

THE EDUCATIONAL IMBALANCE BETWEEN THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN STATES OF NIGERIA: A RE-DIRECTION OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

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13th March, 2002

I. INTRODUCTION:

For almost three centuries before the coming of the “Western form” of education into Nigeria through the Christian missionaries in the 19th century, the “Qur’anic Form” of education with its Arabic culture – orientation and tenets of Islam had been imposed upon the “Nigerian indigenous form” of education, particularly in the northern parts of the country. The subsequent western colonial domination led to the inevitable superimposition of western form of education upon both the ‘indigenous’ and ‘Qur’anic’ forms of education. Although, the three forms of education co-exist side by side till today, the western formal education has attained dominance since it has become almost synonymous with modernization and development in an emergent globalization and communication.

The concept of “educational imbalance” in this lecture is in the context of the differential levels of the attainment of “western education” as measured by selected indicators of admissions and enrolments into the nation’s educational institutions over a span of time.

The central thesis of this lecture is that educational imbalance between the north and south has a historical origin arising from the “rejection-acceptance” dichotomy, by the north and south respectively, of the external influence and innovation process of modernization registered by western education system. The observed imbalance exists at all levels of inception into the educational institutions and industry, including the primary, secondary and tertiary education. This lecture posits that of all the inception

levels, the performance of any community at the primary education level is a determinant of the performance and higher attainment at the subsequent levels of secondary and tertiary education. In other words, primary education is the foundation for all other educational ladders. Since the rest of the education system is built upon the primary education level, it is “the key to the success or failure of the whole system” (Federal Republic of Nigeria, P.4). It was in this consideration that Abdulkadir (1993:5) laments that:

If there is no quality primary school education, from where shall we get quality secondary education? If there is no quality secondary school education, from where shall we get quality higher education? So if there is no increase in primary school enrolment, there will be no hope for increase in secondary school enrolment. And if there is no increase in secondary school enrolment, there will be no increase in higher education

The Federal Government in the National Policy on Education stressed that in order “to foster the much needed unity of Nigeria, imbalance in inter-state and intra-state development (including educational imbalance) has to be corrected” (Federal Republic of Nigeria 1981:2). Perhaps in the attempt to correct the educational imbalance, a number of educational policies have been formulated and practiced over the years.

- the take-over of schools and colleges from the missionary schools and other voluntary agencies;
- the creation of the National Universities Commission to regulate admissions to the nation’s Universities and in this regard, the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) was established;
- quota admission to Federal Unity Schools in the country;
- quota admission to Navy, Army and Air-force schools;
- quota admission to the “Gifted school”, the Suleja Academy;

- establishment of nomadic education for migrants;
- establishment of National Teachers' Institute, Kaduna to accelerate the training of Grade II teachers;
- Special grants to “disadvantaged” states in order to provide additional facilities for various levels of educational institutions;
- The 1976 Universal Primary Education Scheme (UPE)
- The setting up of the National Primary School Education Commission in 1988 that recommended grants to states for children not registered in school along with those registered in schools;
- And recently, the re-launching of the rather non-performing UPE in an incarnation name of Universal Basic Education (UBE).

In spite of all these policies, the educational imbalance between the north and south has not only continued to exist, but more also the gap continues to increase as registered by the indicators. Both the northern and the southern states are aware of the existence and continue to blame each other with unending insinuations. Again, Abdulkadir (1993:4), signified this orchestration with a dirge:

“Politically nation-wide, the all pervasive and most talked about educational gap between one part of the country and another continues to exist, and in fact widening. Those that are educationally disadvantaged feel threatened by the economic implications of being left behind educationally. Those with relative advantage become even more determined not only to maintain this advantage, but to improve upon it, again for its economic implications.

The purpose of this lecture is to help the Nigerians whether from the north or south come to terms with the future of our federation by the deepening of our understanding of how to respond to perceived problems of educational imbalance in the nation. To this end, it

puts forward a broad new theory of adaptation and remediation of the educational imbalance between the north and south.

Although the topic is essentially educational, it is nevertheless political and socio-economic in its ramifications. We have therefore, as of a necessity brought in to bear what the people know; what the people say and what the people feel about the problem of educational imbalance between the north and south. We crave your indulgence for patience to peruse the shocking revelations about the magnitude of the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states.

II THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1. The characteristics of the population of a people in any community determine the nature of their response – rejection to any stimulus and reinforcement. In this instance, since no study has shown that there is a difference in the mental capabilities between the children in the south and north, the emergent differentials in the levels of educational attainment at any level of education are therefore, the factor of response – rejection of educational stimulus of western education by the southern and southern states respectively.
2. The more people are educated at any level of education, the more and higher education they demand for their children. Thus, primary school graduands would aspire for their children to be at least secondary school graduands, and secondary graduands aspire for their children to be university or other higher education or professional graduands. A momentum was therefore, created by the southerners of a massive reception and enrolment at all the educational levels.
3. In the like manner of the Malthusian Laws of the geometric increase in the power of population to grow over the arithmetic increase in the production of food, the gap in the educational imbalance between the north and south will

continue to increase faster than the production momentum and capacity of the north. To redress the emergent educational imbalance, there will be the compelling need (devoid of politics) to apply the positive and preventive process measures to increase primary school enrolment in the northern states instead of the curative educational policies of federal character and quota admissions into the secondary and tertiary educational institutions.

4. Production in education, like in any other productive sectors for goods and services is subject to the quasi-rent principles and laws of economics. There is a minimum gestation period for a child to scale through primary school and move to secondary school or tertiary institutions. Therefore, any action to redress the educational imbalance between the north and south, at all levels must take into consideration not only the physical resource input, but more also the gestation time input to build the enrolment foundation of primary education and succession to the secondary and tertiary levels.

III THE HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS OF THE EDUCATIONAL IMBALANCE BETWEEN THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN STATES

Earlier in this lecture, we proposed that the characteristics of the population of a people in any community determine the nature of their response – rejection to any stimulus and reinforcement.

Prior to the colonial conquest and domination in the 19th century, most of the northern states were Islamic in religious belief and education orientation. The Qur’anic was by and large a necessary derivative of Islam. The tenets of the Islam rest principally on the Qur’an. The Qur’an is to the Muslim what the Bible is to the Christian. In order to effectively participate in prayer and perform religious rites, it was necessary to educate the converts with the rudiments of the Qur’an which was initially written in Arabic language and form. Over time, the Qur’an education became a formal literary form of education provided to the generality of the adherents. Thus if education implies literacy

(reading and writings), the Qur'anic education was by far more wide-spread in the provision of education to the masses of the people in the Islamic dominated areas of the northern states.

As stated by Fafunwa (1974), the level of literacy that prevailed among Muslims in the west and north Africa was unequalled until very recently when the education and literary attainment came to be identified with the western oriented formal education.

The western formal education was introduced into Nigeria through the evangelization activities of the Christian missionaries in the middle of the 19th century. Wilson (1966) described the three significant phases which, included:

- i. the period of the scramble for Africa 1840-1880
- ii. the commercial scramble for Africa 1880-1900 and
- iii. the political scramble for Africa 1900-1950

In all these, and they were hardly separable, the principal aim of the missionaries was to convert the Africans to Christianity. The major content of the teaching and learning was based on the Bible as in the case of the Qur'anic education which was based on the Qur'an. Like the Qur'anic education, the early western education was for the propagation of the gospel and aimed at preparing catechists who could read, write and interpret the tenets of the Bible. Reading and writing were obvious necessities; and if the gospel was to be spread, obviously, catechists and pastors had to be prepared, requiring some degree of general education. Subsequently, as commerce and colonial administration became firmly established, the aim of western education partially shifted from purely religious to the preparation of a certain number of minor administrative personnel and middle class clerical assistants. In other words, if general education were not a necessity for the propagation of the evangelical activities, there would probably have been no case for the establishment of the educational institutions, which became the symbols of modernization associated with western education. The socio-political consequences of this are many.

First the Islamic education was introduced and entrenched in the north with great influence. By the same historical accident, Christianity, which was the herald of western formal education had its node of diffusion and influence in the southern part of the country. Prior to the creation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates in 1900 and their subsequent amalgamation in 1914, the colonial administration had directed the Christian missionaries to limit their evangelical activities to the south and the non-Moslem or 'pagan' areas of the north. This was perhaps to maintain peace and security for the effective British rule and administration. The second and perhaps the most logical factor that limited the influence of western education in the north was the fact that western education in principle and practice was based initially on Christianity and the Bible, just as the Islamic education was based on Islam and the Qur'an. The Moslems which dominated the northern part of the country repelled the content and process of western education until it was too late. Thus, before the political and administrative advantages of western education became very attractive and worthy of pursuit by the Moslems, the southern Christians had laid durable and self-propelling foundations and achieved considerable progress far ahead of their northern counter-parts. This rather unfortunate situation has led to the uneven spread of western educational attainment between the northern and southern Nigeria with all the attendant socio-political consequences of our time.

Although some interest groups in the north have blamed the colonial administration for not having paid enough attention to the development of western education in the north, there are historical evidences to the contrary. Not only was western education repelled because of its inceptional tenets, a number of fruitless efforts were made by the missionaries and the colonial administration to introduced schools with emphasis on non-religious and moral instruction to replace the conventional religious instruction. Under the umbrella of the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S), the Sudan Interior Mission (S.I.M.), the Sudan United Mission (S.U.M.), the Roman Catholic Mission and the Cambridge University Missionary Party, several programmes were designed to facilitate

the enlistment of the children of the Moslems to western form of education without necessarily aiming to convert them to Christianity.

For example, Dr. W.R. Miller of the Party Movement planned to establish schools whereby moral instruction would replace religious instruction for the children of the Emirs and their chiefs. The Emirs were solicited to send two children of their recognized families in the provinces to the school under the supervision of Dr. Miller. The school was to be experimented for a period of one year subject to a review by a joint committee of the Emirs. The school opened in 1907 in Zaria but none of the sons of the emirs from the provinces were present for enrolment. At the end, the Emir of Zaria had to send only fifteen children from some families within the town of Zaria. There were several cases of non-response to the programmes designed to enable the northerners take advantage of the emergent western education.

