war for 27 years to assert that:

> *I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a*

> *democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve (Mandela, 1994).*

Equality means the state of being equal. It could be deduced to mean sameness. This is a subject that has been of much interest to scholars, notably sociologists, political scientists, philosophers and philosophers of education and most democratic governments all over the world. The issue of egalitarianism is a contemporary one that always attracts a number of questions including that of meaning, the possibility of having an egalitarian society and the modalities of building one. Many nations of the world Nigeria inclusive are in principle aspiring to create egalitarian societies. Despite having been under military rule for a long time, one of the five main national objectives is the building of "a just and egalitarian society" (NPE, 2004, p.7). Simons and Masschelein (2010) also reiterate that democracy and equality through and in education appear to be the major concern for democratic citizenship and participation, policies on equal opportunities and so on. People in all human societies all over the world differ with respect to the amount of material wealth, prestige and power that they have. In other words, all human societies exhibit social inequality. Reissman (1973, p.9) succinctly puts it this way:

> *social inequality is as old as human history, as universal as human societies. Everywhere and in every epoch there has existed sort of stratification with those at the top holding more privilege, power and enjoying greater rewards than those at the bottom. Inequality not equality has been the predominant social rule by which most men at most times have lived (Reissman 1973, p.9).*

In spite of being an age old phenomenon, however, no society is happy about the existence of social inequality and most members of any society envision a society in which all members are equal and receive equal treatment. Equalitarianism is thus, an ideology, principle or doctrine referring to equal rights, benefits, and opportunities or equal treatment for all citizens of a society. This is opposed to an elitist ideology, which refers to a few people or a select group of people receiving some preferential treatments mainly because of some social advantages they have over the majority of the members of the society (Simons and Masschelein, 2010).

Ejieh (2004 p.43) argues that adhering to the principle of egalitarianism implies that every member of the society should, under any circumstance, receive the same or equal treatment as any other member. However, when it is recalled that individual differences exist between people right from birth, it becomes obvious that equal treatment does not really mean the same or identical treatment for both the old and the young, the sick and the healthy, the handicapped and the able-bodied and, as Woods and Borrow (1975 p.65) graphically put it, we will be insisting on" identical amounts of food being provided for every individual from new born baby to the wrestling champion…" Instead of identical treatment, it may be better to think more of the principle of equality as demanding that people be treated the same except when there are differences between them to justify treating them differently in particular circumstances.

One of the instruments through which many societies in the world strive for social equality or at least attempt to reduce social inequalities among and between their

members is education (Ranciere, 2007). This is because education fosters social mobility among its participants. This can only be possible if there are no barriers preventing people from participating in it or if there is no discrimination against people based on social status among other factors. An educational system in which all children are treated equally in the same circumstances is an egalitarian education system.

Ironically, some educational systems are designed knowingly or unknowingly to maintain or even enhance social inequalities. The recent outcry in the Nigerian educational system is centered on inequality in educational settings or what Isichei (1998, p.211) refers to as egalitarian-meritocratic dilemma. This dilemma is one between equality and meritocracy. Its effects on the system have created a dichotomy between the children of the poor and the children of the rich. The contemporary educational system in Nigeria is in jeopardy because of this issue of egalitarianism (Akinpelu, 2005, p.211). In the words of Goodson (2000), inequality in educational opportunity often deprived people of the quality of life to which all should have access. The Nigerian democratic purpose is being undermined by this inadequate access to equal educational opportunities. According to Daramola (1994, p.67), social equality is made difficult because of social stratification in the nation's educational system. Children of the higher classes in the society have access to more sophisticated and dynamic learning aids which are not easily found at the reach of their lower class counterparts.

UNICEF has this to say about the issue of access to educational opportunity in Nigeria:

> *UNICEF in its 'state of the world's children' report for 1999 pointed out that about four million Nigerian children have*

> *no access to basic education, and that majority of those that are 'lucky' to enter schools are given sub-standard education (UNICEF,1999).*

Eraser (1993, p.37) attests to the fact that inequalities exist in Nigeria. He opines:

> *certain groups in the population are at a disadvantage in terms of educational achievement and opportunities. They are children from low income homes or low social class. They are outpaced in the educational race because their social and material environments are inadequate for their educational pursuits (Eraser, 1993 p.37).*

The rise and acceptance of private and prestigious schools in the name of deregulation in Nigeria is a clear evidence of sponsored inequality in Nigeria. These schools are so expensive that the children of the less privileged in the country cannot attend them. They posseses everything one can think of for quality and effective teaching and learning, unlike the public schools, especially the state and community schools that are left for the low- income earners without adequate material and human resources. The continued existence of these schools-private and prestigious schools-reflects the basic unhealthy class structure of the society (Amaele 2005, p.48).

Ajayi (1993, p.28) observes that education is one of the avenues of an evidence of inequality in the society through provision of schools, since provision of schools vary and they are not equally available to all. Writing on the caption "Built for the Rich" (referring to a private school in Lagos). Here is his view on aesthetics of such schools:

> *The school's premises…. are enough to lure a willing soul to reading. With big trees to provide breeze and shades from the tropical sun of Lagos, airy classrooms and the beautiful surroundings, the school contrasts sharply with the dilapidated, dirty and repulsive buildings of the public schools (Ajayi, 1993, p.40).*

It is obvious that equal opportunities to education in Nigeria are yet to be attained. Akinpelu (1981, p.208) asserts that inequalities in other areas of the country's life are easily transferred to the educational scene. He substantiates this by arguing that if there is no equality among the citizens, it is needless talking about equal right to education. We may then ask, What is the hope of education in a democratic setting? This is because any democratic promise of equal educational opportunity that is half-fulfilled is worse than a promise broken (Adler, 1982). This is a challenge Nigeria as a nation has failed to meet but we cannot continue to fail without disastrous consequences for the nation, most especially for proper working of political institutions, for efficiency in industries and businesses, for the salvation of the economy, and for the ultimate good of individual citizens and future citizens- the children.

There are divergent opinions as regards this equalitarianism. One may admit that the issue raises more difficult problems, in the sense that many of the good things of life cannot be equally distributed or rationed, like cake. This is based on the fact that some of the good things of life have to be acquired or taken up or produced by the individuals, so much so that there is no way in which they can simply be given. The fact is that some kinds of resources can be allocated, but not learning, the actual process of becoming educated. This is something the individual has to do, and what he/she does depends to a great extent on him/her. Isichei (1998, p.207) argues that the burden placed on education as equalizer of rational being in the society is uncalled for. To him, education is not intended to equalize human beings, nor is it capable of doing so, but to bring out in each individual the ability to live to the fullest the

individual's potentiality to actuality. He continues that God gave each person an equal right to exist but did not give equal personal endowments or abilities, or intelligence quotient.

This researcher's intent is not to dwell on the raging philosophical arguments on equalizing or intelligence quotient but on the issue of equality of access to educational opportunity. Access in this study is not a word that is shrouded in ambiguity but a word that has different meanings and application. The universal meaning of the word access refers to the ability of all people to have equal opportunity to a service or product from which they can benefit, regardless of their social class, ethnicity, ancestry, or physical disabilities.

Education is one service or product that fits into the above definition as a basic utility. Several authors have also explained the concept of access in education in terms of equitability (Akinpelu, 1981; Glenester, 1979). Bereday (1960) sees it as equity. The theory of equity propounded by Mann (1975) and upheld by Sheppard (1992) is the concept of fairness. To the African Union Commission and its International Centre for Girls and Women's Education in Africa (CIEFFA, 2009), access in education goes beyond mere enrolment or physical access to attendance, progression and successful completion.

The concept has been further developed by (CIEFFA), in which five dimensions to access in education were distinguished, namely*:* economic access, physical access, sociological access, physiological access, and cultural access (CIEFFA, 2009). Access,

according to Lewin (2007), is a word that has little meaning unless it results in more rather than less equitable opportunities to learn for children from poorer households, disabilities, ethnicity, and gender equality with less variation in quality between schools. In other words, access is the opposite of exclusion. For instance, more than eight million children of school age are still not in school; drop-out rates in basic education/school is 9.3%; and the transitional rate to secondary/high school in Nigeria is still at its lowest ebb of 60% (UBEC, 2005; NUT, 2008). This compares poorly with Zambia, a sub-Saharan African country, which has one of the highest literacy rates which were also expected to reach 88 per cent in 2000 (Mwansa, 1995).

The Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) conducted in 2003, cited in Popoola, Bello and Atanda (2009), reveals that only 60.1% of all the children of primary school age were attending school at the time of the survey. In particular, boys had a higher Net Attendance Rate (NAR) of 63.7% against that of girls, which was 56%. A similar discrepancy is also noticeable in the attendance rates. In the urban areas, the NAR was 69.5% while in the rural areas, it was 55.7%. Ogunjimi, Ajibola and Akah (2009) also write that out of the 42.1 million children below 14 years of age, only 25.8 million (representing 61.2% of the total population) were in school. Olarenwaju and Folorunsho (2009) state that basic school net enrolment or attendance between 2000 and 2007 was 63%. The drop-out rate for girls is 44% while that of boys in secondary school is 39%. This, however, negates the national objective of a just and egalitarian society that the nation desires to build through the universalization of education.

Education in this context remains the only gateway to achieving the objective of equitable opportunities to learn. It implies that everything about the development or discovery of potentialities and intelligence in the individual is through education. Doctors are not born but made and it is through this same process of education. The fact remains that all are not capable of studying medicine. It is also true that capacity for knowledge is not equal in all humans. If given equal education which is the platform of equality, an individual can develop his or her potential at various degrees. However, the variation in degree must be of the same kind and quality of education. If the best education for the best is the best education for all, the failure to carry out the principle is failure on the part of the society not a failure on the part of the individual. There is, therefore, no unteachable individual.

One of the primary concerns of modern democratic government's in the world is to improve the capacity of the people as a whole to participate actively in the management of their own affairs. They are also preoccupied with maintaining political stability. An effective way of ensuring these is to widen access to education and make it available to both the young and old in the society (Gray, 2000, p.10). The success of any democratic system (which Nigeria now fiddles with) depends largely on equal access to education for the full realization of individual's potential in a democratic society. This is because democratic values are nurtured on the fertile ground of education, rooted in equality and accessibility to functional education with the right focus and correct scope (Marzano et al,1988).

