

Exploring Dropout Issues Amidst Social Change Among Fulbe Nomadic Students in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the areas where education serves as an instrument for injecting positive social changes among Fulbe nomads in Nigeria and to identify some socio-cultural practices of the nomads that contributed to the manifestation of school dropouts among many Fulbe nomadic students in the country. Being a qualitative research design of ethnographic approach, collection of data relies on observations of interactions and interviews with participants in a natural situation where structured questions were administered in six nomadic centres within the study area that is known to have a very high record of Fulbe nomadic dropout students in the country. The findings revealed that learning process, value concept and conduct were the areas where schooling injected social change among the nomads while the study identified relationship as a major factor that cause dropout among Fulbe nomadic students. The paper concluded by recommending the need for urgent intervention of the Fulbe nomadic students from early school quitting due to domestic activities of the nomads in Nigeria.

Keywords: Dropout, Social change, Nomadic education, Fulbe nomads, Cultural practice

PRELIMINARY

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic, multi- religious country located in west Africa, with over 200 million inhabitants (Ekechukwu, 2020), making it the highest population in Africa, with over 500 ethnic groups spread across its width and breath among which are the Fulbe nomadic pastoralist whom are found almost in all the 36 states of Nigeria including Abuja (Usman, 2006, Ojo, 2020), and largely concentrated in the north-eastern, north-western and part of middle-belt Sa'ad, (2002).The Fulbe nomads contributed in the social and economic development of the nation through an intense pastoral lifestyle described as their prominent occupation, mainly herding cattle and smaller ruminant animals like the sheep and goats, an occupation that makes them to interact with different group of people and communities in marketing, education, politics, health and so on across the country. Aliyu, (2002).

The argument here is that, students of Fulbe nomads should be treated as the students of other nomads treated in other parts of the world whose needs and opportunity to access sound education shall be considered very important for the full accomplishment of an individual as a human being and for lifelong survival as well as for achieving the developmental goals of the world community at large. However, many of these students were left behind as far as back to the early age of local engagement of livestock herding, learning the traditional knowledge and skills instead of being in the modern schools Mohanty, (2002)

Apparently, the Provision of Basic Primary Education for all school-aged children have been the major concern of all nations including Nigeria as emphasised by the article on World Declaration of Education for All (1990), and since education is a fundamental human right, in order not to leave the Fulbe pastoralist and other nomadic groups in the country behind, national commission for nomadic education (NCNE) was established under decree 41 of 12th December, 1989 (NCNE, 2008) which addresses the education of Fulbe nomads in the country Mohammed, (2003). Objectively speaking, this education programme for the nomads

had laid a solid foundation for general change among the nomads in the country initiating them to see things in a completely new way, indicating a paradigm shift in their thinking which may likely trigger social change. The fact is that Fulbe nomads have for long suffered various cruel oppressions and injustice of unbearable magnitudes from sedentary farmers on trivial issues which may force the nomads to seek for an alternative vision to their problem. Although the change may not be through the revolutionary means of rallies, protest, demonstrations or fasting such as the Arab-wind- of- change that causes the loss of thousands lives but an evolutionary means through what the research reveals as in learning new skills, valuing lifestyle, general conduct. However, dropping out of school becomes an impediment to achieving such goals and this phenomenon was triggered by what this research identified as relationship.

The introduction of nomadic education in Nigeria should be an avenue for social change among the nomads especially the Fulbe nomadic pastoralists whom Shobola, Omoregbe, and Olufemi, (2012) as well as Buba, (2021), all described as group of wanderers from one place to the other looking for pasture, and or livelihood. Although, Ogundairo, and Ijimakinwa, (2020) were of the opinion that some groups of Fulbe nomads realized the importance of settling down to enable their children acquire education like that of the children of sedentary famers, or to be engaged in ranch cattle rearing, crops farming, minor trading, as well as entrepreneurial activities despite the views of Fareo, and Ateegu, (2020), which revealed that many Fulbe nomads shunned sending especially the girl-child to school.

Boetto, (2019), believed that social change involves a shift in orientation, or societal transformation towards sustainability as in politics, economic, health, education and many more aspects, the Fulbe nomads in Nigeria therefore are not left behind and could as well be triggered by so many factors as in the views of Gauthier, (2019). However, as the changes manifested, the long socio-cultural practices of the parents which some are related to religion, technology, education, economical or cultural, while others are the cultural activities of the nomads such as the frequent migration, the long practiced early marriage which is well accepted among the Fulbe pastoralist (Shaguy, 2023), Sharo game which involved the youths beating each other with whips causing massive injuries, etc.

Apparently, the objective of nomadic education was designed to address the social and cultural integration of the nomads into the main social system of the national lifestyle as indicated in the blueprint of NCNE, (2008). The inculcation of the functional literacy and numeracy which in the package, it means to educate the children to have the ability to read and write things that are very important into their daily lifestyle such as simple letters to friends, government officials etc. they also should be able to read papers such as tax receipts, instructions on how to use veterinary drugs etc Aminu, (2003). However, these intentions are blocked with the incessant cases of school dropouts among the Fulbe nomadic students in the country, also a phenomenon that was blamed as a source of widespread of delinquencies among the Fulbe nomadic youths especially in the northern part of the country. This research, therefore, intends to uncover tethers between social change and dropout cases among the Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria.

Background of the Study

Adegbite, (2019), studied Nomadic education in Nigeria and revealed that it is geared toward achieving two broad objectives, intended to be harvested in a short term and long-term periods. Their ability to acquire functional literacy and numeracy to be achieved within a very short-term while the long-term objective is the acquisition of knowledge and skills intended for integrating into national economic which is gradually pursued in a longer time. The policy will help the nomads to change in all aspects as viewed by Ibe-Moses, and Nwokonko, (2021). Education is an appropriate media for changing pastoral nomads' perception and value system to integrate them into a broader social, economic and political context and to take advantage of technology and information in this era of globalization Godia, (2006).

The Fulbe nomads are like any other nomadic pastoralists world over, they live and derive most of their food source and income from raising domestic livestock, with no recognize place of residence, and move from place to place in search of pasture and water (Carr-hill and Peart, 2005), the kind of lifestyle that prevent their children to acquire education and end up being school dropouts and mostly nuisance to the communities as it was seen in recently in Nigeria. Again, it is obvious that the social life of children of Fulbe nomads are usually

interrupted through their adherence to the cultural activities such as early marriage, untimely migrations that is coupled up with series of communal clashes with the sedentary farmers which usually resulted into an enormous loss of lives and property and eventual dropouts as viewed by Adamu, (2003). Upon this therefore, it is arguable to say that since the inception of nomadic education programme in 1987, although some achievements were noted but then there are more of challenges particularly in the programme presentation or delivery Umar and Tahir, (2000). There are many development agencies from within and outside the country who put hands on desk to eradicate illiteracy and reduce the cases of dropout in the country, that gave some reasonable attention to the social and economic needs of nomadic communities in the country, but yet such organisations were not properly guided both in policy and challenges due to the undefined or predictable lifestyle of the nomads Carr-Hill and Peart, (2005): Kratli and Dyer, (2009).