Even if the case against the colonial masters was to be sustained what efforts had been made since the political independence over forty-two years ago? The realization that there was educational imbalance between the north and south justified the argument by the northerners that political independence should not be granted in the 1950's. Strangely enough, it was the southern states under the Action Group Political Party, in the Western Region that launched the first free primary education for its communities in 1955. In 1957, the Eastern Region launched a similar programme. These "singular" educational policies of both the then Western and Eastern Regions created further impetus for increased primary enrolment, which in turn triggered massive increase in secondary school enrolment of the 1960's and the chain effects of undergraduate enrolment of the 1970's to the advantage of the south. In fact, by 1960 when the primary school enrolment in the north was only 282,849 pupils, the figure for the south about 2,629,770, accounting for 90.1% of the national even the south had only 44.3% of the nation's total population.

Before the Federal Government launched its own Universal Primary Education in 1976, all the States, in the north and south were requested to submit their input needs to ensure

successful take-off and sustenance of increased primary school enrolment. It is therefore a difficult puzzle at that after 22 years of the federal UPE Scheme, primary school enrolment in the north was still under 65% on the average with some states below 20% by 1998.

It behoved the Federal Government to re-launch another version of the scheme, Universal Basic Education in 1999 at Sokoto the same state where the 1976 version was launched. Was that an historical coincidence or a design to remind the people of their inability to accept western education? The answer is simple. Whereas in the south, community leaders and parents alike plead the government to build more schools for the willing children, in the north the governments have failed to persuade parents to send their children to school.

IV. THE MAGNITUDE OF THE EDUCATION IMBALANCE BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH

The observation that there is an educational imbalance between the north and south is not new. What is probably not known is the magnitude of the imbalance and its staggering gap despite all the educational policies put in place to arrest the situation.

At the conference on “State of Education in the North” organized by the Northern States Chamber of Commerce and Industry, December 6th – 8th 1999, it was remorsefully declared that:

It is evident that the gap between western education development in the south and north is so wide and in fact appears to get even wider by the day in absolute number, no matter (what) percentage increase in the north... There are fears that unless the Federal Government declares a state of emergency in education the North attempts to solve the imbalance will remain futile.

While one may differ in opinion as to why a state of emergency in education should be declared in the north, we would want to agree with great sympathy that the efforts being made now to arrest the situation are ‘futile’ because the right and appropriate steps are yet to be taken by both the federal and state governments. We shall come to this central issue later in the lecture.

For now, ladies and gentlemen, the magnitude of the educational imbalance referred to at the above named conference is frightening. Here below, we present an overall summary commentary of the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states for selected educational admission and enrolment levels.

A. PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVEL

Table 1 presents the trends in the primary school enrolment and the observed disparities between the northern and southern states as early as beginning of the 20th Century.

TRENDS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT DISPARITY BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH

PERIOD	PARAMETERS	NORTH		SOUTH	
		Number	% Nation	Number	% Nation
1913	Population	8,487,000	51.6	791,000	48.4
	Expected Pop of Sec. Sch. Age	1,510,686		1,417,058	
	Population Enrolled	25,000	7.9	313,000	92.1
	Enrollment Rate (%)	1.8		22.1	
1960	Population Size	26,854,000	55.7	21,357,000	44.3
	Expected Pop of Sec. Sch. Age	4,779,478		3,801,546	
	Population Enrolled	282,849	9.9	2,629,770	90.1
	Enrollment Rate (%)	5.6		68.2	
1975	Population Size	37,423,945	53.5	32,527,335	46.5
	Expected Pop of Sec. Sch. Age	6,628,898		5,789,870	
	Population Enrolled	1,698,700	27.6	4,463,000	72.4
	Enrollment Rate (%)	25.6		77.1	

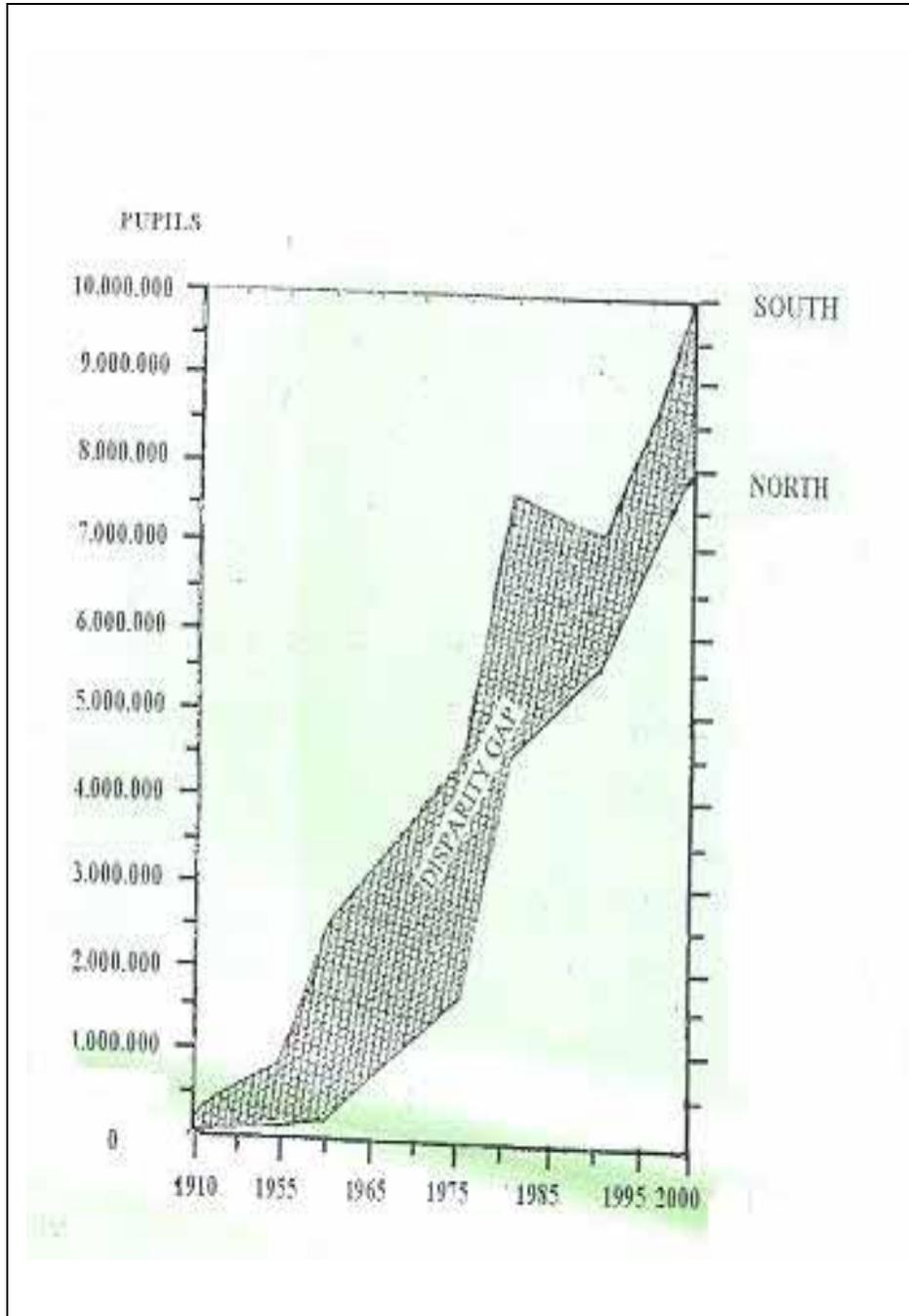
1980	Population Size	40,607,200	53.5	35,294,100	46.5
	Expected Pop of Sec. Sch. Age	7,228,082		6,282,350	
	Population Enrolled	4,500,000	37.1	7,617,483	62.9
	Enrollment Rate (%)	62.3		121.3	
1990	Population Size	46,593,100	53.5	40,496,800	46.5
	Expected Pop of Sec. Sch. Age	8,293,572		7,208,430	
	Population Enrolled	5,676,672	44.6	7,044,408	55.4
	Enrollment Rate (%)	68.4		97.7	
1998	Population Size	57,656,000	53.4	50,314,000	46.6
	Expected Pop of Sec. Sch. Age	10,262,768		8,855,892	
	Population Enrolled	7,984,368		9,958,032	55.5
	Enrollment Rate (%)	77.8		111.2	

Sources Compiled and computed from:

- (a) Federal Republic of Nigeria (1985) *Statistics of Education in Nigeria*, Federal Ministry of Education Science and Technology, Lagos.
- (b) Federal Republic of Nigeria (1990) *Statistics of Education in Nigeria*, Federal Ministry of Education. Abuja.
- (c) Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) *Statistics of Education in Nigeria*. Working Document

Note: Expected population of school ages for Primary and Secondary schools are 17.8% and 14.6% respectively. (Federal Government Study group on Funding of Education, 1984)

Fig.1. PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT IN NIGERIA. 1913 – 2000.



- (i) In 1913, there were only 27,000 (7.9%) in the primary school enrolment in northern states as against 323,000 (92.1%) in the southern states. The female enrolment for the same year in southern states was 53,000 (15.5%), almost twice the entire of enrolments for both the males and females in the northern states.
- (ii) At the time of independence in 1960, the situation had not changed in any demonstrable way. The primary school enrolment for the northern states was only 282,000 (9.9%) as against 2,629,770 (90.1%) for the southern states.
- (iii) By 1998/99, almost two decades after independence, primary school enrolment for the north was still only 7,984,000 (44.5%) as against 9,958,000 (55.5%) of the south.
- (iv) In 1995, only 5.1% of the 212,007 teachers in the south was unqualified, while in Katsina 76.6% was unqualified and Sokoto, 72% was unqualified
- (v) In Abia State, 45%, whereas Plateau 6.3% and Yobe 9.2%.

B. SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL

One observes that the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states increases at each successive levels of the educational institution.

In table 2, we present the trends in secondary school enrolment between 1942 and 2000 for which comparative data was available.

- (i) In 1942 secondary schools enrolment in the north was 1,570 (25.9%) as against 6,700 (74.1%) in the north

- (ii) In 1960, secondary school enrolment in north was only 6,264 reduced to only 11.3% as against 48,971 in the south (increased to 88.7%)
- (iii) Twenty years later in 1980, enrolment in the north was 247,527 (15.9%) as against 1,305,818 (84.1%) in the south
- (iv) However, by 2000 enrolment has increased moderately but accounted for only 2,081,700 (34.4%) as against 3,975,000 (65.6%) for the south
- (v) In 1996, there were 1.4m students enrolled in the north with 105,756 teachers as against 2.9m students in the south 105,756 teachers as against 2.9m students in the south with 105,756 teachers.
- (vi) For the same 1996, there were 2,419 schools in the north as against 4,049 in the south.