The lack of access to equal educational opportunity is the source of many social ills in Nigeria; for example, unemployment, crime, prostitution, ethnic crisis, youth restiveness, kidnapping and the break down in law and order (Dike, 2009). Once the educational opportunities are not provided early for the youth, to educate them when they are adults becomes a challenge. As Rousseau has noted:

> *"People, like men [and women are] amenable only when they are young; in old age they become incorrigible. Once [bad habits] and customs are established and prejudices ingrained, it is a dangerous and futile enterprise to try to reform them; the people cannot bear to have the diseases treated, even in order to destroy it, like those stupid and fearful patients who tremble at the sight of the physician" (Rousseau,1994, p.80).*

It is known at least in the developed world that education determines not only earning capacity but also the very quality of human life, even longevity has a relationship to education. In a society where equal educational opportunity is not a myth citizens tend to have robust minds and understandings of what ideal values are in nation-building. As Davies notes, confidence, self-reliance and adaptability are all hallmarks of a nation which makes equality of educational opportunity a watchword for education (Dike, 2001 p.16-17).

Thus, it makes the issue of equality of educational opportunity a serious issue that requires serious attention; without it being addressed the restiveness of the denied youths to educational opportunity (ies) will persist, the social ills will continue to rise and armed bandits will be on the increase. Gray (2000, p.12) rightly observed the inevitability of high-level involvement with crime of any society that shows any level of youth alienation from educational opportunities. The act of governance will continue to

be truncated. The society will continue to have illiterates and non-leaders as political leaders; the society will continue to have political parties without any philosophical ideology, and such society will continue to fall behind economically, socially, politically and otherwise. All these are traits of the Third-World countries and Nigeria is not an exception. The desire for the realization of a free and democratic society through equality of educational opportunity necessitates the interest of this researcher to explore Dewey's philosophy in salient issues in the Nigerian educational system.

5.4 Democracy and Quota System in Nigeria

The intention of the Missionary for introducing western education in Nigeria was not planned along political or demographic lines but borne out of a strong desire for evangelism. Thus, schools were planted by the religious organization where their religious activities were most pronounced. The government intervention in education years later witnessed the taking over of the educational activities and deciding where institutions should be cited. This, to a large extent, eroded the administrative system of the religious agencies and community involvement in educational governance. The intent, however, was to solve the problems of inequality and marginalization as expressed by certain parts of Nigeria by the colonial administration. Another reason for introducing the quota system was differences in the socio-economic development of different parts of Nigeria. Moreover, there were disparities in the levels of educational developments in different parts of the country. Some sections of the country (North) were alleged to be educationally disadvantaged, while some regions (South) of the country were acclaimed to be educationally advantaged.

The federal character principle was adopted by the 1977 Constitutional Drafting Committee. It became part of the 1979 constitution of Nigeria. From the time of incorporating the quota system into the Nigerian law books till date, the Federal Government has used it as a policy instrument in recruiting people to all Federal Government establishments like the armed forces, police, ministries and Federal Government-owned universities etc. Because it is in our statute books, the various state governments and all local governments' have adopted it as a guide for their various appointments which seems contrary to Max Weber's (1864-1920) position on the principle of democracy. He posits that employees should be hired and promoted based on merit and expertise.

The policy of quota system has found expression at all levels of the educational system. It is more pronounced at the tertiary level of education by which learners from the educationally advanced areas of the country have a lower entry opportunity than those from the educationally backward areas. The question one may need to ask is: How fair and how democratic is this practice? Adeyinka (1993, p.10) admits that:

> *one of the most disturbing issues in Nigerian education today is the obnoxious quota system which tends to favour the weak against the strong; it gives greater admission and employment opportunities to people from certain parts of the country while better ones from other parts of the country are denied admission to educational institutions for courses of their choice or employment in certain professions in Federal Ministries or parastatals (Adeyinka, 1993, p.10).*

Several other scholars most especially in the area of philosophy and philosophy of education have had cause to employ their philosophical lenses to critically analyze this issue of disfranchisement in the name of quota system. Akinpelu (1981) contributes to the debate on this same issue, arguing that the suggestion is a crude one, to the effect that admission into the universities, especially the federal-funded universities, should be allocated on a candidate state basis, such that in the competitive entrance examinations candidates from the disadvantaged states who have not performed very well might still have a chance if their states' quota has not been taken up. The obvious unfairness implied in this solution has not made it acceptable since it abandons merit as a criterion for selection, and discriminates against the brilliant candidates who happen to come from states which can fill their quotas with more brilliant students. In any case, it discriminates on the non-educational ground of state of origin (Akinpelu, 1981, p.210-211).

Bamisaiye (1992, p.62) also points out that the main objective of the quota system was to solve the problem of Nigerianisation. She asserts:

> *The much talked about educational imbalance between the north and the south was never taken into cognizance throughout the colonial days until the Nigerianisation policy was embarked upon. The imbalance in educational attainment between the North and the South became magnified when the expatriates in the Federal, State, and Local governments' services were to be replaced by qualified Nigerians in various disciplines. It became crystal clear that there were comparatively fewer qualified Northerners who could be called upon to replace the expatriates than the southerners (Bamisaiye, 1992, p.62).*

On the part of the government, too, several theories were given as a means of justification for introducing a quota system into national life. Four of these are considered in this exercise: maximization, equalization, meritocracy and the concept of national integration.

Maximization theory requires the state to devote vast resources to the provision of educational practices. A lot of the resources available should go into the funding of education so that the potential learners can be kept in school. Gardner (1961, p.38), one of the exponents of this theory, states that "The society demands the maximum development of individual potentialities at every level of ability, so that the teachable youngster may achieve the best that is in him". This theory assumes that the society is a purely liberal one. Therefore, the need for maximization theory to support the fundamental liberal values of free choice and neutrality among different ways of life is so crucial that the chances to benefit from these values are as equal as possible among all citizens. However, in a democracy, it is necessary to look more critically at the issues involved. In the nation's type of economy and democracy, there is a limit to the application of theory. The mere existence of this charter (Federal Character) in the law books means that the country has been established on the path of injustice. This concept of quota system will certainly prevent the best from emerging in all circumstances. America was established on freedom, equality, human rights and democracy. They live by it and they also export it to the whole world. Quoting a former President of the United States, late John F. Kennedy, "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any

hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty."

Equalization as a theory demands that equal opportunities should be given to the citizenry. It demands that education be used to raise the life chances of the least advantaged up to those of the most advantaged. In practical terms, this approach supports the quota system as practiced in Nigeria. To this end, the government views as unjust any system that keeps a group of people disadvantaged because of certain phenomena, including racial background, social status, economic disability, and so on. To them, this theory that says educational opportunities should be shared on the basis of academic ability is enough propelling force for the introduction of a quota system against meritocracy. Meritocracy is a system that is dedicated to distributing all educational resources in proportion to natural ability and willingness.

The last concept is the idea of national integration. To the government, achieving national integration is crucial to the existence of the country as one entity. Therefore, realization of this lofty objective is achievable only through the Federal Character policy or quota system. Akinpelu (1981, p.211) has this to say in this regard:

> *Another idea behind it was to use it for national integration by encouraging candidates to select and be admitted to universities other than those in their localities. Behind these legitimate objectives was, however, the dubious question of quota system in which it was secretly hoped that it might be possible to operate it in such a way as to give more opportunities to candidates from the deprived areas. Again, this was a failure (Akinpelu, 1981, p.211).*

From the foregoing, the system aims to correct an apparent inequality by offering students from some areas a lowered admission entry point while students from areas that had long educated themselves have to enter under a raised admission entry point. In effect, two students with a vastly different admission score often discover that while the higher score does not secure a place in the university, the lower score does. Thus, this might guarantee that learners from a particular area without a traditional culture of western education now have progressively fewer of theirs in such institutions. This is the extent to which inequality still prevails, though in a different direction. As long as this equalization practiced under the umbrella of quota system still exists so long will inequality prevail in the Nigerian educational system. This again runs contrary to the ideal opportunity for citizenship rights in a democratic society.

5.5 Technical / Vocational Education in a Democratic Nigeria

Vocational education has been an integral part of national development strategies in many developed societies-for example, the United States of America, Netherland, Australia, Germany and so on-because of its impact on productivity and economic development. Vocational education within the context of this study is referred to as a practically illustrated and attempted job or career skill instruction. As such, a variety of components fall under the vocational education umbrella: technical education, technology education, business education, agricultural education and trade and industrial education.

The provision of vocational education has a long history dating back to the period before the Industrial Revolution in Europe. The first formalized vocational education system in America can be traced to apprenticeship agreements of colonial times. The first education law passed in America, the old Deluder Satan Act of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, set specific requirements for masters to teach apprentices academic as well as vocational skills (Encyclopedia, 2010). The number of public and private vocational schools has greatly increased in the US since 1900. The Colombia Encyclopedia (2001) noted some of the early trade schools in the US to include Cooper Union (1859), Pratt Institute (1887), the Hampton Institute (1868) and Tuskegee Institute (1881). The Agricultural High School (1888) of the University of Minnesota was the first regularly established public vocational secondary school that introduced extensive public instruction in agriculture.

The Dutch school system also pays attention to the provision of vocational education at ages 14-16 for a third of all pupils, and widespread vocational education at 16+. And secondary/high schools in many other development- conscious nations have vocational centres that offer vocational training for lifelong trade together with general academic studies. Dike (2009) argues that the 'Asian Tigers' could not have become what they are without massive investment in technical education.

The National Policy on Education (NPE, 2008), a document that provides a sense of direction and purpose to educational activities at all levels of the education system, has vocational education as its priority. The document is clearly the government's blueprint

on functional, universal and qualitative education. *The document explicitly defined vocational education as:*

> *Vocational education is used as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related science and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. Technical and vocational education is further understood to be an integral part of general education; a means of preparing for occupational fields and for effective participation in the world of work; an aspect of lifelong learning and a preparation for responsibility citizenship; an instrument for promoting environmentally sound sustainable development; and a method of alleviating poverty (NPE, 2008, p. 24).*

The Policy stated the following as the goal of technical and vocational education:

- Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical levels;
- Provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development;
- And give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self-reliant economically (NPE, 2004, p.24-25).