According to Bah-Lalya, et. al, (2012), the social and economic value of livestock for the nomads and the entire Continent of Africa will never be disputed and as livestock breeders, the Fulbe nomads were characterised with regular migration along with family members (Iro, 2004), giving more attention on training their children some rudiments of traditional livestock herding in order to ensure the continuity of nomadic lifestyle and cattle rearing despite its opposition and hindrance to school attendance and school dropout.

Furthermore, various research revealed that the Fulbe nomads carry out themselves through their socio-ethical uniqueness or social organization, of “Pulaaku” (a Fulfulde language word referring to the way of Fulbe) and its tenets such as shyness (Adams, Madhavan, and Simon, 2002; Fonchingong, 2019), that lead to restriction in social integration of the Fulbe nomadic students in school.

On these background therefore, the study investigated deep into the life of the Fulbe nomadic student with the hope to understand the factors that may likely push these children to integrate well into the main social, economic and political system of the nation through education and understand the potential socio-cultural antecedents of the Fulbe nomads that remain a potential factors of dropping out of school among the yawning children of these wandering groups.

Statement of Problem

There is no doubt that education will lead to social change among the nomads as it does with the education for the gypsies in United Kingdom, the travelling communities of the People Republic of China, the Kenya policy of education for the Massai herdsmen as viewed by Bakari, (2000). Although, there are disparities in policy implementations between those countries mentioned above but the case of Nigerian nomadic education programme seems to be inadequately funded, cases of poor handling or administration, to mention few that lead to apparent cases of school dropouts among the Fulbe nomadic students were recorded even though, Martha-Rose, Charles and Okereke, (2014), were of the opinion that the crisis of school dropout among millions of nomadic students could be consequential of their peripatetic nature and suitability of accommodating schooling and the economic venture of livestock herding simultaneously.

Teressa, and Bekele (2021), were of the view that, in order not to push away nomadic students from schools, such institutions should be prepared to provide all needed developmental, preventives, or intervention measures that might expose the Fulbe learners to the basic ingredients of academic success to help improve learners' academic performance. The question here is that, are the present nomadic schools in Nigeria capable and willing to do that? a question that may need another researched another day.

In addition, Fareo, and Ateegu, (2020), were of the view that no matter the level of preparedness of nomadic schools, there are disturbing cases that are related to the cultural and traditional practices of the Fulbe nomads that do not only threaten school phobia but rather pulling out the Fulbe nomadic students away from schools. And this assertion was justified by Szumski and Karwarski, (2015), who lamented that social integration is a strapping factor that pressures the future decision-making of a learner to stay or otherwise drop out of the formal school system.

Thynell, (2009), had it that education serves as a springboard for initiating shift into modification of social life, and economical aspects of a community. Just as supported by Dyer, (2001), with the opinion that schooling of

Fulbe nomadic boys and girls is expected to prepare them to positively identify new ways of thinking, to accommodate changes in climate, politics, and economics. This research, therefore, as it views the occurrence of social changes, it also investigates the socio-cultural practices and traditional traits continued to nurture and harvest dropouts among Fulbe nomadic students across the country

Research Questions: This study is guided by central research questions that quested to study on what are the social change manifestations among Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria? And what social practices that manifested dropouts among Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria? To collect relevant information that should answer these research questions, the following interview questions were used with slight paraphrases where necessary as a strategy to deepen the investigation on the topic. The interview questions include: (1) what were the new things your teachers introduce to you in the school? (2) What are the new things you learn from your friends in school? (3) What do you think is good for the social life of Fulbe nomadic students in school? (4) Think of the children of Fulbe origin with all the tenets of Pulaaku, what tenet(s) make you to abandon school and end up being a dropout? (5) What in school do you think made Fulbe children to stop coming to school? (6) What Fulbe traditions which you practice led you to drop out? The questions were the researcher's own designed instrument to be used as an acceptable means for survey research that has non-exiting instrument for modification Creswell, (2012).

METHODS

This research is a purposive ethnographic qualitative research orientation, conducted on Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria. The researcher believed that as school dropouts that mostly quitted at primary school level, the Fulbe nomadic youths whose ages ranged between 15 years old to 19 years old and of pastoral migrant communities background whom the entire lifestyle hinges around herding mainly cattle, could be able to narrate their experiences at home and in school which will build up this study. Furthermore, verbatim expression of these students on their educational experiences will reveal the role of education as a tool for change to their lifestyle and how their cultural practice affected them to drop out of school. This in the views of Usman, (2006), will make the policy makers and education administrators to improve their efforts towards educational approaches to encourage them settle down and avoid dropping out of school at early level for better development of the nation at large.

Participants: The participants for this research were selected with the aim to draw the best maximum data, being a purposive qualitative research strategy that allows a researcher to deliberately select the participants Creswell, (2012). The researcher selected both male and female Fulbe nomadic dropout students despite the understanding of the researcher on the Pulaaku concept "Semteede" (Shyness) that may not allow female dropout students to express themselves freely as the boys. The moral code of Pulaaku, demands that the young Fulbe female should be shyly being a sign of respect to the elders Tilde, (2005). Five participants dropped out of school between basic five and six while the sixth dropped out at junior secondary school two. The participants were all visited in their respective nomadic school locations within five local government areas of Adamawa state, Nigeria.

Furthermore, although the participants were of Fulbe tribe, they however belong to different dialects which also made to be of varying levels of nomadic practices as reflected in the types of nomadic school approaches provided for each group. This includes centers with regular school and onsite school approaches respectively, which gave the researcher varying information from the Fulbe nomadic dropout students since each school and or center have a unique experience.

Ethical Considerations: Since this study involved interview sessions with dropout students, the researcher verbally seeks the consent of the participants and requested places, date and time which mostly occurred during herding and places of work of the participants. No such agreement form was designed for the participants to sign besides, doing such may scare the participants. However, the participants were informed that the interview session would be audio recorded, and participants were at liberty to terminate the session at any time. Furthermore, the participants were assured of anonymity and confidentiality and that the obtained data will be strictly used for research purposes.

Data Analysis:

Data analysis is a procedure to make sense of the data to answer the research questions which require the researcher to merge, reduce and interpret what has been said. Merriam and Tisdell (2016). And most importantly, the researcher should avoid any biasness at any cause (Cypress, 2017), which may affect the result and on this, the researcher complied throughout this work.

Manual open coding of data was adopted in this study following a general procedure of thematic data analysis, this involved stages of summary of the related information for one theme or gathering the similarities or differences in responses from the interview into one common category (Dayang and Abdul Hafiz, 2009), even though there are no single set of guidelines for coding data that existed Creswell, (2007): Tesch, (1990). The analysis however began with the transcription of the data into a textual format thereby giving the researcher an opportunity to read and re-read the texts sentence by sentence and paragraph by paragraph leads to identifying categories and subcategories of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2012; Strauss and Corbin, 1990), on the factors of social change and how socio-cultural practices influence dropout among Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria. The interrelatedness of data collection and data analysis in qualitative research is significantly strong (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The analysis of this research was achieved with the researcher's selfhood that becomes an instrument throughout this study that reveal the factors of social change and the effects of socio-cultural practices of Fulbe nomads on school dropout in Nigeria.