TRENDS IN SECONDARY ENROLMENT DISPARITY BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH

PERIOD	PARAMETERS	NORTH		SOUTH	
		Number	% Nation	Number	% Nation
	Population Size	13,863,000	51.6	13,003,000	48.4
	Expected Pop. of Sec. Sch. Age	2,024,000		1,878,000	
1942 (a)	Population Enrolled	1,570	25.9	6,700	74.1
	Enrollment Rate (%)	0.1		0.4	
	Population Size	26,685,000	55.7	21,337,000	44.3
	Expected Pop. of Sec. Sch. Age	3,896,000		3,118,000	
1960 (a)	Population Enrolled	6,264	11.3	48,971	88.7
	Enrollment Rate (%)	0.2		1.6	
	Population Size	37,424,000	53.5	32,527,000	46.5
	Expected Pop. of Sec. Sch. Age	5,464,000		4,749,000	
1975 (a)	Population Enrolled	105,500	17.5	498,700	82.5
	Enrollment Rate (%)	1.9		8.7	
	Population Size	40,607,000	53.5	35,294,000	46.5
	Expected Pop. of Sec. Sch. Age	5,529,000		5,513,000	
1980 (b)	Population Enrolled	247,527	15.9	1,305,818	84.1
	Enrollment Rate (%)	4.2		22.1	
	Population Size	46,593,000	53.5	40,497,000	46.5

	Expected Pop. of Sec. Sch. Age	6,803,000		5,913,000	
1990 (c)	Population Enrolled	1,080,071	38.2	1,947,046	61.2
	Enrollment Rate (%)	15.9		29.6	
	Population Size	50,315,000	53.5	43,731,000	46.5
	Expected Pop. of Sec. Sch. Age	7,346,000		6,385,000	
1993 (d)	Population Enrolled	1,207,611	30.0	2,824,472	70
	Enrollment Rate (%)	16.4		44.2	
	Population Size	60,930,000	53.4	53,171,000	46.5
	Expected Pop. of Sec. Sch. Age	8,896,000		7,763,000	
2000 (e)	Population Enrolled	2,081,700	34.4	3,975,000	65.6
	Enrollment Rate (%)	23.4		51.2	

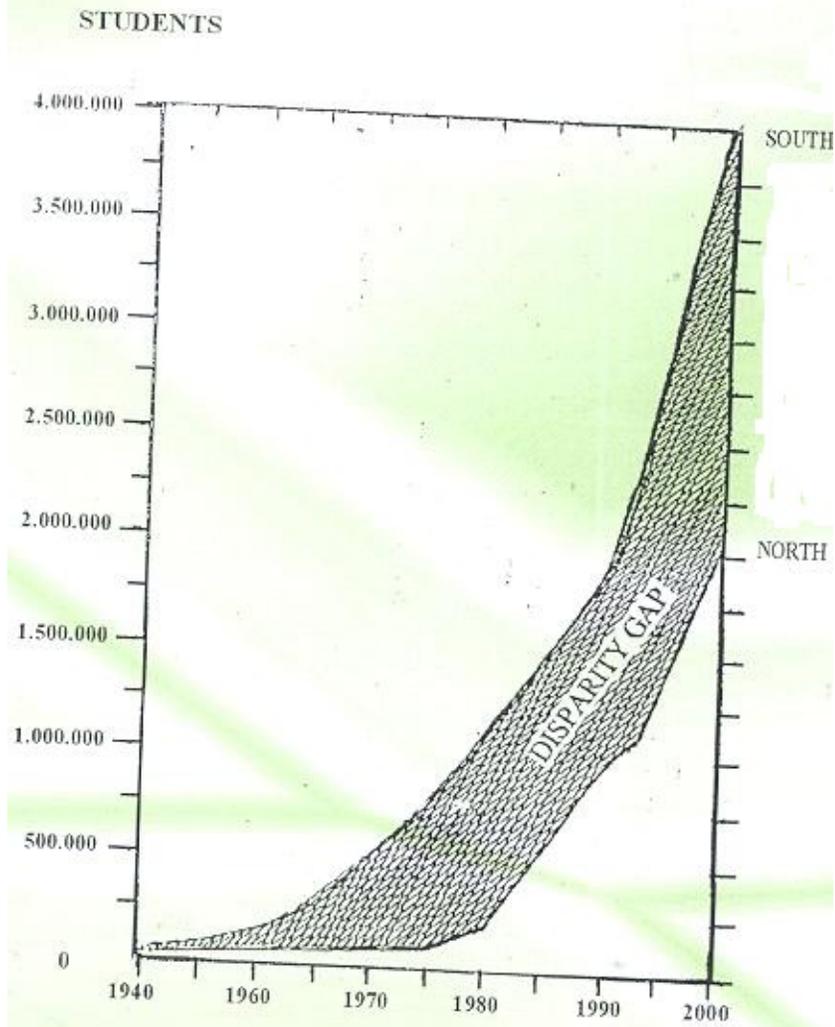
SOURCES

- (a) Okobiah, O. S. (1986) *Historical Foundation and Comparative Education*. Heinemann educational Book Nigeria.
- (b) Federal Republic of Nigeria (1985) *Statistics of Education in Nigeria*. Federal Ministry of Education, science and Technology
- (c) Federal Republic of Nigeria (1990) *Statistics of Education in Nigeria*, Federal Ministry of Education, Abuja.
- (d) Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) *Statistics of Education in Nigeria* Working Document
- (e) Projected at the annual enrolment increase of 1% per year.

Note: Expected population of school ages for Primary and Secondary Schools are 17.8% and 14.6% respectively (Federal Government study group on Funding of Education 1984).

Fig. 2

SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENTS IN NIGERIA 1942 - 2000



C. POLYTECHNICS AND UNIVERSITIES UNDERGRADUATES ADMISSIONS

The observed educational enrolment disparities in the secondary school level help to explain the unimaginable low enrolment for the north in the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) examination that determine the enrolment capacities of the states at the tertiary levels of the educational institution. For example, while in 1998 Ogun State had 23,679 students and Oyo State 15,695 students at the Polytechnic institutions, Sokoto State had 37 students and Zamfara State only 12 students. Similarly, in 1999 only a total of 976 students enrolled for Polytechnics selection examination from six states in the North as against 73,916 students from six in the south.

Table 3 and 4 present the six highest states and six lowest states in JAMB enrolment for 1995/96 and 1996/97 sessions, and University new entrants for 1999/2000 academic year.

TABLE 3 ANALYSIS OF SIX HIGHEST AND SIX LOWEST STATES JAMB ENROLMENTS IN NIGERIA FOR 1995/96 SESSIONS

STATE	REGION	POPULATION 1995 ESTIMATE)	% NIGERI A	JAMB ENROLMENT 1995/96			JAMB ENROLMENT 1996/97		
				No	% NIGERIA	REPRESEN TATIVE INDEX	No	% NIGERIA	REPRESE NTATIVE INDEX
SOKOTO	North	4,848,400	4.5	562	0.14	3	751	0.20	4
KATSINA	-	4,281,000	4.3	944	0.23	5	841	0.22	5
BORNO	-	2,866,200	2.9	954	0.23	8	1,080	0.29	10
KEBBI	-	2,276,000	2.3	423	0.10	4	747	0.20	9
TARABA	-	1,634,300	1.6	681	0.16	10	647	0.18	11
YOBE	-	1,558,000	1.6	439	0.10	6	405	0.11	7
TOTAL for 6 Northern States		17,464,200	17.2	4,012	0.96	6	4,471	1.20	7
ONDO	-	4,287,800	4.3	36,055	8.7	202	28,428	7.6	177
ANAMBRA	-	3,055,300	3.1	29,304	7.1	229	30,274	8.1	261
DELTA	-	2,837,000	2.8	42,422	10.2	364	39,674		379
IMO	-	2,743,500	2.7	39,770	9.6	356	38,526	10.3	381
OGUN	-	2,581,300	2.6	37,249	9.0	346	28,428	7.6	292
EDO	-	2,581,100	2.4	34,804	8.4	350	32,234	8.6	358
TOTAL for 6 Southern States		17,889,000	17.9	219,604	53.0	296	197,564	52.8	295

SOURCE: Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board.
NUC Abuja 1996 and 1997

TABLE 4 UNIVERSITY NEW ENTRANTS IN NIGERIA 1980 AND 2000

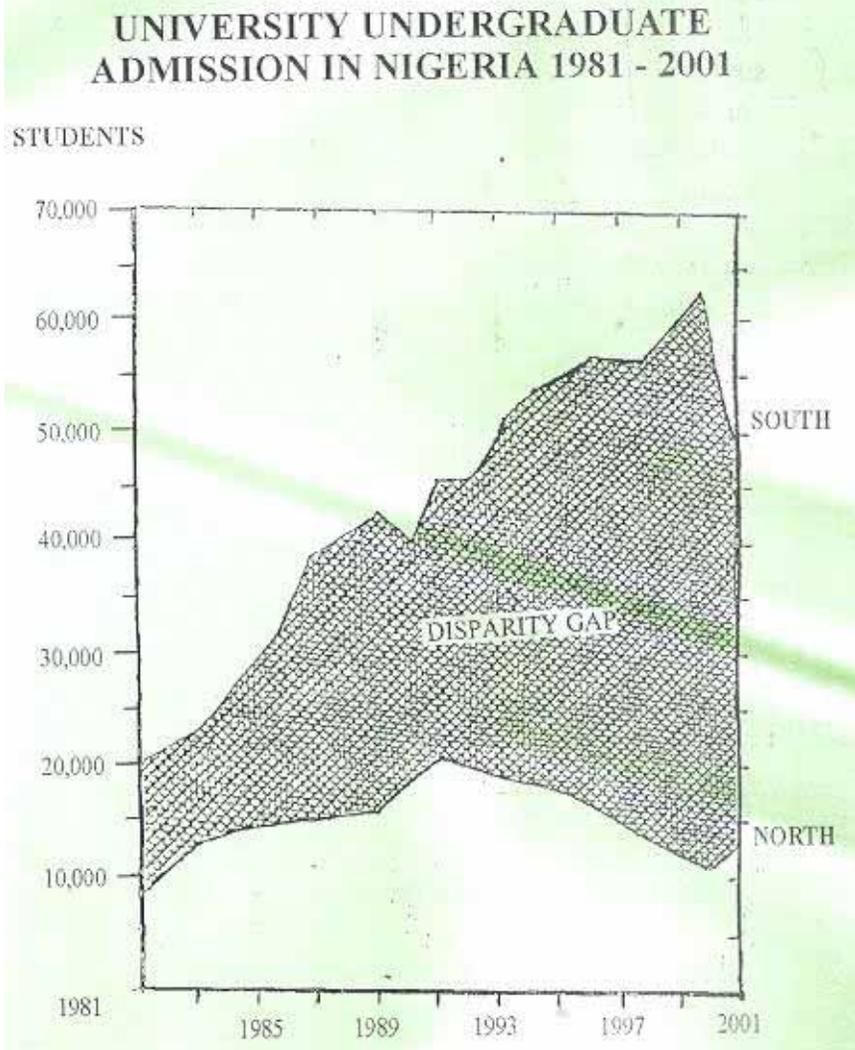
REGION	1980/81			1999/2000		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
North	7,205 (25.0%)	1,322 (4.6%)	8,527 (29.6%)	7,998 (10.7%)	3,033 (4.1%)	11,031 (14.8%)
South	14,404 (50.0%)	5,903 (20.4%)	20,307 (70.4%)	36,439 (48.8%)	27,149 (36.4%)	63,588 (85.2%)
Total	21,609	7,225	28,834	44,437	30,182	74,619
GAP	7,199	4,581	11,780	28,441	24,116	52,557