There seems to be no contention about what vocational education is or what the goals of vocational education are but achieving the stated goal has been a hurricane in Nigeria. These objectives were stated over 25 years ago to redeem the bias against vocational-technical education. To this day, even though more vocational-technical schools have been established across the country when compared with the fewer institutions in 1981, the initial bias against and disdain for vocational education is still

evident. Despite the inclusion of vocational education in the National Policy on Education (section 7 of the 2008 edition), nothing worthwhile has been recorded in terms of its progress and impact on productivity to the economic viability of the nation. The wholesale adaptation of the British system of education in Nigeria was not in the best interest of the developmental needs of Nigeria because of the cultural differences of both societies. For example, British culture and society encouraged elitism, privilege, aristocracy and hierarchy. This was reflected in her educational system, the training of the privileged and the leisure class. But Nigeria had no such socio-cultural structure. Thus, according to Ajayi (1963), the African lacked the environmental influence which supported this type of education. This, however, stresses the importance of science as a necessary tool for technological development.

With the advent of democracy every attention points to a virile vocational educational policy but everyone appears to be wondering why Nigeria has failed to develop as it should, despite its vast human resources and stupendous oil wealth in this aspect of skills development. While vocational education has continued to thrive in many societies and as a means of creating a classless society, Nigeria has neglected this aspect of education. The neglect of vocational education is robbing the nation of the contributions its graduates could make to national development. The 6-3-3-4/ 9-3-4 curriculum was tailored to achieve a comprehensive school system where emphasis was placed on skills acquisition so as to enable young ones from different socio-economic backgrounds to obtain educational training from both academic and vocational courses and choose a career of their choice but it is yet to be realized.

There exists a lack of alignment or insufficient alignment between policy document and implementation. These gaps or touch stones to implementation seem to be responsible for the lack of educational advancement in the country (Denga, 2000; Aluede, 2006). Every facet of the economy has been affected by the scarcity of skilled technicians. The society lacks competent bricklayers, carpenters, painters and auto mechanics; laboratory and pharmacy technicians, electronic/electrical technicians and skilled vocational nurses etc.

Enrolment of students in vocational education has been low within the past three decades when compared with our secondary schools. As reported in the fourth National Developmental Plan (1981-1985), there were 1,513 secondary schools in Nigeria in 1975-1976 academic year, with a 704,917 student population. In contrast, 250 vocational-technical colleges enrolled only 123, 627 students. During the 1980-1981 academic year, the number of secondary schools rose from 1,513 to 4,334 with a total number of 2,226,124 students. Thus, within 5 years, Nigerian secondary schools recorded an increment of 2,821 schools (65.1%) and student enrolment increment of 1,521,207 (68.3%). In contrast, 285 vocational colleges were in operation during the 1980-1981 academic years and enrolled only 263,495 students. Thus, within 5 academic years (1975-76 to 1980-81) the number of vocational education colleges in our country rose from 250 to 285. This is an increment of 35(14%) of the total colleges established in 1975-76. Also, a total of 139,868 (53.1%) student enrolments

were recorded as compared with the 68.3% of the secondary school enrolment increment of 1,521,207 students (FGN- Economic Planning, 1985).

In addition to the above findings, Onwueme (1995, p.8) reported a reduction in the number of vocational colleges and its enrolment between 1991 and 2001. For instance, student enrolments in 190 vocational colleges were 72,136 students. In the same year, there were 5,948 secondary schools with 1,865,189 student population. In 1998, three years later, the number of secondary schools in the country reduced from 5,948 to 5,859 while that of vocational-technical colleges increased from 190 to 252. Thus, a difference of 62 colleges within 3 years recorded 17,400 students (19.4%) of the student enrolment in 1998. In contrast, although the number of secondary schools was reduced by 89 schools in 1998, the student enrolments for this year were 2,941,781. Thus, a difference of 1,076,592 students (36.6%) was recorded as an additional enrolment when compared with 1995.

In 1999, however, a total of 261 vocational colleges across the nation had 1,179 student populations. Although the number of the colleges increased by 9, student populations reduced from 89,536 in 1998 to 1,179 in 1999 while that of secondary schools rose to 2,723,791 students. Thus, a dramatic shortfall of 88,357 students (98.7%) of the 1998 student enrolments was recorded in 1999. In contrast, only 117,990 students (4.0%) of the 2,941,781 student enrolments in our secondary schools were recorded during the 1998 academic year (Onwueme, 1995, p.10).

The rising unemployment and underemployment syndrome has been attributed to the lack of skilled manpower to drive the economy. Technical education, when given the proper focus to provide manpower and skill would lead to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge appropriate for a developing nation to checkmate unemployment (Isichei and Bolaji, 2008). If the philosophy of Nigerian education is to build a self-reliant nation, then the technical aspect of the educational system should be the focus of stakeholders in the national development plan. A critical analysis of the new basic education policy of 9 years of schooling revealed that subjects such as agriculture, home economics and business education that can promote self-reliance, which is one of the cardinal objectives of Nigerian education for a democratic society, are treated as elective subjects (NERDC, 2008).

Sadly, social recognition and advancement in the workplace depends to a large extent on the stack of academic degrees one has acquired. This is because of poor societal perception; the few technical and vocational schools in the society also lack qualified teachers and functional workshops and equipment for on-hand applications. Youth unemployment has been skyrocketing in Nigeria because they lack the relevant skills employers need as well as for self-employment. The Federal Government recently acknowledged that about 80% of Nigeria's youth are unemployable because they lack the basic skills that are required (Olufowobi, 2007).

The political leaders are good at cataloguing the reasons for Nigeria's problems and predicting the future without implementing reasoned policies to create a better future.

Just as Peter Drucker has observed: "if you want to predict the future, create it". Thus, it is not enough to implore the youth to become productive citizens, develop entrepreneural skills, or to reject social vices by word of mouth without providing them with the basic training and resources to develop the skills. There is no shortcut to achievement. Life requires preparation. Therefore, Nigerians need action and not political rhetoric on national development.

5.6 The University Community and Democracy in Nigeria

This is one of the concepts for which there have been several interpretations. The concept of freedom has been part of the dividends of democracy. Freedoms to life, to speech, to fundamental human rights, to justice etc are the tenets of democracy. It is within the context of this study to take a look at the concept from the perspective of the educational system in Nigeria. The National Policy on Education tends to reflect this to a large extent. The document expresses this in section 8, paragraph 63, thus:

a. The internal organization and administration of each institution shall be its own responsibility;

b. The traditional areas of academic freedom for the institution are to:

   i select their students, except where the law prescribes otherwise;

   ii appoint their staff;

   iii teach, select areas of research; and

   iv determine the content of courses,

Government shall continue to respect this freedom as long as these areas are in consonance with national goals (NPE, 2008, p.8).

From the foregoing, it means that the role of tertiary education in human capital development, research and technological innovation cannot be underestimated. More important is the fact that higher education by nature thrives on freedom and autonomy. These are to be seen within the context of general laws, traditions, and policies of the government that rules over society in which the institutions form a part as mentioned above.

University autonomy and academic freedom are highly significant substructures that are integral to the idea of the ideal university. Universities have always regarded the two ideas as indispensable values and have defended them as such due to their inestimable value (Onyeonoru, 2008 p.6). According to Babalola, Jaiyeoba and Okediran (2007, p.277-303), university autonomy is a limited concept implying freedom of universities from external control in matters relating to academic and effective participation of the academic community in the formulation and implementation of university policies and programmes. Considering the Nigerian situation and the problem of academic freedom and autonomy, there is need in this investigation to specially examine the historical conception of the concepts and the modern understanding of both concepts.

Historically, three types of university were established in Europe. According to Okafor (1971, p.3), the first type was by the association of scholars and was called universities

scholarium. The corporation of students employed teachers and formulated policies to ensure satisfactory discharge of duties. The second type called universitas magistorium was the association of masters. The third type was founded by state authorities. In each, it suffices to say that academic freedom and autonomy were guaranteed by the law.

In its historical status the university was a distinct and distinguished social institution, which was regarded as the home of unfettered intellectual activity thus providing an enabling environment for both masters and scholars to pursue their teaching and learning. The term scholar has come to designate not only the student who is engaged in systematic pursuit of knowledge but also the teacher who is not only learned in his field but also engages in continuous study, research and unraveling the mysteries of the unknown. ASUU Bulletin (1981, p.2) is more explicit on this:

> *Ever since antiquity, it has become clear that there are men who are gifted either by nature or nurture to devote their lives to the business of unraveling the mysteries of nature and human society. Universities sprang up to provide the atmosphere conducive to the activities of such men/scholars without undue interference from the outside world. Consequently, the concept of a university is rooted in the historical development of the deal of a self-governing community of scholars (ASUU Bulletin, 1981 p.2).*

Thus, the idea of university autonomy and academic freedom in a democratic nation is universal and the same everywhere, which is to enjoy a high degree of freedom in terms of autonomy and academic freedom of its staff in order to play a meaningful role in societal development and to discharge its responsibilities effectively. Farayola

(2007, p.186) asserts that by its very nature, the university is supposed to be an 'ivory tower', a sacred institution that insulates scholars from unwarranted interference of the larger society. While citing the examples of France, Netherlands, Japan, Vietnam, the World Bank reports demonstrated how financial and spending autonomy could serve as incentives for quality improvement and efficiency in various higher education systems (Babalola, et al 2007). How can the university founded and supported by the state remain an island by itself? It cannot stand without the necessary financial and political-legal support.

In an ideal democratic society, the role of the university in the ancient and contemporary has been significantly the same. The societal trust is that the university is capable through its studies, researches and programmes of findings solutions to man's scientific, technological, socio-political, cultural and humanistic problems. Besides finding solutions to problems, the university also acts as the conscience of society. It understands and can interpret the goals and values of the society better than any other social institution. If the university is to seek the truth and publish the truth, then it must be free and unfettered. Therefore, the clamour for university autonomy in a democratic Nigeria is legitimate.

