Learning Achievement, Livelihoods, and Values in the Nigerian Secondary Education System

Examination Failure As A National Opportunity Not A National Problem
SOMETHING IS VERY WRONG
Something is wrong with LEARNING

• A catastrophic drop in learning achievement
  – Over the past decade, an average of **72%** of Nigeria’s secondary school leavers **HAVE FAILED** the secondary school-leaving examination
    • This ranges from 50% in some parts of the South-East, to **MORE THAN 90% failure in some parts of the North-East!**
    • This means 1,200,000 youth are pushed out onto the streets of Nigeria every year, unable to fend for themselves, and ripe for recruiting by undesirable elements

• For a country that **once led Africa** in education to drop to **one of the world’s lowest learning achievement rates**, is extraordinarily tragic & an alarming national disgrace
Manifested in **Abysmal Pass Rates**

**Nigeria Annual PASS-RATES in May/June WASSCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Pass Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>15.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>35.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>45.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>35.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
High failure is **SYMPTOM** not problem

- As shameful as it may seem though, **very high failure rates are just the symptom, not the problem**
  - Students fail **BECAUSE** they have not learnt
  - Therefore the true solution is not to do everything possible to get students to “pass” but rather to do everything possible to help students to **LEARN** and to **WANT** to learn!

- **Not everyone will go to university, but ALL need basic education to advance in life without becoming societal burdens**
  - The senior secondary educational level is designed to produce citizens **who can pursue independent value-creating existences in society.**
An Urgent Problem (1)

• **No space in the universities**
  – Only 1 in 5 of the 1.6m who finish SS3 every year can fit in university
    • Their secondary education is all they will depend upon to achieve an independent value-creating existence

• **No jobs**
  – Youth unemployment has grown to reach 42.24% with no jobs for 15.2m of the 35.9m youth in the labour force!!
    • If we do not ENSURE that students acquire all the LEARNING required before leaving secondary school, we will be inflating the youth unemployment pool annually with a growing number of **angry & frustrated youth**, who feel impotent to improve their lot
National Security Issue

2014 WASSCE PASS-RATES by Geo-Political Zone

- SS
- SW
- SE
- NC
- NE
- NW
An Urgent Problem (2)

• A fragile polity
  – Our failing school-leavers are some of the most vulnerable youths in the world, ripe for recruiting by seductive & violent forces. Given Nigeria’s current demographic & socio-political makeup, **churning out millions of frustrated children on to the streets is a major security risk**

• The poorest are the worst hit
  – The wealthy can minimize the problems by sending their children to better schools and by hiring private “lesson teachers” for them
  – Thus the worst hit are youth from families with the least economic & social safety nets. **They may thus be the most vulnerable to despair & its consequent antisocial behaviour**
What do we value as a people?

Public Spending on Education as a Percentage of GDP

- South Africa: 5.4%
- Australia: 5%
- India: 3.2%
- Korea Rep.: 4.2%
- Indonesia: 3.3%
- Malaysia: 6.1%
- Philippines: 2.5%
- Argentina: 0.9%
- Brazil: 4.9%
- Mexico: 4.7%
- Egypt, Arab Repub: 4.9%
- Israel: 6.2%
- Poland: 5.6%
- Romania: 3.5%
- Russian Fed.: 3.9%
- France: 4.5%
- Germany: 4.6%
- Italy: 4.6%
- Netherlands: 5.5%
We need to change our mindsets from a focus on PASSING to a focus on LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT
Learning Achievement is IT

• A focus on learning achievement above all, has many implications
  – We see the family, & especially parents, as collaborators in the educational system, not just customers, or sponsors, or even worse, adversaries
  – We focus on a discussion about what we want our children to LEARN, not just what certificates we want them to have
  – We tie education to preparation for livelihoods, because a focus on learning achievement brings more stakeholders (e.g. potential employers & economic actors) into the conversation.
  – Once we see parents & families as collaborators, we get the strongest allies possible in the task of educating THEIR(!!) children
    • Rather than ignoring or even undermining family value systems, we provide space for plurality in values so we can all transparently cooperate for the greater good
Technology Can Help

- In our (admittedly biased) opinion, we feel that THOUGHTFUL technological solutions may be the only way to **achieve scale solutions within the timeframe required**
  - Can, & should the government build another 20,000 schools in 5 years?
  - According to NBS “in 2012, total gross capital formation (GCF) for education was ₦6.72 trillion. **Residential Buildings made up more than 85% of the total cost of GCF reaching ₦6.04 trillion by 2012. Office Furniture was the second highest GCF expenditure** in the sector, down to a total of ₦525 billion in 2012”

- **Is that what we most need to be spending on?**
ONE SOLUTION
TESTED & PROVEN
A tested and proven platform, on which Nigerian students have answered over 110 MILLION learning questions, summaries & explanations, across all years, subjects, and topics of the senior secondary curriculum.

FIRST IN AFRICA
Africa’s first mobile personal advancement platform, whose algorithms use mastery, gamification and social learning theory to drive individual learning achievement in a convenient and fun way.

ANYWHERE & ANY NETWORK
A platform that works with any mobile device anywhere in the world where there is a data signal.
A “Lesson teacher” for every student

- With **gidimo**, every child can afford a personal after-school tutor or “lesson teacher”
  - **Mastery learning theory** combined with **social gamification theory** drive an advanced approach to curriculum mastery via a mobile platform

- **Curriculum mastery becomes a gamified objective, and advanced algorithms accompany and direct each student via daily personal work, at his or her own pace, to thoroughly & demonstrably master the set curriculum before the end of the school session**
  - **gidimo** thus supports the teacher’s role of guidance & explanation

- **gidimo democratises the “lesson-teacher”** and makes it accessible to even the poorest in the most remote parts of the country, wherever there is a network signal

- Knowledge competitions further reinforce learning & drive content deeper into long-term memory areas of the brain