- Sources:**
- (1) Annual Reports (1982 – 1999) National Universities Commission, Abuja, Nigeria
 - (2) Statistical Information, 1995, National Universities Commission, Abuja, Nigeria

Comments:

- (1) The gap in new entrants in 1981 was 11,780, more than the entire total for the North (8,527)
- (2) By the year 2000, the gaps had increased more than quadrupled: 63,588 for South as against 11,031 for the North, revealing a disquieting gap of 52,557. Infact, Imo and Anambra States alone had a total of 15,047 (24.8%) new entrants in 2000 as against the whole of the Northern States with only 11,031 (20.5%).

Fig. 3



- (i) In 1995/96 session, six northern states with about 17.2% of the nation's population enrolled only 4,012 candidates (1.0%) for the JAMB. In the same session, only six southern states with 17.9% of the nation's population enrolled 219,404 candidates (53.0%) for the JAMB. Infact, Delta State alone with only 2.8% of the nation's population enrolled 42,422 candidates representing 10.2% for the session. Imo State with 2.7% of the nation's population enrolled 39,770 (9.6%). Ogun state with 2.6% of the population enrolled 37,249 candidates (9.0%). In contrast Sokoto with 4.5% of the nation's population enrolled 562

candidates (0.10%) and Kebbi with 2.3% of the nation's population enrolled 423 candidates which is (0.10%).

- (ii) In 1996, all states in the north had only 14% of JAMB enrolment as against 86% for the south
- (iii) In 1998, a total of 419,807 candidates applied for University admission through JAMB. Out of this, there were only 50,729 (12%) from the northern states as against 369,078 (86%) from the southern states.
- (iv) In 1998, 34,947 candidates from Imo State alone enrolled for JAMB in the session. On the other hand, only 4,249 candidates were enrolled from six northern states
- (v) In 1999, only 5,519 candidates enrolled for JAMB as against 200,506 candidates from the southern states.

In table 5, we present the summary of University new entrants in Nigeria 1980 - 2000

TABLE 5A: SIX STATES WITH THE LARGEST NUMBER OF UNIVERSITY NEW ENTRANTS 1999/2000

	STATE REGION	POPULATION (a)		UNIV. ADMISSION (b)		Disparity	Index
		2000 (Est)	% Nation	1999/2000	% Nation		
	Northern States						
1	Kogi	2,753,700	2.4	1,847	2.5	+56	104
2	Benue	3,529,900	3.1	1,517	2.0	-769	65
3	Kwara	1,985,300	1.7	1,159	1.5	-110	88
4	Kaduna	5,046,000	4.4	901	1.2	-2382	27
5	Kano	7,449,900	6.5	859	1.1	-3991	17
6	Niger	3,569,800	3.1	622	0.8	-1691	3

	Total	24,334,600	21.3	6,905	9.1	-8989	43
	Southern State						
1	Imo	3,187,000	2.8	11,358	15.1	+9269	539
2	Anambra	3,585,500	3.1	7,801	10.4	+5488	329
3	Delta	3,321,400	2.9	5,620	7.5	+3456	259
4	Abia	2,998,300	2.6	4,983	6.0	+3043	231
5	Edo	2,784,800	2.4	4,382	5.9	+2591	246
6	Enugu	2,517,600	2.2	4,268	5.7	+2626	259
	Total	18,394,600	16.1	38,412	50.6	+26,398	314

TABLE 5B SIX STATES WITH THE SMALLEST NUMBER OF UNIVERSITY NEW ENTRANTS 1999/2000

	STATE REGION	POPULATION (a)		UNIV. ADMISSION (b)			
	Northern States	2000 (Est)	% Nation	1999/2000	% Nation	Disparity	Index
1	Yobe	1,794,600	1.6	105	0.1	-1089	6
2	Borno	3,251,500	2.8	220	0.3	-1869	11
3	Gombe	2,234,500	2.0	248	0.3	-1244	15
4	Taraba	1,938,800	1.7	254	0.3	-1015	18
5	Jigawa	3,686,900	3.2	256	0.3	-2132	9
6	Zamfara	2,182,800	1.9	259	0.3	-1153	16
	Total	15,089,100	13.2	1,342	1.8	-8508	14
	Southern State						
1	Ebonyi	1,526,800	1.3	843	1.1	-127	85
2	Bayelsa	1,935,700	1.7	1,368	1.8	+99	106
3	Ekiti	2,350,400	2.1	1,469	2.0	-98	95
4	Oyo	4,056,900	3.6	1,671	2.2	-1015	61
5	Cross River	2,450,600	2.1	1,746	2.3	+179	106
6	Osun	2,767,100	2.4	2,227	3.0	+436	125
	Total	15,105,5	13.2	9,324	12.5	-526	95

SOURCES: (a) Projected from 1991 National Census

(b) Federal Republic of Nigeria (2002) *Admission statistics (UME/DE) by state of origin and sex* National Universities Commission, Abuja.

NOTE: Absolute disparity = $SA - (TNA/100 \times SPNP)$
Disparity Index = $SA/SEA \times 100$

Where: SA = State Actual Admission
TNA = Total National Admission (74619)
SPNP = State Percentage of National Population
SEA = State Expected Admission ($TNA/100 \times SPND$)

- (i) In 1980/81, the northern states as a whole had only 11,031 (14.8%), new entrant students enrolled in the universities as against 63,588 (85.2%) for the southern states
- (ii) In 1999/2000, female admission in the south was 27,149 (36.4%) about nine times their counterparts in the north 3,033 (4.1%).
- (iii) In the same 1999/2000, Imo State alone enrolled 11,358 University students, which was more than the entire 19 states in the north that enrolled only 11,031 students.

(D) TOTAL UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE ENROLMENT

It was posited earlier in this lecture that the “observed educational imbalance exists at all levels of inception into the educational institutions and industry, including the primary, secondary and tertiary education”. The imbalance is more frightening at the cumulative undergraduate enrolment over time. In Table 6, the cumulative undergraduate enrolment figures are presented with the following highlights.

**TABLE 6 UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE ENROLMENT IN NIGERIA
1980 – 1999**

PERIOD	REGION	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	<i>Gap Between North South</i>		
					MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1980/81	North	15,813 (22.2%)	2,559 (3.6%)	18,372 (25.8%)	24,608	9,743	34,351
	South	40,421 (56.9%)	12,302 (17.3%)	52,723 (74.2%)			
	Total	56,234	14,861	71,095			
1991/92	North	33,242 (18.7%)	9,371 (5.3%)	42,613 (42.0%)	60,079	32,417	92,496
	South	93,321 (52.5%)	41,788 (23.5%)	135,109 (76.0%)			
	Total	126,563	51,159	177,722			
1998/99	North	45,370 (18.2%)	14,459 (5.8%)	59,829 (24.0%)	84,508	45,121	129,629
	South	129,878 (52.1%)	59,580 (23.9%)	189,458 (76.0%)			
	Total	175,248	74,039	249,287			

Sources: (1) *Statistical Information* 1995, National Universities Commission, Abuja.

(2) *Annual Reports* 1982 – 1989, National Universities Commission, Abuja.

Notes

(1) The University enrolment gap increased from 34,351 in 1981 to about 129,629 in 1999.

(2) Females in the South (59,580) in 1999 are almost equal to the total

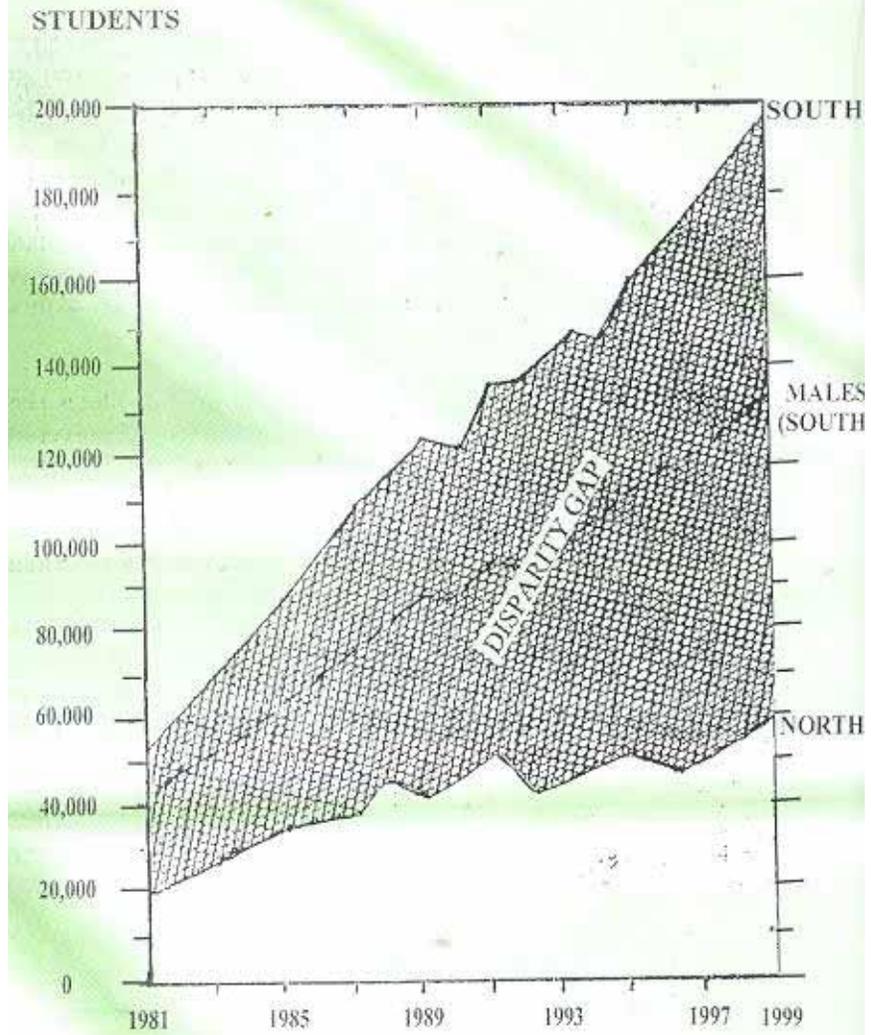
enrolment of the North (59,829)

- i. In 1980/81, the northern states had 18,372 (25.8%) of the university undergraduate enrolment as against 52,723 (74.2%) for the southern states
- ii. By 1998/99, the northern states had only 59,829 (24%) of the undergraduate enrolment as against 189,458 (76.0%) for the southern states. Whereas the undergraduate enrolment gap between the northern and southern states was 34,351. By 1980/81, the gap had increased to 92,496; and by 1998/99 it was 129,627. The undergraduates' enrolment gap for the southern states was about two times the entire total for the northern states in 1980/81. By 1998/91, it had increased to more than three times.
- iii. In 1991/99, Bendel State (now Delta and Edo States) had 8,757 undergraduate enrolment in the federal universities alone. While 8 northern states had only 7,920.