The university's dialectical relationship with the society of its existence is quite significant in its development. In feudal Europe, feudal lords were 'patrons of letters' and 'men of letters' were hired, fired, victimized or patronized. Similarly, in the capitalist era, 'men of letters' became the handmaid of the so-called captains of

industry and the ruling political elite. This development destroyed the 'ivory tower' concept as an ideal institution for promoting the democratic spirit.

It is also pertinent to say that, right from antiquity, tension had existed between scholars and rulers. Ideas and ideals that offended the powers that be attracted all sorts of penalty. Socrates was forced to drink the hemlock and died for espousing ideas and ideals that offended the rulers. Jesus Christ, whose views were considered by the priests as anathema, was crucified. The likes of Thales, Aneximare and Anaximander during the pre-Socratic dispensation were crushed to death by Athenian rulers for their scientific explanations for occurrences in the world. The Italian philosopher Giordano Bruno (1548-1600) was burnt at the stake by the priests of the church during the medieval period. However, the views for which these men died became truths, which helped to shape the course of human civilization. To Nwala (1994, p.76), the university has passed through three distinct periods: the period of opposition, period of acceptance, and the period of independence and autonomy. In the period of opposition, any idea which ran contrary or counter to the existing order amounted to heresy. The penalty for heresy was humiliation, torture or death.

Since truth cannot be suppressed forever, another period witnessed acceptance of the views of the scholars. In that period, religious preachers and intellectuals became court servants and preachers. In the medieval period philosophy which was once dreaded and suppressed by the church was made the handmaiden of religion. During this period scholars were made to bend their ideas to suit the whims and caprices of the rulers. Both periods of opposition and acceptance were not good enough for

scholarship. In the first place, scholarship became a secret and illegal pursuit while in the second, scholarship was accepted, respected but corrupted. Then, there came the third period of independence and autonomy. Having recognized the necessity for ideas or heresies of scholars, the idea of 'self-governance' became a universally accepted principle.

The relevance of the university to commerce, industry, technology, education and to other aspects of human endeavour was no longer in doubt. The university thus became the home of heresy, where truth was sought without limit or hindrance. In other words, it became unfettered in its intellectual activity. Then the scholars were thought to deserve a peculiar environment and a unique condition. Nigerian universities have not had it good in terms of autonomy and academic freedom. The erosion of university autonomy and academic freedom during the military era left a tale of woes among the academia. It is even more pathetic with the rebirth of democracy in Nigeria today, and the reasons are not far-fetched. A quick survey of the nature of interference by the government in the administration of the university would be appropriate for this study.

Loss of academic freedom in Nigerian universities was caused by three basic factors, namely: government interference, the abuse of university autonomy by the university community, and structural and legal constraints. The Nigerian experience shows that from the 1970s the physical and moral decay in Nigerian universities was evident. There was inadequate funding. Conditions of service for the university staff became

unbearable. Universities became subject to control by the civil service. The cumulative effect of all these was the 75 days strike of the ASUU in 1981. The following is a catalogue of the interference:

- In 1973, a trade dispute arose between the governing council of Nigerian universities and the local branches of university teachers' association on the review of the conditions of service;

- In 1975, the general purge of Gen. Muritala Mohammed affected many university staff. This purge ignored university autonomy and academic freedom;

- The Senate of the University of Ibadan also experienced erosion of its autonomy and academic freedom in 1978 when a query was issued to it by the Federal Ministry of Education asking it to explain why so many students failed in the 1977/78 academic session;

- In 1978, the 'Ali must go' nationwide student revolt necessitated the setting up of the Mohammed Commission of Inquiry. Following its report, two Vice-Chancellors were removed and nine members of staff from three universities were sacked. Also, the Anya committee on Academic Freedom was set up to define the concept of academic freedom and work out a code of conduct for students and staff;

- At the University of Lagos in 1981, six professors were dismissed on the orders of President Shehu Shagari for no just cause;

- At the Ahmadu Bello University in 1992 there was an attempted abduction of Dr. Patrick Wilmot, an anti-apartheid campaigner, who was then the Head of Department of Sociology. He was later deported for criticizing the regime of Gen. Gbadamosi Babaginda;

- At the University of Benin, Dr Festus Iyayi, Professor Itse Sagay and others were dismissed;

- In 1991/92 Dr AOK Noah, Dr Siyanbola Oyeweso, Dr Kunle Lawal and two others were sacked by the government for opposing the draconian and machiavelian leadership style of the administration of the late Professor Jadesola Akande, the then Vice-Chancellor of the Lagos State University, Ojo.

- In 2000/2001 the government of Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, the former executive governor of Lagos State, sacked six professors in LASU for opposing the re-appointment of the late Professor Fatiu Akesode.

- At the University of Ilorin, in 2002, some lecturers were sacked in the wake of a national strike. However, the few that are alive have been re-instated by judiciary. All efforts by ASUU to make the government recall the sacked lecturers were rebuffed by the University of llorin Authorities. This is the kind of internal disharmony which the government often taps to rubbish university autonomy.

- ASUU which has been at the forefront of the reforms in Nigerian universities has also been met with stiff opposition from the Federal Government. Frequently, ASUU has been banned and unbanned; student unions, most especially NANS, have also been banned and unbanned. Many academics have been dismissed, retired and unjustly jailed for allegedly teaching what they were not employed to teach.

Apart from the government's erosion of the autonomy of tertiary institutions, the university community itself also exhibited clear cases of the abuse of the fragile academic freedom and the ideal of university autonomy. Below are some instances:

- At the University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 1964, a professor was dismissed for criticizing the university administration in a memorandum he submitted to the University Senate.

- At the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University) in 1964, there was a split in the Action Group – a political party within the university-which filtered into the affairs of the university. The crisis eventually led to the sack of a professor and resignation of four lecturers.

- At the University of Lagos in 1965, ethnic and political rivalries within the Nigerian state crept into the university in the appointment of Vice-Chancellor. The University community favoured the candidature of Professor Eni Njoku but the government endorsed the late Professor Saburi Biobaku for political reasons (ASUU, 1981; Bagudo, 2004).

Since 2008, the Lagos State University community has been engulfed in a prolonged crisis over the re-appointment of the incumbent vice- chancellor for a second term in office. Cases of high-handedness, victimization, selective promotion and financial misappropriation are some of the allegations levelled against the Vice-Chancellor. Individuals who have the guts to speak out are denied promotion, while some are forced out of the university community for criticizing the Vice-Chancellor's leadership style. These cases of abuse raised some critical questions about the extent to which

universities can be insulated from the vagaries of partisan politics in the society at large.

The third threat to academic freedom and university autonomy is the structural and legal constraint within the context of the bodies approved for the oversight functions of the universities. For instance, a critical appraisal of the roles of the Visitors, the Ministry of Education, the National Universities Commission, the University Council, and the Vice-Chancellor reveals a wounding tendency against academic freedom ad university autonomy. As stipulated in the universities' constitutions, the visitors are the president for federal universities, the governors for state universities and the heads of missions or individuals for private universities. The visitor has legislative, executive and judicial or quasi-judicial powers. The unrestricted power of the visitor may abuse or rubbish university autonomy.

The ministry of education approves budgets, recommends government appointees, and supervises the visitation of the universities on behalf of the visitor. For instance, it was the ministry in 1988 that announced the ban of ASUU. Also, there were instances of the ministry announcing the sack of some lecturers without reference to the governing councils of the affected tertiary institutions.

The Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) was set up to provide technical advice on the establishment of new universities, to prepare a master plan for balanced and coordinated development of universities, to provide general policy guidelines, advice

on the financial needs of the universities, receive block grants and allocate these to universities, and so on. Since 1974, the NUC has gone beyond its general functions to interfere in the internal administration of universities. In 1978, the NUC announced new fees in universities, which provoked student unrest nationwide. It has also interfered on matters relating to conditions of service, which should be the exclusive task of the university council.

Most university council members are politicians appointed by the government. The council's power of hiring, dismissal and disciplining of staff is often usurped by the government. Also, because of the executive powers of the Vice-Chancellor, the powers of the council may be rubbished.

The idea that the council is the highest governing body is not really true. This being so, power is heavily concentrated in the Vice-Chancellors. This is disastrous to the university community. The Vice-Chancellor's appointment is by the Visitor through the Council. Such an external appointment makes the Vice-Chancellor to be primarily responsible to the government that appointed them. Hence, they may be tempted to employ unconstitutional means to usurp the powers of the various organs of the university, especially in areas of appointment, promotion, discipline and dismissal. Internal democracy is wounded by the hostility of the Vice-Chancellor with his enormous powers and this threatens the issue of academic freedom and university autonomy.

From all indications the democratic government in Nigeria seems not to understand the peculiar character of the university and other tertiary institutions judging by the incessant encroachment into the affairs of the academic community. In fact, it is very clear that the government is not favourably disposed to granting academic freedom and autonomy because up till now the 'University Miscellaneous Provision Act 2003 which provides for the academic freedom, autonomy, management and re-organization of universities in Nigeria is yet to be implemented. The next chapter shall explicate the relevance of Dewey's philosophy for this investigation.

CHAPTER SIX

DEWEY'S PHILOSOPHY TO DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

The argument presented in this section is on the study of Dewey's relevance today. Dewey's philosophy was instrumental to the prevailing waves of school reform innovators in the 20th century in America. It is essential, however, to reread Dewey because his outlook on education and democracy is useful and important in repositioning educational practice in Africa and particularly in Nigeria.

Research Question 1:

6.1 Dewey on Education and Democratic Education in Nigeria

In Nigeria today, education is to transmit the long-established values and past knowledge of our society. As agents of the community, teachers are expected to infuse selected pre-determined skills into the students, often through a subject-centered, discipline-oriented, standard-based education. In practice, the traditional methodologies in our public schools often result in a strict and controlling classroom where children are taught to learn by rote methods and are expected to memorize information to demonstrate mastery of subject matter or of the content of study. This rigid structure of schools requires children to learn content distant from their lived experiences in overcrowded, anonymous classrooms. The teachers often see students as passive vessels in which to pour knowledge regardless of the children's individual needs and differences.