Data Presentation

This section is mainly concern with the data related to the factors of social change among Fulbe nomadic students. Three subtopics were discussed as supported with quotations from the data after it has been fractured into the open coding analysis. The researcher employed the conditional relationship guide (Scott, 2004), to give a focus to the research by answering what, when where, how and who questions raised in this research. When one speaks on the factors of social change, obviously, the agents of socialization such as the parents, community, religion etc., are on the lead. As such, this research investigates the impact of these agents on the life of Fulbe nomadic students in schools and the result was discussed under three main topics namely: (1) learning process (2) Value lifestyle and (3) Social Conduct.

Data revealing Learning Process Among Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria

The first and important factor of social change uncovered in this research is the academic learning process which showed itself through available evidence of improvement in knowledge aspects, the skills and other school activities which the Fulbe nomadic students were exposed through the school. For example, the following participant shared his experience in school as the participant said thus:

"In the school we really learn many things related to knowledge.... like the subjects such as English and Mathematics. I know addition, multiplication and the rest"

Similarly, another participant narrates thus:

"I also learn various subjects like English, mathematics, integrated science, agriculture and social studies..."

More clues continued to be revealed even at different questions such as this statement:

"I can say that here I learnt subjects like English language. I can distinguish between the parts of speech, make simple sentences. I can also make simple calculations..."

Here the learning of subjects and making simple calculations should be understood as an increase to the knowledge of the participants because as obvious, these children are exposed to learning as it is in any school in the country. And most importantly the learning is understood to have involved aspect of knowledge that will remain and be useful to the Fulbe nomadic students throughout their life span especially as it involves some aspects of Islamic religious knowledge being that Islam is an integral part of Pulaaku, the concept that makes up a Fulbe himself Abubakar, (1991).

Furthermore, the learning process involves acquisition of skills such as the skills of playing football, fluent reading and writing skills etc. to show the keen interest of the students in school and willingness to stay. This was also justified by all the participants in their discussions with the researcher. For example, these statements, were captured from three different participants as thus:

“We learn how to play football...”: “I learn playing football with my friends...” and “...we take off our dresses just for playing football...”

All these statements were referring to the skills of football which is part of the structured activities in school curriculum that involves manipulation of muscles and coordinating the brain to perform as viewed by Matsuzaka, Picard and Strick, (2007), and fortunately, football playing today has change the lives of many youths in Africa and the world at large. School games such as football have changed the traditional games of the Fulbe nomads just exactly as this participant narrates. He states thus:

“Actually, I do not participate in the Fulbe traditional Sharo game because of schooling but we play football instead. And you know now, schooling is very necessary to everybody. If you are not educated for instance, people in the city will see you like your animals. So schooling is important in socializing us as well”

Other skills learnt by the Fulbe nomadic students in school included their ability to read fluently, write readable texts, make simple abstract drawings in school, have the technique to write examinations in an orderly manner, the skill of proper dressing such as school uniform etc.

These Fulbe nomadic students have learn effectively despite the hard and difficult terrain which they live in their respective localities. They were able to properly handle their learning materials such as books that are vulnerable to harsh environments. Furthermore, they have also adapted to the classroom situation that involves “uniform dress, good schooling characters which is deeply ingrained in the structure of mass-production for making the children to learn same things at the same time as viewed by Collins, and Halverson, (2009), a situation that will inevitably influence social change among the Fulbe nomadic students.

The diagram 1 below shows the building of relationship of learning process among Fulbe nomadic Students in Nigeria.

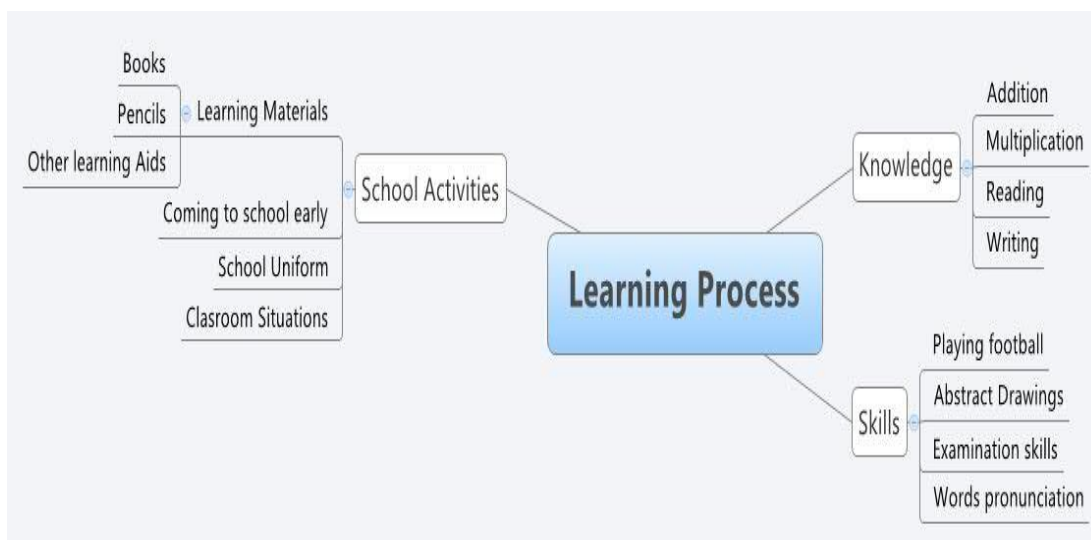


Diagram1: Learning Process among Fulbe Nomadic students

As presented in diagram 1 above, learning process is a factor for social change among Fulbe nomadic students since the knowledge and skills that were learnt in school are capable of injecting different social background through acquiring new carrier or at least adapting to a sedentary lifestyle for the better change of the future generation of Fulbe pastoralist in Nigeria and discourage dropout cases among the Fulbe nomadic students in the country.

Data on Value Concept being Manifestation of Social Change among Fulbe Nomadic Students

The next important issue revealed was the evidence to understand the worthiness of education that could be achieved only through education which the researcher tagged as value. Qualitatively speaking, these children were able to display understanding of the lifestyles lived across by different people and they also understood that due to the conditions or the type of occupation they find themselves, the situation is different. However, most of the Fulbe nomadic students interviewed were optimistic for change if they continue with the schooling. The participants interviewed were able to raise issues of value which include quality lifestyle, education, wealth and technology.

Firstly, the word “quality” was used to show feelings of the participant on the types of schools or the approaches provided for them as children of the nomads in the country unlike the nomadic schools that were neglected. For example, these participants were quoted saying as thus:

“I think the regular school provided mostly for sedentary dwellers is better than our schools that lack even good classrooms and seats. They should have considered the lifestyle of the Fulbe nomads, the mobile schools usually come up with problems...”