Fig. 4 presents a realistic analysis of the position and ever-increasing undergraduate enrolment gap between the northern states and the southern states.

- iv. In fact, the male undergraduate enrolment figures in the southern states were at all times (from 1980/91 – 1998/99) far larger than the totals for both males and females for the northern states.
- v. In 1980/81, the number of female undergraduate enrolled in the southern states was about six times that of the northern states. Whereas, the gap was 9,743 in 1981,

FIG. 4
UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE
ENROLMENTS IN NIGERIA 1981 - 1999



- vi. In 1980/81, the total female undergraduate 12,302 enrolment in the southern states was almost 67% of the total male and female undergraduate enrolment for the northern states (18,372).
- vii. The female undergraduate enrolment for the southern states in 1998/99 was 59,580. This was almost equal to the totals of both the male and female for the northern states (59,829) for the same academic session.
- viii. As from 1991/92, the totals of the female undergraduate enrolments for the southern states were far larger than the combined males and females undergraduate enrolments for the northern states. (See fig. 5).
- ix. In 1980/81, the total female undergraduate enrolment in Delta State (3,978) was by far larger than six States in the North (3,162).
- x. Between 1995/96 and 1998/99, the female undergraduate enrolment for Imo State alone was far larger than the northern States.

The details of the educational gaps and disparities between the northern and southern States are shown in Annexures (A), (B), (C), and (D) at the end of this paper.

Ladies and Gentlemen: the magnitude of the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states after over four decades of independence is an indictment for lack of seriousness by the educational administrators in both the federal and states.

It is a common vituperation from some of the well-placed leaders in the northern states that “western education is against the principle of Islam. “Such attitudes of the leaders have in no little measure contributed to the widespread apathy against western education, in spite of its obvious derivatives as a medium of modernization and development in general. Nonetheless, if the data and the information presented about magnitude of the educational disparity between the northern and southern states are real, we must admit

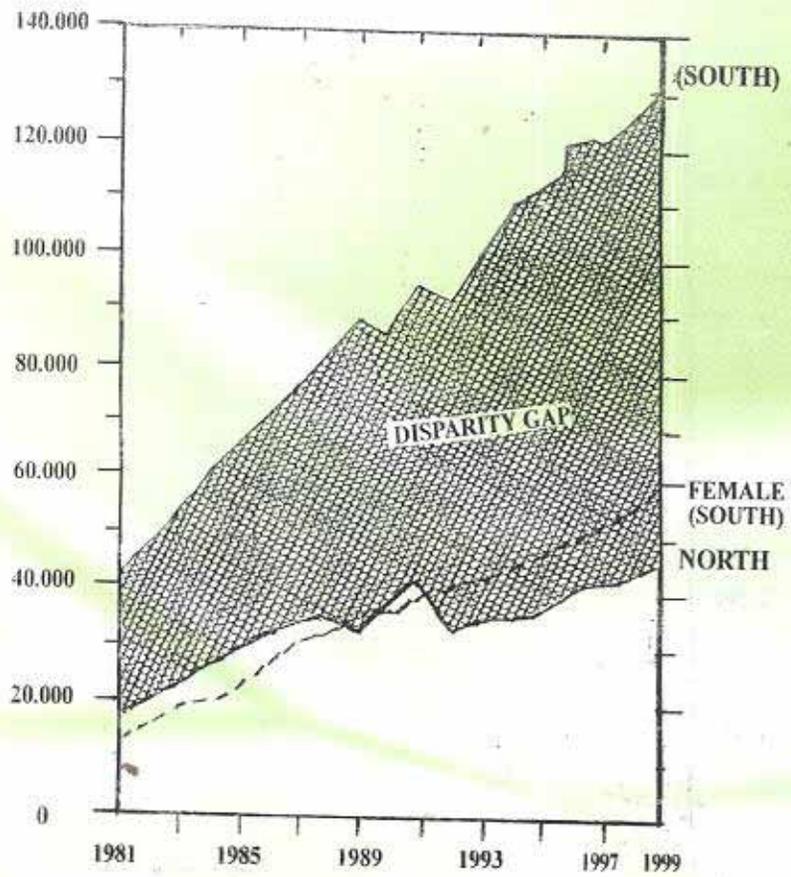
that we have a problem before us as a nation. Can this observed magnitude in the disparity be explainable only in terms of acceptance-rejection of western education by the southern and northern states respectively? Or should our national total population census and its geo-political distribution to the northern and southern states be held with suspicion? These may be areas of concern to my other colleagues for their study, research, analysis, evaluation and judgment.

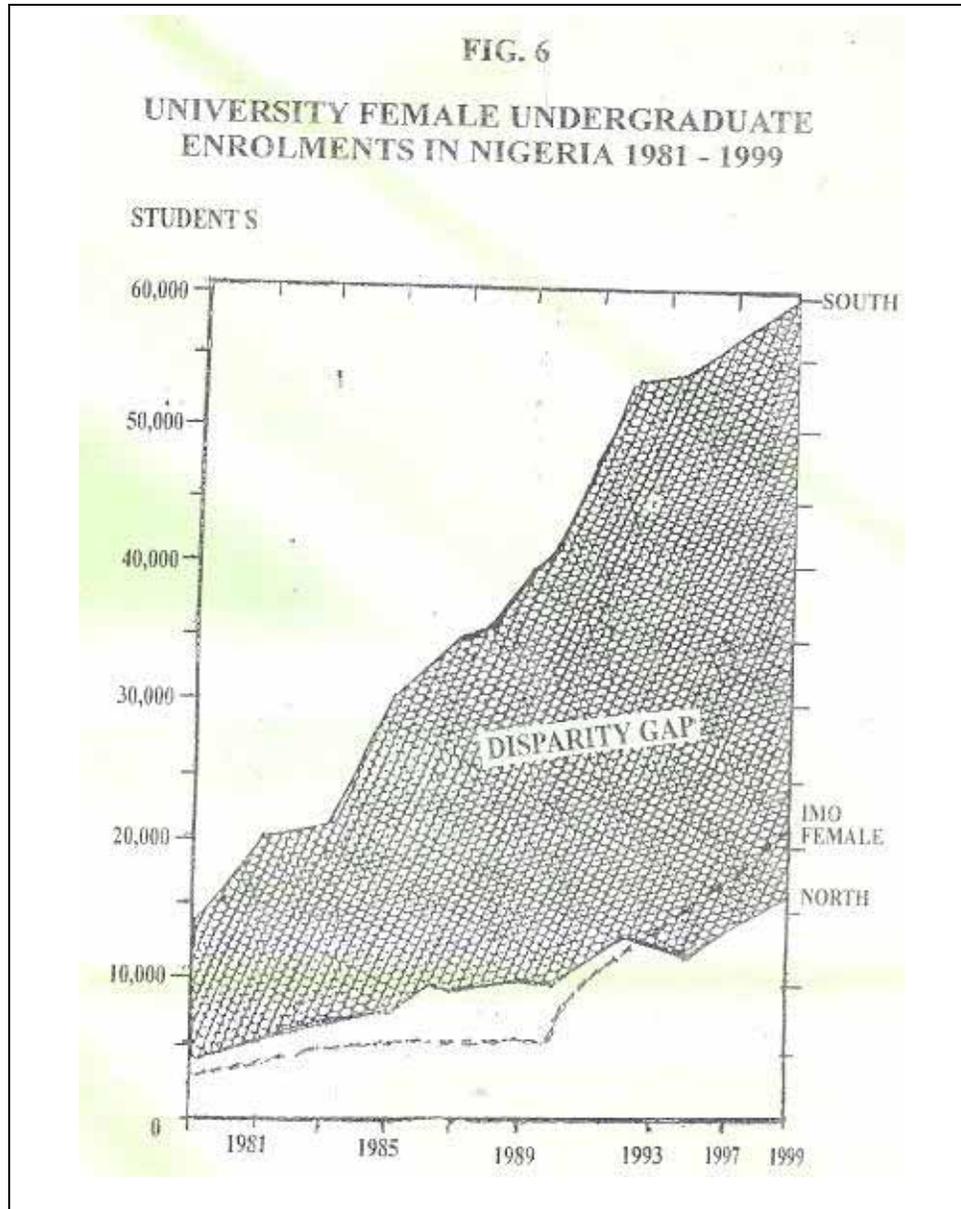
VI RESPONSE TO THE PERCEIVED PROBLEM OF THE EDUCATIONAL IMBALANCE BETWEEN THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN STATE

The effectiveness of any response and or set of responses to any perceived problem in any human community is a factor of the awareness of the nature, structure and elements of that problem. The awareness and sustained response thereto from is a factor of the readily available and objective information, and of course the nodes of the dissemination about the perceived problem.

FIG. 5
UNIVERSITY MALE UNDERGRADUATE
ENROLMENTS IN NIGERIA 1981 - 1999

STUDENTS





The issue of the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states is not new. It had always been perceived, sung and heard by many individuals, states and federal governments since the attainment of political independence in 1960. Concerned interest groups have always raised the issue, but have not courageously opted for viable solutions. The problem has remained, as it were, insurmountable because the right solution options had not been sufficiently identified and signified with missionary zeal

for concerted approach beyond rhetoric and counter insinuations about “when”, “what”, “who” are to blame.