It is against this traditional way of imparting knowledge that Dewey's view is crucial. He believes that traditional approaches to education cannot develop a thoughtful, capable, well-rounded citizen who could contribute to a rapidly changing democratic society. He therefore advocated 'experiential education'- a curriculum that responded to both the needs of the students and the time. His position is that a curriculum must always be a question of the child's experiences and the ability of the child to connect the experiences and the subject matter. Dewey's desire is for a curriculum that will foster educational experiences for children in a democracy. He disapproved of traditional educators who seemingly stressed subject-centered curriculum at the expense of the child's individual interests. Dewey's goals of an educational curriculum are to make all of us problem solvers employing intelligent thinking. He asserts

> *When subject-matter dominates a curriculum, habits of acceptance of other people's opinions are formed, and memorizing becomes the functioning quality … the more and the longer the children are exposed to a subject matter program, the less they are capable of making use of opportunities for experience (Dewey, 1938, p.106).*

Dewey's theory of educative experience is a learning experience founded on the principles of continuity and interaction which he referred to as transaction. It is a concept that says children will learn best when they are helped to connect their past and present experiences, both in and out of school, which can then be used to create new knowledge and to expand opportunities for future growth. The hallmark of this principle is premised on the teacher and the learner with the content to be learned by striking an orderly yet dynamic balance between the needs of the learner as an individual in a social context and the subject matter to be learned; a balance between

the teacher's control over the traditional subject matter and the child's expression of personal understanding. It is a process created by the teacher where both subject matter and children connect, where knowing and not knowing intersect, where the learners become a part of a self-perpetuating learning process.

This principle was put to practice by Eileen (2000). When she was trying to help her fifth graders understand the causes of the Civil War in America, she discovered that some children found little interest or meaning from the textbook's traditional approach that focused on mastery of the historical facts that seemed meaningless to the children. Therefore, she developed a curriculum that presented classroom experiences designed to help the children empathize with the plight of the slaves. By stimulating the children to think about times in their own lives when they felt under the total control of an authority as well as dependent on that figure, she actively engaged them with the subject matter through what Dewey calls "psychologizing" the content. Then, when she used readers' theater techniques to juxtapose Fredrick Douglass' Independence Day Speech at Roachester with Martin Luther King Jnr's, The March on Washington Address ("I Have a Dream"), the abstract concepts of freedom became concrete for the children.

This principle advocated by Dewey, if adopted, can help to rejuvenate the educational system from the traditional approach to learning that is characterized memorization or cramming of subject that just needs a simple act of understanding through illustration. The situation report on student performance in Nigerian National Examination (NECO, WAEC) is a clear indication that there is a need to revisit the Nigerian education

curriculum. Subjects like English Language and Mathematics can effectively be taught with the aid of this principle. For instance, NECO's performance report of 2009 presents a gloomy picture of the future of Nigerian education:

> *November/December Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) results. Only 4, 223 candidates passed with five credits and above in English and Mathematics. This is just 8.41 per cent of those who sat for the examination (WAEC Report, 2010).*

The educational system in Nigeria of today presents bleak, blank faces gazing at bleak, bland futures. The tower of the public schools has crashed down to the dungeons of decrepit desolation and disrepair; from an incubator of fresh thinking, it is now a prison of dead thoughts. What can be perceived from the prism of this prison is a picture not of enlightenment at its highest peak, but ignorance at its darkest pitch. Suleiman (2010, p.12) observes with outmost dismay that:

> *Nigerian students know everything about soccer, nothing about Socrates; all about Arsenal, nothing about Aristotle; all about Maradona, nothing about Michelangelo; all about Pele, nothing about Plato. This is nothing but a display of mast of memories misted by the fog of foiled, failed folios (Suleiman, 2010, p.12).*

From the foregoing, it seems that there are serious limitations to the present methods. It is time to reconsider the inadequacy of the methods. One will not be surprised to find out that most, if not all, primary and secondary school teachers in Nigeria teach on their memories rather than on pedagogic methods, skills and experiences.

The most important question we need to raise about education, in Nigeria among the most important questions that can be raised in the society particularly at this period of the democratic history is: What kind of education do we want Nigerian children to get?

Aristotle, cited by Cremin (2007, p.154), wrote that when we educate we aim at the good life. Hence, if the desire of the nation is for the good life, then the reform of the educational system should be considered. We do not need a reform which rests upon the enactment of law, but one that sees education as a fundamental method of social progress.

This approach will go a long way in helping pupils solve problems based on their associated and individual interests. As a result of learning through this process, pupils are expected to be able to transfer their knowledge to situations in and out of school. Apart from that, problem-solving requires the internal self-discipline desperately needed in this country, rather than the type of external coercion often administered by most teachers in schools in the wrong belief that discipline comes from the problem itself and is internal to the requirements of the task posed by the problem.

Aladejana (2005, p.24) asserts that it is about time that this method was tried on a large scale in Nigeria because as the pupils are guided to use it their co-operative experiences of working with others in associated problem-solving groups are enriched. As participating members of the group, the pupils learn to co-operate with others, contribute to the discussion and are an integral part of deliberations and decide to act with others. This method of education will definitely stress the co-operative act, based on shared experiences and use of democratic practices urgently needed to restore sanity to the society.

Democratic education is vital for the success of democracy. It is based on the premise that every child should be provided with learning experiences that strengthen individuality and at the same time build social cohesion. Education in this regard is a valuable tool for helping to bring about democratic values and behaviours. According to Parker (2003), it is only an educated person or an enlightened citizenry that can make sound political decisions. It is in line with this statement that Nigerian education has attempted to facilitate the growth of an enlightened citizenry by providing students with some knowledge of the government's workings through teaching of social studies.

Biesta (2006) in this line of thought defined democratic education as that which aims to equip students with the required knowledge, skills and attitudes to be effective citizens of a democracy. Accordingly, students should gain knowledge about the institution of a democratic government and the rights and responsibilities of individual citizens, acquire skills in communication and deliberation, and take pride in their country. Regardless of the frequent setbacks in the nation's democratic governance, many still believe that schools should be responsible for the teaching of democracy and preparing students to participate in the democratic process. Rose and Gallup (2000) submit that nearly two-thirds of all Americans think that schools should teach that "democracy is the best form of government". Indeed, many scholars and educators have called for concerted action to strengthen democracy in schools by emphasizing critical thinking, public deliberation, service learning, constructivist teaching, critical pedagogy and critical teacher education. Is this the ideal concept of democratic education according to Dewey?

Dewey (1938, p.41) argued that democracy has to be enacted anew in every generation, in every year and day, in the living relations of person to person in all social forms and institutions. On different occasions Dewey reiterated the same point. He asserted that the greatest mistake that we can make about democracy is to conceive of it as something fixed, fixed in idea and fixed in its outward manifestation (Dewey, 1938, p.82). The emphasis Dewey presents in this study is to get rid of the habit of thinking of democracy as something institutional and external and to acquire the habit of treating it as a way of personal life. To him, creation of democracy as a form of all-encompassing culture and as a personal way of life will gradually lead to better answers to the question of political governance. Thus democratic education is simply not about direct instruction in principles of democracy as the traditional educator might use them but about active participation in the community.

The concept of democratic education, according to Dewey, is the creation of fully developed human beings for a flourishing human community. He observes that the term 'democratic education' like moral education, peace education, or environmental education, makes one think of a particular academic curriculum or programme. However, for Dewey democracy is not an academic subject but a moral outlook on life. Democratizing our lives is more important than merely democratizing schools. In this respect, Stone (2008, p.3) posit that:

> *Dewey's idea of democratic education is important. Those who claim to understand Dewey yet do not reconstruct him for their time, place and purpose fail to appreciate what was perhaps his most profound message. Even though I do*

> *not adopt the same expression as Dewey, I embrace Dewey's unique rendering of democracy as synonymous with education.*

There are three points that can be deduced as to the meaning of democratic education, according to Dewey. The first is that Deweyan democratic education is learning from life itself. As Dewey (1916, p.370-9) explained, it requires the essential "moral interest to learn from the contact of life". This moral interest lies in the belief that the very process of living together educates. One is not complete alone; we need others to stimulate us, challenge us, and to help us along the way. Dewey wrote about the need to receive and incorporate others into our own lives, including those we love or hate, those with whom we agree or disagree, and those with whom we spend a lifetime or only a few minutes. He opines that "those who disagree even profoundly with us are those from whom we may learn, and in so far, as friends" because it is a means of enriching one's own life experience (Dewey, 1939, p.228). The lesson from this is that democratic living demands that we should not turn away from interpersonal problems or social disputes but accept them as opportunities for learning. It demands that we artfully turn conflict into harmony, narrowness into openness, and shallowness into depth.

The second is that Deweyan democratic education is an education about us and our humanity. We learn many things from our association with others, but the most important thing we learn about is ourselves-our strength and weakness, our intelligence or prejudice, our fear or our desire, our joy or sorrow. According to Wang (2009), we learn about our humanness. Dewey warned against the illusion that one

can complete one's education, meaning learning to be more fully human by ignoring and excluding others. As Dewey contended, an environment in which some are limited will always in reaction create conditions that prevent the full development even of those who fancy they enjoy complete freedom for unhindered growth (Dewey 1939, p.20).

Lastly, Dewey's democratic education will allow everyone to make a contribution in creating a more just and human world. This requires that we shift the language of rights and responsibilities to that of communication, cooperation and contribution. Dewey stressed the importance of communication by saying that " democracy is not concerned with freaks or geniuses or heroes or divine leaders but with associated individuals in which each by intercourse with others somehow makes the life of each more distinctive" (Dewey,1916, p.53). The democratic way of life values the habits of amicable cooperation. This simply means that the idea of contribution is no less important than that of communication and cooperation as stated in Dewey's writings. The researcher believes that Deweyan democratic education thus reconstructed can make the nation safe for democracy.

Research Question 2:

6.2 Dewey and equality in Educational Opportunity

Dewey's idea of equality of access to educational opportunity is a panacea for solving this dilemma that seems to be a thorny issue in the nation's educational system.

Dewey and Tufts refer to it as serious decisional problems which involve a struggle within oneself.