“We learned the importance of staying in one place for a very long time and the importance of furthering education where I hope in the future to better upgrade Pulaaku traditions such as modern herding...”

Similarly, another participant shared the same opinion with the previous participants on the quality of school desired for the Fulbe nomads. The participant states thus:

“I think the best type of school is the regular school, because mobile schools sometimes lack good attention from the teachers since not all the teachers migrate along with the pupils”.

The presence of regular schools for the children of Fulbe nomads which most of the children attended have planted in the minds of the children to like settling down rather than following the bush like their parents do and it also opens up the minds of these students to behave better and appear neater both in the body, clothes and the conducts in order to live a good lifestyle as narrated in the following statements. The participant said thus:

“There are changes in one’s lifestyle when we compare those days when we were not in school roaming about with the herds in the bush...”

“We also do good things like cleanliness of the body and cloth every morning before one goes to school and even when at home...”

Furthermore, the value of wealth was also raised among the Fulbe nomadic children such as the statement of this participant:

“I learn how to stay with other people in the world, how to cultivate a farm and how I will improve my wealth (Cattle)”

Although, as obviously expected this participant is having a different opinion as he states thus:

“Staying in one place cannot help to increase one’s cattle...”

This opinion reveals how the Fulbe nomads valued cattle and but never the less it also opens up the secret believes of the Fulbe nomads on owning cattle which was earlier revealed that the dignity of each Fulbe family depends on the number of cattle heads the family owns and also determines the position or status as well as the respect of that family or an individual in the community Umar and Tahir, (2009).

Finally, the participants revealed value of ‘technology’ in their discussions. This can be justified in the following statement of this participant who referred to items like wrist watches, hand phone, Radio etc. as in the following statements.

“We use radio, television and phone sometimes at home or in the school”

“The teachers come to the school with hand phone which they sometimes give us to play games in the phones...”

“...but wrist watches yes, our teachers do have. I can still remember when I was not good in English, one teacher uses to ask his colleague, what was the time? This encouraged me to have a watch and to learn how to speak in English as well”

“Hand phone and radio are very important to our lifestyle. The watch is also doing its own effect because we are now time conscious particularly during school time”

Diagram 2 below indicates related values in the lifestyle of Fulbe nomadic primary school children as discussed above.

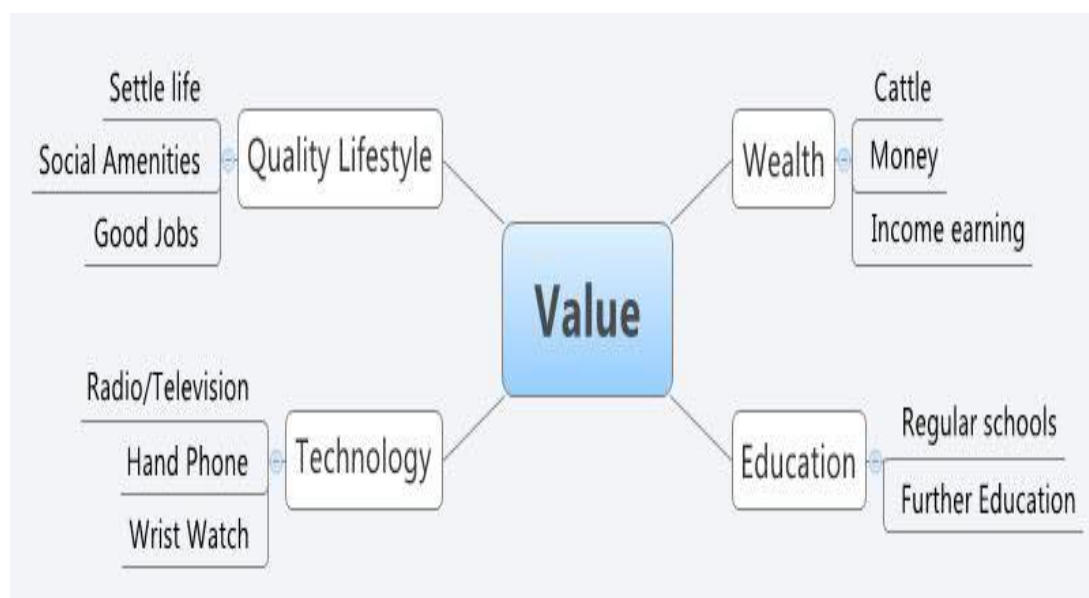


Diagram 2: Value Concept among Fulbe Students

A close study of the picture above will reveal that Value lifestyle among Fulbe nomadic students was a strong factor of social change since the need for quality lifestyle means a lot to the Fulbe nomadic students who was determine to work hard in school and avoid dropping out to have good results and eventually acquire white collar jobs in a settle lifestyle full of the social amenities in their respective environments.

Data on Personal Conduct being manifestation of Social Change among Fulbe Nomadic Students

Conducts were also identified in the data as a meaningful social change among Fulbe nomadic students interviewed in this research. Some were of the positive side while others were negative as it is an obvious phenomenon with human being. For this work, we shall look at the conduct of Fulbe nomadic students relating to their social behaviour, state of the mind, leadership conduct, state of the body and the health consciousness that led to school dropout among the naive student of nomadic background in the country.

On health consciousness among the Fulbe nomadic students, participants believed that school taught them lessons on health education. For example, some of the participants state thus:

“I am afraid of the school not to be infected from other children in the school especially during exercise in health education.”

“Also, other things are issues such as health education. We always cut our hair and nails in the school. Do you know that such thing will lead to infections in the school?”

Also, this participant said,

“The new lifestyle we learn in this school includes cleanliness of the body and environment. But issues such as the male or female organs, wearing short dresses during Physical education subjects are shameful to us especially our female ones. In health education we are encouraged to take regular bath, wash our cloths, unlike the time when we were herding in the bush. I think this I will rather better practice it at home”

The social conducts of Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria is incline under certain circumstance and environment in which the students found themselves which also determine the mode of presentations in the world around them and not only the school but at larger perspectives understanding the winds of change bellowing around their ears both at home and in the schools.

The most important conduct is the ability to keep the body healthy but unfortunately is the fact that such students insist to quit and be with parents instead of completion. Apparently, most of the students of Fulbe nomads have understood that the school is a learning institute that should upgrade their knowledge both in theory and practice, the students in many instances have testified to have learnt issues on health education particularly in the school like in the science education subjects and the regular exercises conducted during physical and health education classes.

The conduct of Fulbe nomadic students also revealed the state of mind of the children which is very important clue for social change. Through the responses of the participants, we can be able to understand the state of their minds particularly with regards to their experiences in school for better change. On this also most of the participants sounded friendly and calm during our discussion as well as the references they were citing as part of what was learnt in school. For example, this participant said thus:

“I would like to tell you that the teachers look at students with good behaviours among us to assign certain responsibilities like head-boy-ship of this school.”