In October, 1997, a large gathering of eminent Nigerians under the auspices of the Northern States old Students Association (NOSOSAS) and the Balewa Old Boys’ Association (BOBA) met to appraise the impact of western education in the northern part of Nigeria and how the “age-long gap” in educational attainment between the geopolitical south and north could be bridged. Among other proponents was the former civilian President Alhaji Shehu Shagari who intimated compatriots that:

The first variable and noticeable gulf between one geographical unit of our great and diverse country and the other is in the area of education and a glaring example is that of geographical north and south..... Available social statistics have shown that over the years since independence, it is an open secret that the north has lagged and still lags behind the south in education at all levels.

While recognizing that “education is the cause of the wide socio-economic gulf between the northern and southern states and it is at the same time the solution to it”, Alhaji Shehu Shagari emotionally pleaded that to ensure social, justice, equity and fair play in the production and distribution of Nigeria’s abundant resources, including the man power resources, “there must be equal opportunity for all citizens to education”.

One would reasonably believe that the federal government realized and recognized the impact of the universal elementary education programmes offered to the southerners by both the then western and eastern regions that constituted the so-called educationally advantaged south. Consequently, the federal government created “equal opportunities for all citizens” of this country by the launching of the National Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1976 and the recent re-launching of another metamorphoses in the name of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in 1999. Records are there to show the establishment

of nomadic education institutions and related specialized institutions and projects to the advantage of the hitherto disadvantaged groups. There are the Unity Schools, two of which were built in each state of the federation, one co-educational and the other exclusively for girls and of course the “Gifted School” all of which are subjected to the amorphous policies of “Federal Character” and “quotarization of admission” in the bid to “create equal opportunities for all citizens” Mr. Vice-Chancellor we are not sure that the giftedness could be distributed to the states by nature on basis of quota. ***Thus any federal or state government policies that subject the selection and admission of students to the “Gifted School” on the basis of states quota and federal character is an aberration of the natural laws of bio-sociological environment.***

We should recall that the character of the people in any set of community is a determinant of the inceptionability, repeatability, internalization and overt manifestation of the will of the people to access and utilize “the opportunities created for all citizens” These are inalienable factors which the states and federal governments and all other interest groups in this time-bomb phenomena, (the educational imbalance between the north and south) must realize in order to opt for the appropriate response advocated in this inaugural Lecture.

At this point, one may wish to further raise another question “What have been the results, of our educational policies aimed at rectifying the educational imbalance between inter and intra-states?” This was why Anya (1998; 11) recently challenged the results of the educational policies with lamentations:

Despite the utilization of the concept of educational disadvantaged states for a quarter of a century, for the allocation of resources and admission into educational institutions, the so called disadvantaged state have remained disadvantaged as they were in 1975.... (The quota and federal character for admission) were clearly instruments of political manipulation which have proved ineffectual even for the

purpose they were designed for They must therefore be discarded.

Beyond reasonable doubts, the existing educational policies purposed to correct the educational imbalance have failed. We are compelled to chart for other alternatives, and orientation towards pragmatic and purposeful engagement. No matter what the federal and states educational policies and programmes may be, there will be little or no effect until the internal characteristics of the people that impeded the development of western education are consciously demystified, and re-oriented.

VII. TWO – TIER ACTION – ORIENTED OPTION

Considering the magnitude of the educational imbalance between the northern and the southern states in section (IV) and the federal and state governments response to the perceived problem in Section (V) of this lecture, we need to distinguish between the cause(s) and the effects. In summary, the cause of the problem is the character, attitude and perception of the people towards western education.

The problem, which is the effect, is the low level of enrolment of primary, secondary and tertiary education among the northerners. It is in these perspectives that we proposed a two tier-action oriented options including:

- (i) Programmes to change the attitude and perceptions of the people towards western education and the subsequent integration of both the western and Qur’anic school curricula and
- (ii) Vision 2020, Education Turn-Around-Maintenance (ETAM) for the rectification of the educational imbalance by systematic and sustained enrolment drive at all levels of the education system in the northern states; and indeed in all the other so-called educationally disadvantaged states.

1. ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTION TOWARDS WESTERN EDUCATION:

We have posited severally in this lecture that unless there is a positive change of attitude towards western education by the northerners, it would be very difficult to solve the problem of the low enrolment particularly at the primary and secondary education levels.

The second aspect of the problem is that many of the northern leaders are aware of the issue. They talk about it but do nothing positive and meaningful about it.

Professor Adamu Baike, (1999), the Chairman of the Technical Committee of the Northern Educational Summit believed very strongly that the positive steps to change the old attitude towards western education is the only viable option to redress the “aged-long educational backwardness of the north. Baike stated:

We have through acts of commission and omission sadly watched the almost irreversible decline of education in the north... We have no excuse to justify the untenable (situation) in which education is in the north... We have been afflicted by our nonchalance individualistic and parochial interest... We seemed to have relied so much on some untested assumptions which have today failed us; the by-products of our indiscretions... The assessment of data (of educational imbalance) are staggeringly devastating for the information they convey.

It was good enough to realize that the educational imbalance between the northern and the southern states was a factor of the characteristics of the people and their attitudes towards western education. However, the proffered solutions at the said summit were in no way different from the orchestrated educational policies in which the “untested assumptions” they have relied on in the past with dismal failures. Among others, things, the proffered solutions where:

- Massive expansion of infrastructural facilities at all levels;
- Enrolments at all level;
- Special scholarships, bursaries and other incentives to be “generously” provided to encourage teacher trainees;
- Massive recruitment of teachers;
- All northern states and local governments to allocate 20% of their total annual budget to education at least for next five years;
- All the northern state governments to set aside ₦100,000,000 or one ₦100 billion annually for the next five years for rehabilitation of educational institutions.

For a good instance, Delta State Government alone had spent over ₦2 billion – ₦3 billion within the first 30 months or precisely 900 days from the inspection of its administration in May, 1999.

With minor emphasis, these were the same old parameters targeted during the federal Universal primary Education Scheme in 1976, which did not yield any result. The answer is first and foremost, a programme that will change the attitudes of the recipients towards the acceptance of western education. The problem is the educational imbalance in the context western education. The communiqué at the end of the Northern State Education Summit realized the importance for the change of attitude towards education.

The community remains at best lukewarm in its attitude to (western education).... Insufficient interest by the community has resulted in the absence of appropriate pressure on the authorities to handle education with the seriousness it deserves. Religious and additional rulers have a role to play in this respect especially in the crucial areas of integrating Qur’anic/Islamic schools with the western system of education.

We must address, with courage, the issues of culture barriers against western education and to find a way of adapting and integrating the western form of education into the existing Islamic institutions, particularly at the primary and secondary school levels. There must be an indo-propellant force to incept the rudiments of western education from its fundamental base and foundations.

It was along these considerations that Mohammed (1997) at the workshop organized by the Northern States Old Students Association called for the integration of Islamic/Qur'anic education into the western type of educational system” Mohammed listed a number of the attitudes and beliefs that must be discarded with in order to integrate both the Qur'anic and western form of education.

- That the western education cannot be accommodated in the philosophy or culture of Islam which is their way of life.
- That female education would lead to adultery and hence females should marry early;
- That mix school (co-education) should not be permitted particularly for adolescents;
- That western education is secular in nature, and prepares children only for worldly lives.

These are the imperative steps to be taken in the words of Prof. Mary Lar (1999) a participant at the 1999 Northern Education Summit;

We (northerners) have not cared to move beyond the toddling steps of our founding fathers. With great measure of truth, we have even taken steps backward.

The steps forward are clear. In the interactive global world of today, no society can cling to its lone religious and culture enclaves, and afford to remain in isolation from the milieu

of modernization processes. In the words of Adamu Haruna, the Administrator of Petroleum Trust Fund (1999)

The awareness must be promoted for the people to realize that religious education in Qur'anic/Islamic schools is not alternative to western education; rather (it is) that one should complement the other.

It was indubitable that at the inception, western form of education was perceived to be synonymous with “Christianity and Bible”.

However, the global ascendancy of western form of education has in itself transformed the general process of education an international phenomenon, and a vehicle for modernization devoid of any religious tenants or association. In effect, any culture that rejects the western form of education on religious grounds imposes on itself isolationism from all the derivative benefits of modernization of the contemporary globalization processes.

We must step forward beyond the dichotomization of Nigeria into religious fanaticism of Christian-Moslem, Bible-Qur'an and Western Arabic culture orientations of the 19th and 20th centuries. It is time to blend the wheel of science, technology, informatics and universal language of communication in a global world to influence the curriculum of teaching and learning in our educational institutions, north and south.

We must now turn to the second of the two tier action oriented scheme-the Vision 2020 Education Turn-Around Maintenance (ETAM) to balance the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states.

2. THE VISION 2020 EDUCATION TURN AROUND MAINTENANCE (ETAM) FOR THE NORTHERN STATES.

Earlier in this lecture, we posited that of all the inception levels, the performance at the primary school level is a determinant of the performance and higher attainment at the subsequent levels. Consequently, primary education is the foundation to and for all other educational ladders.

Ladies and Gentlemen it was salutary to learn that at the end of the notable gathering of the Northern State Old Boy's Association (NOSOSA) in 1997, it was signified that "primary school is the gateway to education". It was clear to all that low enrolment at the University level was a factor of low production at primary and secondary school levels. When Kano State planned to establish a State University in 1987, it could not take-off because there was no sufficient number of candidates from the State to justify the venture. This helps to explain why there are only two states Universities in the north as against eleven states in the south. As of now 2002, all the six recently licensed private Universities are in the southern states.

Permit me to present to you the feelings and anxieties of three prominent leaders in the north about this issue to justify the vision 2020 propounded to redress the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states.

Lamenting the dwindling fortune of the north at the higher educational level, Aliyu (1997), Pro-Chancellor of Jos University stated that....

The failure of our secondary school to produce Students with good rates of success at their senior secondary certificate examination... ensure that our youths are not in a position to compete confidently for access to the highest education (levels)... Primary education which is required as the foundation of any education career is said to be organized at largely ramshackle schools buildings with teachers who are either not adequate in number or

inadequately trained or even both. It is no wonder that primary education enrolment remains a big problem.