> *"serious decisional problems involve a kind of 'struggle within oneself'. The struggle is not between a good which is clear to him and something else which attracts him but which he knows to be wrong. Rather, 'it is between values each of which is an undoubted good in its place but which now get in each other's way" (Dewey and Tufts, 1932, p.175).*

If a private dilemma is a struggle within an individual, a social dilemma is one between different values each of which commands public concerns and can reasonably compete for our respect and loyalty. The tension involves divergent demands made on the society by principles that cry out for our attention (with good reason), and yet conflict with each other in such a way that we cannot satisfy them all. Thus, the subject of inequality involves many such dilemmas. The conflict that has received most attention concerns the contest of inequality of educational opportunity among the citizenry.

Although inequality in the society cuts across every part of human endeavour such as social and economic inequalities, the intent of this study is to examine the inequality within the context of educational opportunity in Nigeria. This particular issue has received a fair amount of discourse among philosophers of education; it has also received a fair share of views and comments from other professional stakeholders and, rightly so since it is an important conflict. Sen (1997, p.2) confirms that many find severe inequality in the society as barbaric. Yet attempts to eradicate inequality can, in many circumstances, lead to loss of most, or all.

The big issue is that inequality is seen as an 'inner struggle' which has serious ideological implications for a nation (Sen, 1992, p.15). More importantly, for a nation that is on the verge of a new era in their national life. In principle, democracy has come to stay in Nigeria for the first time in almost five decades of her existence with the enfranchised citizenship on all the people regardless of sex, race, or ethnic origin. The investigator is of the opinion that the concept of democracy should not be seen only from the choice it portends - universal suffrage- but more from the angle of the right which means that both universal suffrage and universal schooling are inextricably bound together to make democracy work. Adler (1982, p.1) agrees that the one without the other is a perilous delusion. He opines that suffrage without schooling produces mobocracy, not democracy, not rule of law, not constitutional government by the people as well as for them (Adler, 1982, p.2)

Dewey (1916, p.85) tied these two words together and let each shine a light upon the other when he asserts that:

> *a democratic society must provide equal educational opportunity for the citizenry. Not only by giving to all its children the same quantity of public education- the same number of years in school but also by making sure to give to all of them, all with no exceptions the same quality of education (Dewey, 1916, p.85).*

The ideal Dewey set before us is a challenge that Nigeria as a nation has failed to meet. However, the country cannot continue to fail without disastrous consequences for the citizenry. For the proper working of our political institutions, for the efficiency of the nation's industries and businesses, for the salvation of the economy, for the vitality

of the culture, and for the ultimate good of the citizens as individuals, and especially the future citizens.

The country is facing the challenge of continued failure to fulfill the educational obligations of a democracy. The democratic experience is yet to impart fully on the nation's school system. A democratic promise of equal educational opportunity that is half-fulfilled is worse than a promise broken. As Dewey rightly observed 'education is the gateway to equality'. He submits that:

> *equal educational opportunity is not in fact provided if it means no more than taking all the children into public schools for the same number of hours, days, and years. If the educational system is such that divides into sheep and the goats, into those destined solely for toil and those destined for economic and political leadership and for a quality of life to which all should have access, then the democratic purpose has been undermined by an inadequate system of public schooling (ibid, p.90).*

It however could be deduced that the educational system failed in achieving equality of educational opportunity not because of quantity of public schooling provided but quality (Akinpelu, 2005, p.256). This failure is a downright violation of the nation's democratic principles. Hence, progress toward the fulfillment of the democratic principles by means of the educational system should be accelerated taking recognition of Dewey's ideal of equal educational opportunity. In a nutshell, it need not take another century to achieve uniform quality for all in the nation's public schools. There is no acceptable reason that trying to promote equality of educational opportunity should lead to the lessening or loss of quality. Margonis (2007) stresses that if a nation would dedicate herself to the attainment of equal education and proceed in the

manner articulated by Dewey, it would little by little bring it closer to the aim of educational equality in democracy.

Research Question 3:

6.3 Dewey and Quota System

There is a raging controversy over the complexities of admission policies in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The normative argument for advocating a quota system in respect of admission procedures in Nigeria is informed by the need to promote equal educational opportunity for the supposedly less developed regions to advance themselves. According to Aristotle, treat equals equally and unequal unequally in proportion to their relevant differences (Aristotle, Book V, 3).

The pragmatist's position is against the issue of the Federal Character principle. Pragmatists argue that entrance to university should be based on the principle of merit. To Dewey those who succeed in pre-university academic work or in admission examinations are meritorious in academic achievements for which these are evidence and deserve admission to university in recognition; therefore (Dewey, 1958, p.348-50). He asserts that places other than universities should be found for those who lack the potential for advancement of the sort a university can facilitate.

The doctrine of Federal Character and its forerunner 'quota system' are contentious issues that have been entrenched in the public sphere of the nation. Since its inception as a formalized doctrine for distribution of federal appointments to reflect equitably the

different dimensions of the nation's ethnic, regional, and religious, heterogeneity, in order to "promote a sense of belonging and loyalty" among diverse peoples of Nigeria, it could be said that they are solutions that have deepened the problem that they were designed to tackle (Ekeh, 1989, p.34). Afigbo believes that the present structure of the Nigerian federation has not succeeded in meeting and solving the problems which necessitated the emergence of the doctrines (Afigbo, 1989, p.16). He is of the view that the Nigerian north-south dichotomy remains a thorny issue, in spite of attempts to obliterate it by demarcating the nation into smaller states (ibid, p.10).

> *those who could not compete favourably for positions were the ones playing up all manner of sentiments for selfish motives. We are a country where leaders tend to play tribal sentiments, saying I am from south- south I am from North-west... all these are selfish motives tomake people who probably cannot compete with others..to use these sentiments (Ojeifor, 2010).*

Quota system in the Nigerian educational system is an issue that has gained editorial consciousness and promotion by the Nigerian press over a period of three decades. Agbaje (1989) observes that the Nigerian press has been guided in taking editorial positions in the debate mainly by the political interests of their proprietors. This in a nutshell buttresses the fact that the issue of quota system seems to be more of politics than distributive justice. Sharing Dewey's view, Agbaje and others opine that emphasis on public policy on 'Federal Character' rather than on merit amounts to injustice.

The principle of merit as advocated by Dewey's is centered on the fact that coming from an un-educationally deprived background or region does not constitute difference

that justifies exclusion from university education. Those who have educational deficiencies or could not meet up with the cut-off marks for admission can possibly go in for special programmes.

Question 4:

6.4 Dewey's Technical /Vocational Education and Curriculum Reform

In as much as education is an indispensable instrument for the development and transformation of the nation, an appraisal of the educational system that will bring about the desired transformation in national life is essential. This statement is buttressed by Noddings (2007, p.2) when he asserts that most of the job openings in the next decade will be in occupations that do not require a college education.

The argument has been that schools should have a standard curriculum that will prepare students for university education and thereafter the world of work. Today, secondary schooling is deemed compulsory for all Nigerian students as a way of preparing them for the university education. The irony here is that the rush for university education is so alarming that students are ready to accept any course offered them by the university even if it is against their choice. More important is the fact that in trying hard to get the students from failing, conscientious and energetic teachers manage to pull some unprepared youngsters up to a respectable level of performance, but even the best teachers often sacrifice the quality of their subjects to spare their students from the experience of failure. However, it is this system that is failing the students. Noddlings (2007, p.3) writes that an enlightened educational

structure would spend time finding out what the students are interested in and providing relevant alternative courses.

Dewey's position on this issue of curriculum reform is that schools should provide a variety of programs to address different needs, talents and interests. The idea of forcing everyone into a standard academic curriculum is highly questionable. Dewey criticizes the idea of compulsory higher education. To him:

> *they work hard. But, it is a nasty, anti-democratic message. It undervalues large numbers of the citizens who do work on which we all depend. Those kids who do not want to 'go to college' is sent with good intentions; it is meant to inform students that they can all 'make it' if colleges are demeaned (Dewey, 1927 p.184).*

On this same issue Isichei and Bolaji (2008) have raised questions on why the government is over-emphasizing university education to the neglect of other higher institutions in Nigeria. Is university education a must for everybody? Does it mean that there are no other institutions of higher learning that are relevant in building a nation? It is often observed that after the completion of secondary education in Nigeria, the next line of thinking is university education without the individual considering capability and talent. What about technical/vocational education as university education in achieving skills?

The researcher is aware that this is what the concept of a comprehensive school system at Ayeitoro is intended to achieve. But the comprehensive secondary school introduced in the 1980s, for all its faults, made it possible to increase secondary school attendance without achieving the primary aim for setting it up. It might be imagined

what difference it would make to the educational system and the development of the society if students, with guidance and encouragement, could choose their own tracks and switch tracks if they felt they needed to.

The Nigerian government's initiative or reform on basic education has not yielded any positive development. The situation seems pathetic. With so many resources invested in the reform programme, more than eight million children of school age are still not in school; drop-out rate in basic education or school is 9.3%; the transitional rate to secondary or high school in Nigeria is still at its lowest ebb of 60% (NUT, 2008). Some who even complete secondary school are not really prepared for university. Those who complete university education find themselves in jobs that do not require a university education.

Dewey's idea of reform is centered on vocational education. He believes two years of vocational or commercial training could be very useful for an occupational career. This task is achieved by introducing into the curriculum the practical activities which he called 'occupations'. An occupation is a 'mode of activity which reproduces or runs parallel to some form of work carried on in social life' (Dewey, 1956, p.132). This vocational perspective is founded squarely on Dewey's pragmatic theory of knowledge which strenuously maintains the 'continuity of knowing with an activity which purposely modifies the environment' (ibid p.344).

The emphasis on practical work is a proposal for a reform of the educational curriculum. Dewey is advocating a broad curriculum for secondary education centered

on vocationalism which will allow for a genuine discovery of personal aptitudes so that proper choice of a specialized pursuit in later life may be indicated. This actually connects well with Dewey's preference for a pedagogy which exploits the learner's interest and experience and, ideally, this is the practical solution that we need to salvage the educational system. Dewey's idea of what it is to have a vocation and his proposals for a vocational education reform have much value to offer the educators, policy makers and other stakeholders who are presently concerned with bridging the divide or dichotomy between secondary and vocational education in Nigeria.