Or as this participant refers to his teachers in his discussion as he said,

“Really our teachers taught us cleanliness, good behaviour and how to interact with other people.”

Although this participant claimed to have good behaviours from home but then learn from his teachers as well. He said,

“Our behaviour is learnt from when we are young. We learn from our elders and teachers because we have good relationship with our teachers. So, we can maintain these behaviours. But then it is possible someone may change when he reaches secondary school level.”

Despite what have been said in the previous quotations, yet some of the participants were optimistic to the good lifestyle in school as this participant stated thus:

“I learn to be shyly, helping one another, kindness and many other things that are useful to be with other people anywhere...”

To this, therefore, one can say that the minds of the Fulbe nomadic students have been adjusted to have the feeling of betterment for good since these Fulbe nomadic children are getting use to good conducts, interact with teachers and friends cordially, avoid unnecessary fights, respect the elders, develop the spirit of helping each other with kindness. These are the conducts of the mind which the Fulbe nomadic students learn to understand as bases for development.

Furthermore, there are other social conducts such as cleanliness, respect, discipline and good behaviours that the participants mentioned as behaviours that they learn in school or display as students and interact with their friends or teachers. On this too, the researcher cited few examples such as the saying of this participant:

“In this school we learn to improve on our shyness and obedience to the teachers. When they ask us to do something then we do it happily”

Others said,

“I like to mention even the way we seat in the classroom. We are arranged and it gives us a kind of discipline”

In another attitudinal consciousness among Fulbe nomadic students studied, was the issue of leadership which was raised during our discussion with the participants and that the researcher finds it necessary to report more especially when one thought of “”, Leadership (thus, Ardungal), being an important tenet of Pulaaku (Aminu, 2003) expected to be reflected among the Fulbe students. And relating to this, a participant state thus:

“I also cannot stay with dirt on my body or cloth because I am the school head boy”

Also, these students believed that leadership is a tool for development and can be achieved through knowledge. Therefore, as students, they endeavour to work harder in order to achieve leadership right from the classroom level and into the larger society because the better among them is always assigned to be a leader even in their classes. This participant said,

“We learn many things in the classroom particularly as we are grouped by our teachers in the classroom. You know sometimes not only the teacher is teaching us sometimes it is our group members that help us to understand other things. The best among us is always the group leader”

Finally, the state of the body was also referred among the students’ conducts. These include the physical body and the mode of dress in school. To this therefore, one participant who was referring to the future of his physical appearance if he is in school. The participant said:

“I think, if I continued schooling in the future, shyness would disappear in me totally. I will also stop plaiting my hair and painting my face during celebrations”

Again, this participant is describing how some of the Fulbe nomadic youths who were not enrolled to any school dress, he states thus:

“...the Fulbe social organisation “Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria” (MACBAN) had discouraged the youth here in doing things related to Sharo game such as tight-fitting legging pantaloons, leaving bushy hair and all sort of things related to Sharo game. And, you know that now I am grown up person, so I really understood the importance of school”

These statements indicate that the Fulbe nomadic students have established good conducts of the body through dresses and avoiding other facial marks that are not inherited such as tattoos on faces or any part of the body that hitherto was practiced by Fulbe youth who had not been to school. Furthermore, hair plating among male Fulbe nomadic youths and all other vices that can destroy the integrity of the Fulbe students were avoided. Cautiously but persistently Fulbe nomadic children addressed such conducts even with the help of some notable non-governmental organisations such as the Miyetti Allah Fulbe organisation in order to establish a well behave Fulbe students for the betterment of Fulbe society. Diagram 3 below depicts general conducts of the Fulbe students in school.

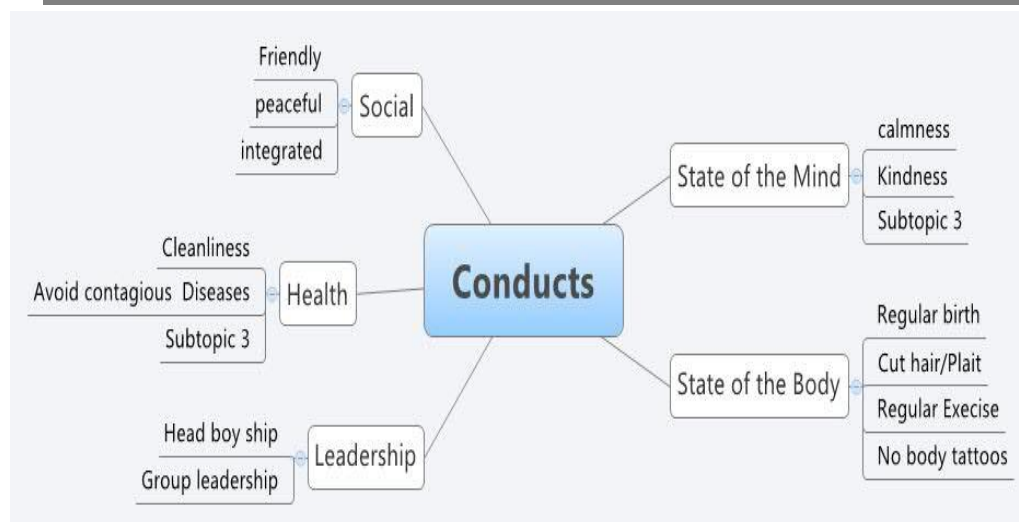


Diagram3: Conduct among Fulbe Students

Data on Relationship being Manifesting Factor of Dropout among Fulbe Nomadic Students

The interview sessions with Fulbe nomadic dropout students (participants) revealed the clout of relationship that include kinship, Organisations, marital relationship and gender influence to pull out Fulbe nomadic students away from school.

Kinship relationship among Fulbe nomadic children in primary schools involves the relationship with their parents, brothers and other members of family around them in the schools. This knits relationship unfolds its impact on the education of the children through many faces, and the researcher believes could influence change among these children in the future. This statement for example, reveals the willingness of the Fulbe parents to educate their children. The Participant states thus:

“Although my parents encouraged us to go to school regularly but since our brothers and sisters quit and some of them were not even enrolled from the first instance, we too decide to quit and be with our siblings”

Furthermore, to show his concern for parents toward his conducts, this participant said:

“I don’t want to see my parents taking care of the animals while I go to school. I, therefore, decide to leave the school and be with my parents...”

This statement justifies close relationship between the parent and the participant otherwise the participant would not have worried with the parents.

It is very important to understand that relationship have a strong effect for social change. As such many heart-touching statements were revealed by the participants such that could eventually lead to change among the children. However, such relations may eventually lead to school dropout as seen in this statement. The participant said,

“The teachers sometimes assign us to beat our friends or brother as punishment for offences, and you have no option, and this shows lack of kindness, it is therefore, better to stop coming to such schools...”