General Yakubu Gowon, former Head of State, recently in an interview with the press stated unequivocally that:-

I believe the basic and the most important solution to the question of educational imbalance in the country must be found at the primary school level, and all energies must be geared towards increasing (primary school enrolment)... especially in the educationally backward areas.

Lastly, Alhaji Daudu Birma, former Federal Minister of Education in an interview with the Guardian reporter (1997) declared:

Primary education must be sine qua non to a solid advancement into both secondary and tertiary institutions. This is because without a solid foundation, all other investment would collapse.

Any attempt to redress the present educational imbalance between the northern and southern states must begin with how to address the low level of primary school enrolment in the north, since this is no longer an issue for debate.

We propose in this lecture that both the federal and states governments in the north should embark on an 18-years programme that will ensure satisfactory enrolment of pupils and students at all levels of the education system.

- (i) Two (2) years of planning, sensitization and positive orientation activities towards western education (2002 – 2004);

- (ii) Six (6) years to effect sustained primary school enrolment drive (2005 – 2010) to move from under 40% to 90% enrolment;
- (iii) Six (6) years to effect sustained secondary school enrolment drive (2011 – 2016) to move from under 30% to 70% enrolment;
- (iv) Four (4) years to raise satisfactory tertiary education enrolment level (2017 – 2020);
- (v) Two (2) years of general consolidation.

To raise the enrolment levels of the primary, secondary and tertiary education will require a gestation period of about two decades:

- (i) At least, two years to plan and put in place, the necessary material and human resource input. To be specific, this will include the deliberate programmes of sensitization educational activities to convince parents and children alike that are part to the social milieu of the nation, and the only way to be maximally functional to self and the society is to acquire knowledge, skill and attitudes towards modern means of the production of goods and services in the society. In this instance and age, it is western form of education.
- (ii) At least, six (6) years of incremental enrolment drive among the population of primary school age, to the extent that by the end of 2010, the first generation intake of the vision 2020 would be graduates who are western education converts, and eager to demand secondary education as witnessed in the experience of the then western and eastern regions 1950's and 1960's. The parents and communities will be demanding from the governments, the creation of institutions for their children as it is now in the southern states.
- (iii) At least, (6) years of continuous and sustained enrolment drive among the population of secondary school age. This is understandable because the

proportion of students that would enroll in the secondary will be conditioned by the yearly enrolment and completion of pupils at the primary school level. In any case, by 2016, there would have been a satisfactory transition from the primary school level to the secondary school level.

- (iv) At least, four (4) years of continuous and sustained enrolment drive among secondary graduands of the Vision 2020 for tertiary education. Thus by the year 2020 the issue of low primary enrolment, , which in turn reduces the accessibility to secondary schools and procurement of admission to tertiary educational institutions, would have been over. There will no longer be the need for the sentimental but ineffective educational policies of the federal character and quota admissions to educational institutions at any level and for any group north or south.

If the current population size of the country and its distribution is dependable and not held to suspect as indicated earlier in this lecture, then we may assume that there would be more population of primary, secondary and tertiary school ages in the northern states at all times than in southern states since the north has always had, historically, the highest proportion of the nations total population.

It is also reasonable to suggest that by 2020, about 60 –70% of those who had acquired at least a tertiary education before now may have retired from their various positions of work. Then if the northern states were producing manpower from the same educational institutions comparable to the southern states the issues of educational imbalance between the north and south would only qualify to be a subject for classification and documentation in the African Section of the National Archive.

Two decades may be long in calculation and over bearing in expectation particularly in a nation with historical records of mutual suspicion generated by religious bigotry. But we have lived with the issues of educational imbalance between the northern and southern states for over 50 years now.

We have noted earlier that education like any other productive industry is subject to the principles and laws of quasi-rent in the economics. The supply of goods and services that require long gestation period cannot be increased through any other short term process of incubation. To increase the supply of cocoa for an increased demand of same requires at least six to eight years of nursing and nurturing the seedlings. The same principle applies to education. It takes at least 16 – 20 years of sustained schooling from education to be a graduate of tertiary institution. That is the quasi-rent which we must pay to wait for two decades of careful, planning nurturing and providing supportive and continuous re-orientation programmes to parents, without which, the project to raise enrolment in all the levels may not succeed. We must take the Vision 2020 like a couple expecting the birth of a long awaited child. According to Mead (1970:42).

*We must place the future like the unborn child in womb of a woman, within a community of men, women and children, among us, already to be nourished and succored and protected; already in need of things for which if they are not prepared before it is born, it will be too late. So as the young says: **THE FUTURE IS NOW;***

Too many schemes of policies which were no more than meditations have failed to rectify the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states in Nigeria.

Expensive and long period of waiting would be justified if only two decades will guarantee the adequate supply of primary school, secondary and tertiary education enrolment for the northern states. This is the only positive and preventative process measure to rectify the vexing educational imbalance between the northern and southern states once and for all.

VIII CONCLUSIONS

The problem of the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states has been with us for well over 50 years at least. Some blame the colonial administrators for

not providing enough opportunities for the development of western education in the north as much as was done in the south. Some other blame the educational imbalance on the northern Moslems who repelled western education because it was almost synonymous with Christian religion at the early inception period; and this “militated against the philosophy of life for the Moslem adherents”.

Regardless of who is to blame we have the problem before us. In this lecture, we have tried to define the nature, origin and magnitude of the problem. It was well established that the character and the attitudes of the people at a point in time prevented them from embracing western education which has become a sine-qua non-for modernization and development.

There are two ways suggested to rectify the educational imbalance. The first is a programme designed to effect attitudinal change to embrace western education. The contemporary western form of education is in no way related to any religious tenets or association. The second is to develop a systematic long-term plan, Vision 2020 Education Turn Around Maintenance (ETAM) for the northern states. The programme requires two years orientation activities; six years for intensified primary school enrolment drive; six years secondary school enrolment drive and four years of tertiary education enrolment drive. The logical sequence is clear. The first converts to be enrolled would have left the primary school at the end of the first six years. These would be the first group to enroll as the first generation secondary school students of the (ETAM) programme. Similarly, within the succeeding six years, the graduands of the secondary school would be ready to enroll at the tertiary institutions.

We believe that as a nation the problem of the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states can be solved if we are sincere committed and determined to do so. The time is now for the federal and the states governments of the educationally backward or disadvantaged to put in process viable options to redress the nagging imbalance. Any baby born this year, if well nourished and oriented socially and intellectually to the available educational opportunities prepared for the purpose will have

the optimum chance of becoming a graduate or an undergraduate student of any tertiary educational institution within the period of 20 years, we have postulated for the Vision 2020 Educational Turn Around Maintenance in this inaugural lecture.

*The time is now to start. The start is the primary school
from where cometh increased enrolment in secondary and
tertiary education:*

*I am (primary school) the way.
The truth and life of education
No child cometh unto secondary
And tertiary education
Except by me.*

Ladies and Gentlemen, noble patriots politicians and academia from both the educationally disadvantaged and advantaged states, we cannot play the ostrich wisdom of burying its head in the sand and feel secured and protected from its assailants. We cannot bridge or rectify the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states by applying the non-effective policies of federal character and quota admission into the nation's educational institutions. The simplistic Universal Primary education Scheme did not achieve it. The take-over of missionary and voluntary agencies schools did not correct the imbalance. The National Primary Education Commission which created formulas for resource allocations to the so-called disadvantaged areas did not achieve it. The "Open University" which was closed before it was opened did not solve the problem. In fact, in the words of the protem Vice-Chancellor, the project "did not take off all.... because of the ethnic balancing considerations (and or the fear that it would) widen the educational gap between the northern and southern states, when in reality it would have helped to close the gap" (Guardian December 2002).

If only for emphasis, we want to end this lecture by recalling the thought provoking questions asked by Abdulkadir (1993). If there is no increase in primary school

enrolment, from where shall we get the enrolment for secondary and tertiary education? This is the crux of the matter. This is the cause of the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states in the first instance.

We need to redirect the educational policies and practices to solve our educational problems including the rectification of the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states of the Nigerian federation.

Since primary education is the basis and the most important foundation for all other education development care must be taken to plan for it systematically in order to achieve a sustained and increased enrolment which will subscribe for the subsequent secondary and tertiary educational enrolment. This is what the Vision 2020 Education Turn Around Maintenance (ETAM) advocated here, and should be adhered for the next 20 years. If this is not done early enough in another half a century from now the ordinary socially and culturally created problem may gradually become hereditary, which may require another sort of biogenetic engineering to rectify. It may become the new education version of Human Immunity Virus (HIV) and the intractable Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and in this case, Acquired Imbalance Education Disease Syndrome (AIEDS).

For this consideration, we strongly urge the northern states governments and community leaders to come to terms with parents and children through orientation activities designed to change their attitudes towards western education. If western education is the panacea for modern social-economic development, there is no other way any community can set it aside and remain in isolation from the rest of the country let alone the rest of the world.

This inaugural lecture has provided us with the instruments and modalities needed to rectify the educational imbalance between the northern and southern states, which had been with us for too long. It remains for both the federal and states governments to recognize the modalities and the related positive and preventive process measures for what they are and be able to use them for the purpose.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, and gentlemen of the press,

We rest our case

Thanks for your patience.