Australia is an example of a country that has adopted this Deweyan ideology. The Encyclopedia (2010) mentions the International Assessment of Education for 2006 which ranks the Australian education system as sixth on a world-wide scale. So also, The Education Index, published with the UN's Human Development Index in 2008 listed Australia as 0.993, amongst the highest in the world (Encyclopedia, 2010). This feat has been attributed to their virile curriculum policy which gives premium to vocational education and demystifies university. Attesting to this is an online web which states that:

> *80% percent of school age children attend one school or the other. 60% goes to technical and further education-(TAFE), 20% percent attend university. 10% percent are into a form of labour that does not require a certificate (http://ad.yeildmanager.com/iframe3?).*

The reality of vocational education curriculum advocated by Dewey is possible if the comprehensive school system once established can be re-visited and backed up by strong legislation. Buttressing the potency of vocational education for the development

of skilled manpower and for effective national development, Fafunwa (1967, p.76-77), cited in Isichei (1998, p.181), asserts that African reconstruction, rebirth or development, can only become a reality when more emphasis is placed on technical education. The need for the reform of our educational curriculum is informed by the need for improvement in the quality of manpower and governance in Nigeria.

Question 5:

6.5 Dewey and the University Education in Democracy

The landscape of higher education is going through a period of rapid change. In many countries, Nigeria inclusive, the higher education sector has come under serious threats of autonomy and academic freedom, expressed in the idea that the prime function of higher education is the training of a high-skilled workforce and the production of high scientific knowledge. Apart from the knowledge monopoly that is commonly understood and justified in epistemological terms about the function of the university, does the University have a role in a democratic society outside the jurisdiction of being a custodian of knowledge? If it does have a role in democracy, can it be devoid or free from of external intervention?

There is absolutely no contention about the function of the university as a citadel of knowledge. The general definition of a university, simply put, is that it is an institution at the highest level of education where you can study for a degree or do a research. This definition sees the university as the last stage of educational attainment where a certificate is awarded after 3 or 4 years of attendance. Public perception does not differ from the above assertion. Supposedly, the prima-facie view of the public about

the university is that it is a place of education, a place for where a great deal of knowledge on a great many subjects can be acquired.

The university is regarded as the third and most advanced stage in education for the young (man and woman), i.e. for those who have attained maturity. Maritain (1948, p.75), cited by Isichei and Bolaji (2008), submits that university education is for those who have entered the adult universe of thought and are preparing themselves at close range for the tasks of manhood and womanhood.

He further states that this type of education is for those people who have enough reasoning and self-will, and have their hope, experience and self determination sharpened. Essentially, he is simply saying that this level of education is not for immature people or pessimists but for those individuals who by reason of knowledge acquired can face the societal challenges and better their lots. Philosophically, it means university education is not for everybody, though it is a fundamental right of any individual to have access to university education. The name "university" is exclusively reserved for higher learning in advanced and graduate studies. Thus, among the aims of the university is to achieve the formation and equipment of the youth in regard to the strength and maturity of judgment and intellectual virtues. Newman (1907, p.246) refers to it as a place of teaching universal knowledge.

It seems to mean that the term 'universal knowledge' connotes a study of wide sweep of generality to coincide with definite specialized studies. By implication, the holistic intent of this level of educational attainment is to produce more diversified outstanding

citizens of all ranks in the nation which is a sine qua non for a developed society, without losing its essential character.

Answering the question about the role of the university in a democracy, Dewey opines that the idea of the contribution of higher education to democracy lies first and foremost in the fact that a university must be free from external intervention, which does not mean that it would result in a university disconnected from wider social and political concerns. He maintained that the pursuit of truth would result in the enlightenment of the individual, society, the state, and mankind as a whole (Dewey, 1939, p.51).

He suggests that the university should become the site of public discourse so that it can become "important agents of the public sphere, initiating social change rather than just responding to it" (ibid, p.52). Giroux (2003, p.196) presents a similar view when he makes the case that higher education can and should function as a vital public sphere for critical learning, ethical deliberation and civic engagement. What unites these suggestions is that they are all, in a sense, normative. They specify a particular cause of action that needs to be stated and executed in order for higher education to perform its civic role (Beista, 2007, p.470).

Democracy and democratization have a history that at least goes back to the enlightenment and the emergence of the modern nation-state. According to Dewey (1916, p.271-285), it was a society in which knowing was more valued than doing and in which theory had a much higher status than practice. Dewey (1938, p.84) asserts

that the idea that the university should focus on the education of enlightened, informed and critical citizens is imperative. He stresses that the university's role should not be influenced by the elite in the society; rather, it should impact the citizenry as a custodian of knowledge.

The crux of Dewey's philosophy on the role of the university in democracy is that the agenda of the university should not only develop in an individual a reflective approach towards the production of scientific knowledge in the society alone but that the university should work assiduously toward the agenda of developing and contributing to the democractisation of knowledge. This is what Beista (2007) referred to as *knowledge democracy*. This, to Dewey, is crucial for the development of a knowledge society which in turn will help the university against any infringements or external influence on their autonomy and academic freedom.

CHAPTER SEVEN
CRITIQUE AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Critique of Dewey's Philosophical and Educational Views

The overriding philosophy of Dewey's work was his profound belief in Democracy and Education. This is because democracy and education are the ultimate ethical ideals of humanity and are therefore synonymous. Dewey's educational theories as presented in

his writings on education make a strong case for the importance of education not only as a place to gain content knowledge but also as a place to learn how to live. In his eyes, the purpose of education should not revolve around the acquisition of a pre-determined set of skills but realization of one's full potential and the ability to use those skills for the greatest goodness.

Dewey notes that to prepare a man for the future life means to give him command of himself .It means to train him so that he will have the full and ready use of all his capacities, in addition to helping an individual realize their full potential. Dewey goes on to acknowledge that education and schooling are instrumental in creating social change and reforms. The researcher upholds this Deweyan position because education remains the only regulatory process of sharing in the social consciousness and the adjustment of individual activities in the society.

However, Dewey was alarmed by many 'child-centered' excesses of educational- school pedagogues who claimed to be his followers. He argued that too much reliance on the child could be equally detrimental to the learning process. He was quick to point out that an educational structure should strike a balance in delivering knowledge while taking into cognizance the interest and experiences of the student. It is in line with this thought that this study argues that a teacher must take a stand with the child/learner and the departure from him. By this the researcher believes that it is the teacher and not the subject-matter that determines both the quality and the quantity of learning.

Thus, the duty of the teacher should not be the one to stand at the front of the room doling out the bits of information to be absorbed by the students. Instead, the teacher's role should be that of facilitator and guide. Just as Dewey puts it:

> *The teacher is not in school to impose certain ideas or to form certain habits in the child but he is there as a member of the community to select the influences which shall affect the child to assist him in properly responding to these influences (Dewey, 1990, p.9).*

Thus, the teacher becomes a partner in the learning process, guiding students to independently discover meaning within the subject area. This philosophy should become more increasingly popular idea with the present day teacher preparatory programme in Nigeria.

Dewey is most famous with his experimental education. He argues that if knowledge comes from the impressions made upon us by natural objects, it is impossible to procure knowledge without the use of objects which impress the mind (Dewey, 1916, p.217). This idea has been the propelling force behind many other influential experimental models and advocates. The experiential education that was postulated by Dewey will place students in the active role of researcher. Thus, Dewey did not only re-imagine the way that the learning process should take place but also the role the teacher should play within that process.

Dewey in his *Democracy and Education (1916/1966)* seeks to elevate and thereby elaborate the case for education in a way that allows us to see the possibility of a society that not only declares itself as democratic but as a society that can engage

with novelty and shared interests. His is keen to remind us that a 'lack of the free and equitable intercourse which springs from a variety of shared interests makes intellectual stimulation unbalanced' (Dewey, 1966, p.84). The emphasis, therefore, has to do with the development of human thinking. Hence, in this form of understanding democracy, education becomes a question of thought as much as governance. It stresses the basic assumption that democracy cannot strive in any society without education. Thus, it is tied to ethical responsibility as much as a question of society and socialization. This gives credence to Dewey's famous argument that "a democracy is more than a form of government" (ibid, p.87).

As we uphold Dewey's notion of democratic education, its prospects face other criticisms. Page (2006) argues that the first question that emerges when re-reading *Democracy and Education* against the ideology that '*No Child Should be Left Behind'* is that Dewey in all his treatises has never succeeded in making a convincing case for a humane curriculum to the public, or to school practitioners, policymakers, or even within the research community.

Dewey in defense urges us to assume all the consequences to which any prospect that calls itself democratic and educational could lay claims. In educational terms this apparent paradox between what often seems to be in opposed positions has a lot to do with curriculum. This notion is somehow accommodated by a view of the curriculum that would not lay an exclusive claim to history. This is where Kliebard's (2006, p.113) discussion of occupations and experiential knowledge comes in. Rather than dismiss

Dewey as being a failed prophet, Kliedbard's position puts the onus on the readers to study Dewey's philosophy more closely because of the integrity of his ideas and because they present a formidable challenge to how education is conventionally conceptualized and practiced, not simply in Dewey's time.

Kliebard takes the challenge to study Dewey's philosophy of education into the realm of teaching, particularly the discussion of the relationship between subject-matter and method. The denunciation of any split between method and subject-matter is clearly stated by Dewey, and Kliebard makes this the ground of his argument. While canvassing the methods identified by Dewey in *Pedagogical Creed* as appropriate in teaching, he takes the pleasure in presenting Dewey's famous notion of 'method of teaching as the method of an art, of action intelligently directed by ends' (Dewey, 1966, p.170). While reinforcing the idea of an organic relationship between subject-matter and teaching, Kliebard takes Dewey's argument into the realm of a sound knowledge of the subject-matter, which cannot be decimated by the shortcuts of a method devoid of content.

Reading this from the pedagogical point of view where pedagogy is not merely 'a technique of teaching', one cannot help but orientate Dewey's philosophy towards a much wider horizon across which could be appreciated a far more immanent understanding of teaching. The researcher believes that by this immanence one will begin to perceive teaching from its interiority, from what it holds in terms of potential, promise and meaning-indeed its dispositional essence. In a nutshell, to judge teaching

from its immanent character is to avoid its externalization in the forms of 'efficiency' and 'success'.