Furthermore, kinship relationship among the Fulbe nomadic students and their parents was understood in the statements that revealed efforts of these students to persuade their parents to change the nomadic lifestyle habit and settle in one place instead but at the end the parents influenced such students to abandon the schools and be with them in migrations. On this, a participant was quoted saying thus:

“It is true that we inherited migration, but we tried to discourage our parents this unnecessary migration and to settle down in one place to enable us acquire education. I personally tried to persuade my parents on this matter many times but then the parents’ triumph and migrate as they too inherited from their parents”

The same participant also reveals further relationship with his parents where he admitted having been helpful to the parents at home which might be a reason why he should not continue to go to school as the participant states thus,

“I know that I am the only son that help my parents in doing all the things at home and that is why I have to quit...”

This participant seems to have appreciated the efforts of his parents as they send him to school from the first instance against all odds in that locality, but herding activities could not permit him to continue schooling even as his parents were very active in the society by attending meetings including the PTA meetings. The participant states thus:

“In this school, our parents usually send us to herd during school hours particularly in the morning. And My parents do send me herding but rather prefer to send me to school as early as eight o’clock in the morning. My parents understood the importance of school particularly with the politics involved in the society today. You see my father always attend to the PTA meetings but like what I said earlier, herding is very important to us....”

The participant also reveals an intimate relationship with his parents on social issues like early marriage, that the issue of marriage does occur between them and their parents were supportive as he states,

“I am married as early as when I was young. Our parents though are strong on this issue of early marriage. They like their children to get married as early as possible to have grandchildren and we respect that we will never disappoint our parents and so we have to quit the school.”

Another important relationship observed to have influenced school dropout among the Fulbe nomadic students is the issue of Organisations. Here the participants particularly mentioned Fulbe organisations such as the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria, and the Pulaaku vigilante groups that played significant role on the life of the Fulbe youths. For example, this participant states thus:

“Yes, like I said earlier, the Fulbe social organisation Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria and other vigilante groups are groups that we joined as youths where we patrol our environment against cattle rustling and other minor crimes among us such organisations are helpful”

Furthermore, Islamic organisations were also on the searchlight in this research where they too played a significant role in the schooling life of the Fulbe nomads. The participant states thus:

“Here our parents are Muslims who belong to various Tarika. We like Islamic songs, and we like to join the first aid group of such Islamic organisations especially as we attended the primary level so no need for continuation to further education....”

This participant spoke categorical on how his participation of the Aid group affects his studies since the participant had to travel far into the urban area to be able to attend. The participant said thus:

“Yes, we do not have such Islamic organisations in our area, but we were able to locate the first aid groups in the nearby towns and join such groups. Surely, we travel far and so sometimes we may miss the our lessons in school and as this continued we eventually quit the school completely”

This participant understood the roles of government and non-governmental organisations in the country since these organisations have touched them by providing learning materials in their school. But unfortunately, most of these NGOs quit and stop the assistance which also discouraged the students and led to school dropout. The participant said:

“This type of our school is a regular school that resembles the normal or conventional school in the city. At first, there were NGOs like DFID that assisted our brothers to attend the nomadic pre-service in FCE, Yola but now it stopped and truly speaking, it led us to loss interest in the school...”

Also, this participant reveals more ideas when he mentioned politics of the society which is also played in their school and of course how it involved their parents and finally affected their schooling. He states thus:

“My parents understood the importance of school particularly, but politics involved in the society today neglected our schools. You see my father always attend PTA meetings and through this they complained on the poor state of our schools. There were no seats, no teachers, no classrooms etc. so one may be discouraged to come to the school...”

Relationship among Fulbe nomadic students involves marriage relationship. It was an issue that the researcher noticed to have been mentioned by the participants in different occasions as they were reacting to the interview questions raised during the interview sessions. For example, this participant shared his experience with us when he said thus:

“Some of the female colleagues in the school were my friends but were married before completion and now are housewives. (Laughter); You know that in this our community marriage start from childhood, so I know this is bad habit but then we sometimes do it instead of coming to school...Laughter”

This participant revealed a similar statement on early marriage when he revealed to the researcher that, he was engaged for marriage while the participant was in school and though delayed the formal contraction of the marriage but then eventually was married and abandoned the school. Early marriage is a respected tradition of the Fulbe nomads that continued till today. The participant states:

“I was engaged to marry while I was in school and even though it was delayed but then it affects my studies”

To this participant it is memory still fresh in his mind regarding a friend who happened to be a victim of early marriage who could not continue with school. He states:

“You know some of us were married very early and it is true that early marriage does prevent learning because I can remember our classmate called “Hajara” a female child who leaves school for marriage...”

On a contrary to the victim above, this our participant testifies that he was married as early as possible, yet he was schooling but it all started to fade away when he became a parent himself. As the participant states:

“I was married as early as when I was young, but my teacher was discouraging us for such activities. Our parents though were strong on this issue of early marriage. They like their children to get married as early as possible to have grandchildren and I remembered the first time I quitted schooling was when my I became a parent”

And, but to this participant the issue is a different one because he said:

“I was not married at the early age because of school until after junior secondary school (JSS) level and our teachers were encouraging us for that but at senior level, marriage comes and schooling ends... (Laughter)”

Most of the claims for early marriage were blaming the parents like the previous participants and as emphasised with these statements:

“It is our parents that encourages us to get married as early as possible for the fear of what may happen if we further our knowledge”

This participant revealed to the researcher how mingling up with opposite sex in school affects their schooling and led to school dropout. For example, a participant state thus:

“You know that it is bad things play with girls. You know in our culture the male and female children are not supposed to play together each one has his own role in the family. In school here we it is not so and the only solution to this is to quit ...”

Also, this participant is showing a distinct exceptionality on sex difference among the children of Fulbe nomads in Nigeria when he states:

“The dress we wear in the school also is making us to feel shy particularly the girls among us. We don’t like it and the only way out is not to come to school...”

Furthermore, the relationship also reveals a connection these students have in school against their teachers which most often resulted negatively against the students as the following participant claimed as thus:

“I want you to understand that as friends we were all tied up together against anybody in the school include our teachers. Sometimes if we hate a teacher, we just quit his class and that later affect our stay in the school totally”

Again, the teachers themselves have their own role in through the way they interact with the students and the kind of motivation they give these students. For example, this participant testified the lack of encouragements from his teachers as thus:

“Our teachers punish us for a small mistake in the school or classroom. The teachers scare us, so you don’t have the time or opportunity to seat with your teacher and discuss on some issues because you are afraid not to be punished”

Furthermore, this relationship was also understood between the Fulbe nomadic students and their teachers especially during the Fulbe seasonal migrations. Sometimes migrations cut-off their relationship and they are not sure of the next teachers they should meet in the next school as this participant states thus:

“Mobile schools lack good attention from the teachers because not all the teachers migrate along with the students and if you meet a bad teacher in the next school then you know the result!”