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ANNEXURE (A)
UNIVERSITY NEW ENTRANTS BY STATE OF ORIGIN 1980 – 2000

		1980/81		1980/81		1989/90		1999/2000	
NORTHERN STATE		NO	%	NO	%	NO	%	NO	%
1	Bauchi	634	2.2	1132	2.4	1100	1.9	306	0.4
2	Gombe							248	0.3
3	Adamawa	606	2.1	1320	2.7	1552	2.6	396	0.5
4	Taraba							254	0.3
5	Kaduna	1168	4.1	1935	4.0	1939	3.3	901	1.2
6	Katsina					727	1.2	442	0.6
7	Kano	988	3.4	1865	3.2	2233	3.8	859	1.1
8	Jigawa							256	0.3
9	Niger	528	1.8	746	1.5	1253	2.1	622	0.8
10	Benue	1259	4.4	1802	3.7	2412	4.1	1517	2.0
11	Kwara	1408	1.9	2915	6.1	3768	0.4	1159	1.5
12	Kogi							1847	2.5
13	Plateau	852	3.0	1244	2.6	1522	2.6	482	0.6
14	Nasarawa							372	0.5
15	Borno	496	1.7	1133	2.4	1202	2.1	220	0.3
16	Yobe							105	0.1
17	Sokoto	588	2.0	1011	2.1	1183	2.0	385	0.5
18	Zamfara							259	0.3
19	Kebbi							402	0.5
	Sub Total	8527	29.6	14803	30.7	18891	32.2	11031	14.8
SOUTHERN STATE									
1	Imo	3142	10.9	4662	9.7	6159	10.5	11358	15.1
2	Abia							4983	6.0
3	Anambra	3097	10.7	4553	9.5	5814	9.9	7801	10.4
4	Enugu							4268	5.7
5	Ebonyi	882	3.1	1672	3.5	2458	4.2	843	1.1
6	Rivers							3374	4.5
7	Bayelsa	3864	13.3	5528	11.5	7161	12.2	1368	1.8
8	Edo							4382	5.0
9	Delta	3164	11.0	4878	10.1	4980	8.5	5620	7.5
10	Oyo							1671	2.2
11	Osun	2250	7.8	3673	7.6	3495	6.0	2227	3.0
12	Ondo							3206	3.1
13	Ekiti							1469	2.0

14	Ogun	1929	6.7	3136	6.5	3530	6.0	3871	5.3
15	Cross River					1261	2.2	1746	2.3
16	Akwa – Ibom	1485	5.2	3179	6.6	2304	3.9	2606	3.5
17	Lagos	517	1.8	2086	4.3	2558	4.4	3625	4.8
18	Sub Total	20307	70.4	33367	69.3	39720	67.8	63588	85.2
	Grand Total	28834		48170		58611		74619	

SOURCES:

- (1) Federal Republic of Nigeria (1997) statistical information on Nigerian Universities, National Universities Commission, Abuja.
- (2) Federal Republic of Nigeria (2000) “Admission statistics (UME/DE) 1999/2000 Session by States of origin and sex; National Universities Commission, Abuja.

Notes/Comments

- (1) Although the Northern States have always lagged behind the Southern states in general, the situation has deteriorated since the mid 1990’s. For example, the Northern states had (29.6% of new entrants in 1980/81). 30.7% in 1985/86), (32.2% in 1990/91) but dramatically dropped in both absolute numbers and percentage representation in 1999/2000.
- (2) Imo State alone with 11,358 was larger by 327 new intakes than the total of the 19 Northern states by (11,031) by 1999/2000 session
- (3) The females in Imo State alone (5,766) was by 159 more than totals of both male and females in 15 Northern states (including Yobe, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, Jigawa, Zamfara, Bauchi, Nassarawa, Sokoto, Adamawa, Kebbi, Katsina, Plateau, Niger and Kano)

**ANNEXURE (B)
NEW ADMISSION STATISTICS BY STATE OF ORIGIN 2000/2001 SESSION**

NORTHERN STATES					SOUTHERN STATES			
	STATES	Admission	Cumulative from Lowest	Cumulative from Highest		STATES	Admission	Cumulative from Highest
1	Yobe	173	173	12,426	1	Bayelsa	974	974
2	Jigawa	216	389	12,253	2	Ekiti	1011	1985
3	Taraba	262	651	12,037	3	Ebonyi	1016	3001

4	Zamfara	307	958	11,775	4	Oyo	1250	4251
5	Katsina	329	1287	11,468	5	Cross River	1371	5622
6	Kebbi	331	1618	11,139	6	Osun	1427	7049
7	Gombe	367	1985	10,808	7	Lagos	1980	9029
8	Nassarawa	398	2383	10,441	8	Ondo	2013	11042
9	Bauchi	411	2794	10,043	9	Akwa-Ibom	2259	13301
10	Sokoto	432	3226	9632	10	Ogun	2427	15728
11	Adamawa	522	3748	9200	11	Edo	2707	18435
12	Plateau	538	4286	8678	12	Rivers	2963	21398
13	Borno	072	4858	8140	13	Enugu	3319	24717
14	Niger	620	5478	7568	14	Delta	4177	28894
15	Kano	846	6324	6948	15	Abia	4237	33131
16	Kaduna	867	7191	6102	16	Anambra	6836	39967
17	Kwara	1179	8370	5235	17	Imo	8211	18178
18	Benue	1863	10,233	4056				
19	Kogi	2193	12,426	2193				
		12426					48178	

Admission Gap of South Over North 35,752 (or 287.7% greater)

SOURCE: Compiled from the National Universities Commission Admission Statistics 2000/2001 session.

Notes/Comments

- (1) The admission gap of new undergraduate for the Southern states over the Northern states in 2001 was 35,752 (or 287.7% of the North)
- (2) Imo state alone had 8211 which was 1020 more than 16 states of the North (7191 including Yobe, Jigawa, Zamfara, Katsina, Kebbi, Nasarawa, Bauchi, Sokoto, Adamawa, Plateau, Borno, Niger, Kano and Kaduna).
- (3) The least state in the South (Oyo with 1250) is almost same as states in the North with 1287 (including Yobe, Jigawa, Taraba, Zamfara and Kaduna).
- (4) Female admission in 2000/2001 in Imo state was 4129 which was only 157 less than the totals of both the males and females in 12 states of the North (4286, including Yobe, Jigawa, Taraba, Zamfara, Katsina, Kebbi, Gombe, Nassarawa, Bauchi, Sokoto, Adamawa and Plateau)

ANNEXURE (C)
STATES ADMISSION INDEX OF UNDERGRADUATES
IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES 2000/2001

S/N	Northern States	Population (1000) %		Application %		Admission %		Admission Index
1	Kogi	2754	2.4	17,179	3.1	2193	3.6	150
2	Benue	3530	3.1	9999	1.8	1863	3.1	100
3	Bauchi	5579	4.9	3750	0.7	1189	2.0	41
4	Gombe							
5	Kwara							
6	Plateau							
7	Nasarawa	4247	3.7	7008	1.3	836	1.5	41
8	Kaduna	5046	4.4	6601	1.2	867	1.4	32
9	Kano	7450	6.5	6669	1.1	846	1.4	22
10	Sokoto	5731	5.0	3228	0.6	741	1.2	24
11	Zamfara							
12	Niger	3570	3.1	3327	0.6	620	1.0	32
13	Borno	3252	2.9	4136	0.8	572	0.9	31
14	Adamawa	2695	2.4	4298	0.9	522	0.9	38
15	Kebbi	2652	2.3	1444	0.3	331	0.6	26
16	Katsina	4812	4.2	2082	0.4	329	0.5	12
17	Taraba	1939	1.7	2267	0.4	3262	0.4	24
18	Jigawa	3687	2.3	1498	0.3	216	0.4	18
19	Yobe	1795	1.6	1747	0.3	173	0.3	19
	Sub Total	60723	53.2	91471	16.6	12426	20.5	39

S/N	Southern States							
1	Imo	3187	2.8	56591	10.3	8211	13.5	482
2	Anambra	3586	3.1	44853	8.2	6836	11.3	364
3	Enugu	4044	3.5	27840	4.8	4335	7.2	206
4	Ebonyi							
5	Abia							
6	Delta							
7	Rivers	3321	2.9	45093	8.2	4177	6.9	236
8	Bayelsa							
9	Ondo	4853	4.3	40707	7.3	3024	5.0	116
10	Ekiti							
11	Edo							
12	Ogun	2992	2.6	38248	7.3	2730	4.5	187
13	Akwa Ibom	3090	2.7	20977	3.8	2259	3.7	137
14	Lagos	7341	6.4	27244	5.0	1980	3.3	52
15	Osun	2767	2.4	27389	5.0	1427	2.4	100
16	Cross River	2451	2.2	8473	2.0	1371	2.3	105
17	Oyo	4171	3.7	2944	4.2	1250	2.1	57
	Sub Total	53378	46.8	458513	83.4	48178	79.5	170
	Grand Total	114101		54994		60604		

SOURCE: Federal Republic of Nigeria (2001) Applications and Admission Statistics (UMED/DE) by state of origin and sex, National Universities Commission, Abuja.

**UNIVERSITY ENROLMENTS IN NIGERIA
BY STATE OF ORIGIN 1981 – 1999**

S/N	NORTHERN STATE	1980/81		1991/92		1998/99	
		No	%	NO	%	NO	%
1	Bauchi					2,333	3.9
2	Gombe	1172	1.6	3497	2.0	1,854	3.1
3	Adamawa					1615	2.7
4	Taraba	1604	2.3	N.A		1256	2.1
5	Kaduna			3957	2.2	4846	8.1
6	Katsina	2280	3.2	6987	3.9	2513	4.2
7	Kano					4227	7.4
8	Jigawa	1652	2.3	4448	2.5	1256	2.1
9	Niger	955	1.3	2869	1.6	3560	5.9
10	Benue	2765	3.9	6015	3.4	7598	12.9
11	Kwara					6342	10.6
12	Kogi	3890	5.5	9086	5.1	9393	15.8
13	Plateau					3530	5.9
14	Nasarawa	1630	2.3	5711	3.2	2274	3.8
15	Borno					1795	3.0
16	Yobe	1562	2.2	3080	1.7	778	1.3
17	Sokoto					1556	2.6
18	Zamfara	862	1.2	2143	1.2	1496	2.5
19	Kebbi					1376	2.3
	Sub Total	18372	29.8	42613	24.0	59829	24.0
SOUTHERN STATE							
1	Imo					20893	11.0
2	Abia	8078	11.4	14281	8.0	12125	6.4
3	Anambra					15912	8.4
4	Enugu	8077	11.4	16726	9.4	13640	7.2
5	Ebonyi					2652	1.4
6	Rivers					8905	4.7
7	Bayelsa	4554	6.4	10697	6.0	3979	2.1
8	Edo					12883	6.8
9	Delta	8895	12.5	27425	15.4	19133	10.1
10	Oyo					8836	4.4
11	Osun	7824	11.0	15459	8.7	10257	5.4
12	Ondo					11557	6.1
13	Ekiti	5530	7.8	14437	8.1	5305	2.8
14	Ogun		6.7	14015	7.9	15346	8.1
15	Cross River			4968	2.8	4926	2.6
16	Akwa – Ibom	3039	4.4	10091	5.7	11746	6.2
17	Lagos	1241	1.7	8810	5.0	11366	6.0
	Sub Total	52723	74.2	135109	76.0	189458	96.0
	TOTAL	71095		177722		249287	

SOURCES: Compiled from: Federal Republic of Nigeria

- (a) Federal Republic of Nigeria (1997) *Statistics Information on Nigeria Universities*, National Universities Commission, Abuja.
- (b) Federal Republic of Nigeria (2002) *Admission Statistics (UMED/DE) by States of origin and sex*. National Universities Commission, Abuja.