Fenstermarcher's (2006, p.97) invitation to 'rediscover the student' with Dewey's help claims that student as intentional, independently capable, autonomously deserving persons are at the core of Dewey's work. The assumption that student-centeredness has become a condition of a 'good practice' in education to Fenstermarcher is less complacent. The mainstream of his criticism is what he calls 'Herbart's Errors', the discovery of which he attributes to Dewey's insightful discussion of Herbart in *Democracy and Education.* He asserts:

> *Too many of us today commit "Herbart's Error", by placing so much of the emphasis on what teachers do to ensure the acquisition of subject-matter by the students that we lose sight of how and why students learn (Fenstermarcher, 2006, p.101)*

Here Fenstermarcher is not in disagreement with Kliebard's valorization of subject-matter rather, he qualifies the dynamic relationship between the subject-matter and method by drawing our attention to Dewey's location of the student at the core of education. To read Dewey from this perspective, he avers "one senses that democracy and education form ground, while the student forms the figure" (Ibid, p.102). This figuration of the student in the dynamic relationship between democracy and education returns our attention to the dispositional powers by which human beings achieve those appropriate spaces and opportunities by which knowledge is seen through the agency of learning.

Englund (2000, p.305) acknowledges the intellectual significance of Dewey's philosophy that is brought to bear on the relationship between democracy and education. He recognizes the philosophical tenets of Reconstructionism centered on the societal role of the schools. The democratic ideal of Reconstructionism can be compared with what has been called 'participatory democracy' from the viewpoint that schools should contribute to the development of pupils' interest in societal questions by focusing on possibilities for everyone, understanding the kind of issues involved in such questions and opportunities for discussion of controversial questions offering. The aftermath of this was the renaissance of ideas and citizenship education in schools and in Europe under such headings as 'political education'.

He argues that if one reads from Dewey's perspective of neo-pragmatism, the emphasis is on communication. Thus, Dewey is seen more as an advocate of education as communication. Education is just one aspect of a democratic form of social life that is communicative. He therefore argued in favour of deliberative democracy as an educational process based on the theory of communicative action. To Habermas (1996, p.271) the theory of communicative action is further developed into a model for deliberative democracy and a discourse theory of law and democracy. The models of deliberative democracy, according to (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996, p.34), are explicitly based on the need for education in deliberative attitudes on the part of the citizens who exercise the communicative power that is one of democracy's consequences. This model also sees the discursive creation of public opinion as an

educative process. The obvious question is, What is the part of schools in these processes? Gutamann puts it as follows:

> *We can conclude that 'political education'- the cultivation of virtues, knowledge and skills necessary for political participation-has moral primacy over the other purposes of public education in a democratic society. Political education prepares citizens to participate in consciously reproducing their society and conscious social reproduction is the ideal not only of democratic education but also of democratic politics (Gutamann 1987, p.287).*

She argues that it is reasonable to try to develop everyone's capacity and the opportunity, to question traditional authorities- for example, parents and religious ideas- and to provide every student with the critical intellectual abilities needed to evaluate and judge different life forms, even those that differ from those of their environment. This implies that it is the task of the schools to elevate every individual out of his or her private life to the public world, with the possibilities of making one's own choice among different ways to the good life.

Gutmann has pointed out that the mission of the public schools is to develop the deliberative virtues. The schools have to develop the capacities of children and youngsters to enter critical discussions where facts and values are simultaneously present and to develop their moral and political capacity to evaluate and judge in public discussions (Kymlicaka and Norman, 1995). She can also be seen as a representative of a balance between a participatory and a deliberative democratic view. Just like participatory democracy, deliberative democracy emphasizes participation in democratic processes but it accentuates the character of the process. Thus advocates of deliberative democracy stress the presence of different views or

arguments which are to be negotiated or put against each other in argumentation. Two or more different views on a subject are proposed by persons who confront each other but with openness in the argumentation.

Englund argues while acknowledging that we are destined to disagree that deliberative democracy also affirms that we are capable of deciding our common destiny on mutually acceptable terms. Thus compared to participatory democracy, deliberative democracy especially emphasizes responsibility and consequences, implying that socialization to citizenship and the exercising of a citizenship must be the focus. As Gutmann and Thompson write:

> *In any effort to make democracy more deliberative, the single most important institution outside government is the educational system. To prepare their students for citizenship, schools must go beyond*
> *teaching literacy and numeracy, though both are of course pre-requisites for deliberating about public problems. Schools should aim to develop their students' capacities to understand different perspectives, communicate their understandings to other people and engage in the give-and-take of moral argument with the view to making mutually acceptable decisions. These goals, which entail cultivating moral character and intellectual skills at the same time, are likely to require some significant changes in the tradition of civic education, which has neglected teaching this kind of moral reasoning about politics (Gutmann and Thompson, 1996, p.359).*

Westbrook (1991, p.138) in his influential book, *Dewey and American Democracy,* argues that Englund misconstrued Dewey's philosophical position on democracy and education. He asserted that the ideal of democracy and education which Dewey pursued could be characterized as a 'deliberative democracy'. He submits that:

> *Deliberative democracy captures in totality Dewey's philosophical erudition of procedural ideal better than the term used-participatory democracy, since it suggests something of character of the participation involved in democratic associations rooted in an expansive conception of the community of inquiry.*

Bohman (1997, p.322) upholds that Dewey's concept of democracy and education in outlook is deliberative in nature because it gives everyone an equal standing to use their practical reason in the give and take of reasons in dialogue. In this context, however, democracy as advocated by Dewey is equally an effective social freedom, understood as equal capability for public functioning. Thus, the idea of deliberative democracy postulated by the neopragmatic interpretation of Dewey's work creates new vision for the relationship between democracy and education, and as an educational process offers an image of a kind of communication where different perspectives are brought into ongoing meaning creating processes of will-formation.

Conclusion

In the contemporary culture of accountability and democratic education, pragmatism as a philosophy is crucial as a force of ideology for practice. In the words of Saito (2006, p.6), if a theory makes no difference in educational endeavour, it must be artificial. Putman (2005, p.8) argues that it is the educational point of view that enables one to envisage the philosophical problems whenever they arise. This study contends that since appearance of the work of Dewey on *Democracy and Education (1916/ 1966),* philosophers of education, policy initiators, educationists and other stakeholders have been advocating a philosophical ideology and educational structure in Nigeria that will

foster a democratic spirit among individuals on the one hand and between individuals and society on the other.

The idea of Dewey as discussed extensively in this study is essential for the revitalization of the Nigerian educational system with the aspiration to build a democratic society. The researcher submits that if indeed the nation is willing to conceive education as the process of forming fundamental dispositions, building a democratic society, developing a platform for equalitarianism, making vocationalism a focus of its educational proposal, Dewey's philosophy becomes imperative for the realization of these objectives. Saito (2006, p.7) captures the essence of pragmatism, declaring that it is philosophy centered on problem-solving, philosophy for ordinary living and most importantly, philosophy as education.

Thus, such a philosophy involves changes in dispositions and ways of action: philosophy must 'make a difference' in practice. This includes the role of philosophy in serving democracy as a way of life, the ongoing creation of a democratic community in which the welfare of each individual is enhanced through free and equal communication, and in respect of differences as the valuable source of mutual learning.

It could be reasonably inferred that the state of education in Nigeria is in dire need of Dewey's philosophy because of the growing concern for democracy and education in Nigeria towards achieving an overall objective of a democratic society. This is because

education is the only instrument for fostering democratic principles and democracy can only thrive in a nation that has a philosophical base. Hence, there is need for reform the present educational system from the traditional method of transmitting knowledge as highlighted in Dewey's philosophy.

Democracy has the potential to promote academic freedom and autonomy in the nation's tertiary institutions. The concept of equality of educational opportunity in the context of equality of access to educational opportunity is achievable in a democracy. Dewey's idea of democracy and education is relevant for development of democracy and education in Nigeria.

Contributions to Knowledge

1. The study has shown that Dewey's concept of democracy and education are applicable to the Nigerian condition. It has provided essential information on the ills associated with the Nigerian educational system and has called attention to the need to overhaul the system through Dewey's philosophical approach.

2. The study has revealed the appropriateness of Dewey's philosophy as panacea for achieving socio-economic development in Nigeria through a reform of technical/vocational education in Nigerian schools.

3. The study ascertained that Dewey's philosophy is appropriate in enhancing access to education and promotion of a democratic spirit among Nigerians.

4. The study has contributed to an understanding of the role of the university in fostering and promoting democratic governance. Dewey's philosophy has shown that the university's role should go beyond dissemination of knowledge to include developing and contributing to the democratization of knowledge.

Recommendations

In light of the above analysis, this study recommends an overhauling of the educational system through Dewey's philosophy with its corresponding philosophy of education of reconstructionsim.

The study has established that Dewey's philosophy can enhance access to education and promote a democratic spirit in the citizenry. It is recommended that educational opportunities should be given to all citizens of school age in public school based on the same quality and quantity as practiced in private schools.

Dewey's concept of democracy connotes equity and meritocracy for all citizens. It is on these premises that this study recommends that the Federal Government should abolish the concept of Federal Character/Quota System from the educational system. This will enable all individuals to compete favourably on merit for placement in our institutions of learning.

It is therefore recommended that two years of technical/vocational education should be made compulsory for all secondary school leavers before proceed for further

studies. This will adequately cater for the dearth of middle-level-manpower skills needed to drive the economy.

The study recommends that the Federal Government mandates all tertiary institutions in Nigeria, both private and public, to develop a unified course and make this compulsory for all students.

This study therefore recommends that the Federal Government should advise the Nigeria Curriculum Council to develop a curriculum in practical terms on democratic education as a subject against the rhetoric of civil education that is yet to be implemented in the basic education programme.

Suggestions for Further Studies

It is hoped that the following topics would stimulate interests for further studies:

- A comparative study on egalitarian education advocated by Dewey and the current educational system as pointed out in this study.

- A critical review of technical/ vocational education programme, advocated by Dewey against the present technical education in Nigeria as contained in the National Policy on Education.

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