And again, the same participant further revealed how their teachers treat them in school that made them to quit as the participant states:

“Yes, our teachers, particularly those from within the village do encourage us to learn but others force us and punish us for slight mistakes. They disrespect our cultures and that is why we may not come to the school at all. They force us to pull off our dresses just for playing football”

This participant revealed how far the teachers will go into the lifestyle of the Fulbe nomadic student regarding education. The statement indicates the involvement of the parents and the community leaders who were all involved by the teachers just to ensure the children of this educationally disadvantage communities have acquired the basic education, but all failed as the participant states:

“Well sometimes our teachers meet our parents to allow us to attain to school at the right time. The teachers also meet the community leaders to force us to school. But does it work?”

He further explains the conduct of the teachers toward the students’ discipline masters. On this too the participant states:

“My teachers are mostly responsible for my dropping out of school because they do beat us in school for sometimes late coming or other problems”

And he also added by saying that,

“Well, small offences such as a torn off shirt, fighting and even problems like not coming to school with broom or sweeping. (Laughter)”

In another aspect he states,

“Well, you know that we are male students. The boys are responsible for herding cattle except in homes where there are no male children then a female will do the work of the male such as herding. And for this, being the only male child at, I am responsible for herding and so I must be at home for that”.

Another respondent also complained on school dress as thus:

“You know when I was in primary school, we used short dress, and my parents don’t admire such dresses”

The next participant on this topic is one who relates culture to the behaviours of the teachers which sometimes are rejected by the Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria as he states:

“...but in a situation where the teachers are not Fulbe, it is possible that he should practice things that are not the same with our cultures where we sometimes reject. Please remember that we are Fulbe nomads and been guided by Pulaaku concept”

And finally, this participant further complained on the roles they played both at home and in school such as sweeping the school which the male students see as the roles of female etc. these also affected the life of Fulbe nomadic students in school to the extent that they opted to quit as he states:

“Yes, among other things that made us quit schooling was activities such as sweeping and sometimes fetching water in the school. These are works of female not men in our view...”

Again, this participant was categorical on gender sensitivity that affected his studies when the participant said thus:

“Truly speaking I feel embarrassed to be mixed with female students in the same class. If you don’t know something in the class everybody will laugh at you and it is shameful, and the only solution is not to come tomorrow”

Again, this participant was concerned with

The summary of relationship as a factor of dropout among Fulbe nomadic students is presented in the diagram 4 below:

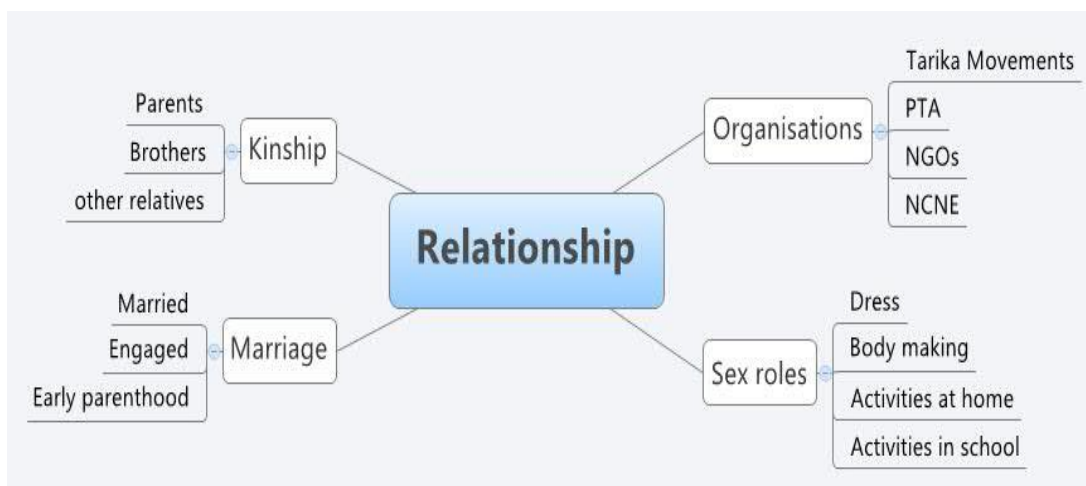


Diagram 4: Relationship among Fulbe nomadic students

Diagram 4 above reveals that kinship relationship between the Fulbe nomadic students, and their parents, brothers and other members of family existed and affect the schooling of most of the Fulbe students in Nigeria. The relationship also revealed a tie between school dropout and marriages as well as early parenthood that resulted from the marriages. Issues of organisational short comings and sex roles all affected the stay of Fulbe nomadic students in school.

Discussions of Findings among Fulbe Nomadic Students

This research discovered that there are significant social changes in the lifestyle of Fulbe nomadic schooling youths in Nigeria despite the challenges of nomadic education programmes of the country in general.

Discussions on Objective One: To Study Social Change Manifestation among Fulbe Nomadic Students in Nigeria

The first social change revealed is the Learning Process: Learning process here encompasses:

(1) **School activities** which among were the management of learning materials such as books, pencils and other teaching and learning aids that the Fulbe nomadic students handled in their environment despite the migrations and poor environment they lived Lenshie, & Jacob, (2020). Again, coming to school every morning despite the Fulbe culture of sending younger ones to care for animals at the same morning hours (Abubakari, 2024), is also significantly changed. Wearing school uniform had to be imposed on Fulbe nomads (Gougoure, 2009) as a shunned tradition but the research understood that the situation is gradually changing among the Fulbe nomads in Nigeria. And finally, the classroom situation which the nomads were exposed to a controlled situation was entirely a new experience unlike in Qur'anic school systems where learners were allowed to chant and progress individually (Moore, 2012), learners were controlled and taught together and the Fulbe nomads learnt to change on that too.

(2) **Knowledge:** as it is obvious, the Fulbe nomadic students revealed the changes in academic performance in the areas of arithmetic, reading and writing skills. And like the short-term objectives of nomadic education in Nigeria, these wandering communities were expected to be enrolled for the ability to learn the rudiments of reading, writing and simple calculations Akpan, (2018).

(3) **Skills:** the Fulbe nomadic students studied for this research revealed their ability to learn skills of games, abstract drawings and paintings, speaking skills and skills to write examinations successfully. This too was among the long-term objective of nomadic education in Nigeria to be able to integrate the nomads well into the national economy Akpan, (2018).

The second social change revealed in this work is the development of value concept among the Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria. Here too, the data brings to light the value of the following areas that include:

(1) **Value of Quality Lifestyle:** the participants Fulbe nomadic students shared their views on the change of quality lifestyle such as living a settled lifestyle, having social amenities such as clean water, electricity, good roads and having good jobs which all have to alter the traditional wandering lifestyle of the nomads that involves long distance pasturing of cattle as in the words of Ajala, & Onyima, (2021).

(2) **Value of Technology:** the Fulbe nomadic students registered their change towards the use of modern communication gadgets such as the transistor radio sets, hand phone set, and the use of wrist watches. It was a tradition of the Fulbe nomads to hang a transistor radio or tape recorder on the shoulders listening to music and or radio programmes as they care for herds (Nnanyelugo, & Onyeke, 2024), and now, there is an improvement as they were active users of hand phone that comes along with inbuilt radio and clock.

(3) **Value of Wealth:** this is another important change in the lifestyle of the Fulbe nomads in Nigeria that was acquired in school. The nomads learn to improve their means of income earning which may be through securing jobs or engaging in paid labour or petty business to earn money for the family. Among the long-term objectives of nomadic education in Nigeria is to help the nomads to participate into the national economy (Akpan, 2018), and this has begun to manifest among the Fulbe nomads who are facing challenges of cattle rearing especially in the states where free grazing laws were imposed (Ogu, Augustine, & Udeh, 2023), restricting the traditional nomadic lifestyle. And,

(4) **Value Education:** the nomads valued education by attending the regular and conventional schools in the cities and furthering their education to higher level. This a positive change as well on the nomads and it is

also a way towards achieving the long-term objective that advocated for the nomads to further education to professional courses Akpan, (2018).

The third issue raised in the data is a change in conducts of the Fulbe nomadic students which itself comprises of social, health, leadership, state of the body and state of the mind as discussed below.

(1) **Social Conducts:** Usman, (2005), viewed Fulbe nomads as those that triggered rage, resistance, and hostility, on the contrary, students of nomadic background have learnt to go well with friends in school as the data reveals. These students were peaceful with others in school despite the views of that lamented terrorism against the Fulbe nomads in Nigeria. And the students learnt to integrate well with others in school a factor that warrants change among the naive Fulbe youths.

(2) **Conducts in Health:** this research discovered that Fulbe nomadic students in school have learnt reasonable knowledge and skills of health education. These were noticed in their appreciation for cleanliness, and avoidance of any contagious diseases in school. This was also among the stated long-term objectives of nomadic education in Nigeria Akpan, (2018).

(3) **Conduct in Leadership:** the next item identified in the conducts of the Fulbe nomadic students is the skill of leadership which the participants experienced in the school. Leadership is an important tenet of Pulaaku (Ouedraogo, 2022), which the Fulbe nomads believed to be a core skill that will reveal ones' integrity and kindness among his subjects.

(4) **Conduct as in the State of Body:** The Fulbe nomads realized the importance of regular birth, hair dressing or care, regular exercise and avoiding scary body tattoos. All these were things the school address among the learners to ensure a healthy environment.

Discussion on Objective two: To investigate the Social Practices that Manifest dropouts among Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria.

Below are brief discussions on the findings to answer research question two of this paper. Among other areas identified were the kinship, Marriage, organisational effects and sex roles. Each topic was discussed separately as in below:

Relationship being a Character Pattern that Manifested School Dropouts

The influence of relationship towards the manifestation of dropout among Fulbe nomadic students was revealed in the data. This relationship includes the kinship effect, marriages, organisations and gender roles as discussed below:

(1) **Kinship:** Fulbe nomads are closely tied family that maintain relationship and could easily be convinced by parents or brothers to quit schooling as the evidence revealed. In addition, assigning the Fulbe nomadic students to discipline his brother could also face a very strong denunciation and could be an embarrassment on the Fulbe student due to shyness effect of Pulaaku concept (Dahiru, Ahmad, & Wan Jaafar, 2017), and thereby derive away the student from school. In addition, the migration effect will not allow Fulbe nomadic student behind for schooling. The nomads migrate together with family members including the schooling children (Munyalo, 2020; Agbo, 2016), irrespective of the school level of the students as seen in the data of this research.

(2) **Marriage:** The issues on marriages were also discovered to have been a very serious factor for dropout among the Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria. Schooling children were reportedly removed from school for marriage and the issue gets bigger when the couples have children and become parents themselves. Early marriage is mostly practiced among Fulbe nomadic group in Nigeria, and repeatedly it terminates the education pursuit of Fulbe nomadic youths especially the female students Fareo, & Ateegu, (2020).

(3) **Organisational Effects:** The third issue uncovered is the effects of NGOs and other agencies that provide or support nomadic education in the country. These agencies seem to have neglected nomadic

education totally which the Fulbe nomadic students relayed upon. For example, discussion with a participant, reveals that the nomads were not happy for the withdrawal of Nomadic Pre-service Programme, in the Federal College of Education, Yola: a programme provided and supported by the Directorate for International Development (DFID) a British Council supported programme: this research discovered that this action have bring a serious setback onto education of Fulbe nomadic youth in the region where many dropped out of school.

(4) **Sex roles:** Gender role was also discovered to have played a significant role in pushing away Fulbe nomadic students from school. The sensitivity of gender difference among Fulbe nomads is so pronounced in the Pulaaku concept itself through the tenet of shyness which required avoidance of unnecessary interactions between the male and female individuals Meyer, & Meyer, (2018). As such, individual responsibilities are defined and discharged accordingly. As seen in the data of this research, students quit schooling for been assigned to perform the work of an opposite sex. Also, in the sex roles, the issue of dress was noticed to have contributed to discourage Fulbe nomadic student to attend to school regularly.

Finally, as can be seen in the analysed data and the discussions above, school brought reasonable social changes in the lifestyle of Fulbe nomadic students and on the other hand, some of the cultural practices of the Fulbe nomads have contributed to push or pull out the yawning Fulbe nomadic youths away from the school as dropouts.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, to answer the research questions raised for this study, social change among Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria include change in learning process which comprises the knowledge, skills and school activities. There are changes in value lifestyle that include quality lifestyle, technology, wealth and education and finally among the positive social changes are the conduct that addressed social conduct, health wise, in leadership, the state of mind and body and social practices that manifested dropouts among Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria, it can be rounded up that school brought social.

On the other hand, the social practices of the nomads that leads to school dropout was tabled under relationship factors that include kinship effects, marriage contracts, organisations and sex roles that were all detrimental to a smooth schooling of the Fulbe nomadic students in Nigeria.

In this case therefore, it is suggested that the government of Nigeria should revisit nomadic schools and the entire education of the Fulbe nomads in country. This will help for the development of humanity, harness the available resources for an effective placement of the Fulbe nomadic students that were victims of school dropout through the following:

i. Strong willingness to provide education for the Fulbe nomadic students irrespective of the wandering lifestyle they encounter during their inherited traditional herding.

Provide adequate social infrastructure in the settlements of the Fulbe nomads to assist them integrate well into modern society.

Provide adequate training for the teachers in nomadic schools to equip them well with the modern strategies and methods to carry along all the Fulbe nomadic students.

Embark on continuous campaign through mass media (Radio in particular) on the need, objective and necessity to educate the Fulbe nomads for positive change toward peace and development of the entire society.

Improve the spirit of federal character considering the Fulbe nomads in the provision of social amenities such as education, health care facilities and other basic facilities to capture the Fulbe nomads in rural settlements to reflect the atmosphere of democratic polity in the country.

Provide the means of tracking Fulbe nomadic students during migration with members of the family to ensure they fully attend schools provided for them in their respective communities.

Make a deliberate effort to carry along girl-child education and women development programmes for the betterment of Fulbe nomadic family unit and

Enhance laws against family life specially to deter early marriages and early parenthood to enable schooling youths' graduate.

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