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Gombe Savannah Journal of Language, Literature and Communication Studies (GOSAJOLLCOS) is a peer-reviewed journal of the Department of English, Gombe State University. The journal is committed to the development of communication arts through researches in Language, Linguistics, Literature, Theatre Arts, Cultural Studies, Creative Arts, Media and Communication Studies. It has both print and online versions. The Editorial board hereby calls for thoroughly researched papers and articles on the subject areas already mentioned. Submissions of papers are accepted all year round but publication is expected to be done in May/June annually. All manuscripts should be accompanied with the sum of ten thousand (10,000) naira only. On acceptance of any manuscript, contributors will pay the sum of twenty five thousand (25,000) naira only as publication fee.

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#### ENGLISH LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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#### Abstract

This study explores the vital connection between English language, literature, and national development. English, as a global language, has become a significant tool in facilitating economic, cultural, and social advancement in nations worldwide. Similarly, literature, written in English, has played a pivotal role in fostering national identity, promoting critical thinking, and inspiring social change. This abstract highlights the ways in which English language proficiency and engagement with literary works contribute to national development. The paper uses literary analysis, historical analysis, as well as sociolinguistics analysis as the best methodology adopted in the research. It examines the literature as a vehicle for social transformation, through literary works, Authors shed lights on societal injustices, raise awareness about pressing issues, and provide platforms for marginalized groups to have their voices heard. The paper emphasises literature as the concept that has the power to inspire individuals to question the status quo, challenge oppressive systems, and advocate for positive change. The paper also plays a vital role in describing literature and national development as the possible way in shaping national policies, social movements, and the overall progress of a society. The paper recommends some certain ways on how to facilitate English language literature, humanity and national development. It finally concludes on the discussion of national development and humanities which are interconnected and mutually beneficial towards the development of English language and literature for national development.

**Keywords:** English Language, Literature and National Development

#### Introduction

The English language and literature have played a significant role in the development of nations across the world. As a language of trade, diplomacy, and colonization, English has spread to every corner of the globe, influencing the culture, politics, and economy of countless nations. Additionally, English literature has provided a platform for the Language to be a vehicle through which people's culture is transmitted. It is an index of identity which serves as a repository of a people's culture, industry and exploits. It is language that differentiates the homo-sapiens from other animals. The most effective engine of a people's culture is their mother tongue (MT). Indigenous languages are treasures of culture and self-identity. In other words, language is the indicator of history and selfidentification (Solanke, 2006). It is an

indispensable cultural legacy with which all forms of human interactions are carried out. According to Nwadike (2004) it is the key to the heart of the people. If we lose the key, we lose the people. If we treasure the key and keep it safe, it certainly unlocks the door to wealth or affluence, thus bringing about national development. This development ranges from growth in education (i.e. intellectual growth), politics, economy, science and technology. In educational process, language is the main pillar through which man has to plan, instruct and evaluate programmes. The development of individuals in respect of their aspiration in the society means development of a nation. Individuals develop educationally, socially, economically, politically and culturally through their interaction with government agencies that disseminate ideas and policies through

various media in the languages that the individual's best understand.

However, Aziza (1998) sees national development is a gradual and advanced improvement through progressive changes in the socio-political life of the nation. Language is a catalyst in educational development which is an important index of national development. Qualitative education in any nation is not a luxury, but an imperative to national development. In order to achieve national cohesion and unity, Nigeria recognises the importance of mother tongue education hence she states in her National Policy on Education (NPE) that the language of instruction in the primary schools should be initially in the child's mother tongue or the language of the immediate community. Indigenous language is the most important tool with which society is organised, and it is hardly possible to talk of national development without including the language with which the people formulate their thoughts and ideas. Multilingual education is capable of eradicating illiteracy. It provides political awareness and socio-political stability. Government's programmes and policies reach the grassroots with the use of indigenous languages. National unity depends largely on mutual understanding of each other's language and culture. This is why Nigeria considers it to be in the interest of national unity that each child should be encouraged to learn one of the three major Nigerian languages other than his own mother tongue henceforth MT. Unity means strength or power, and it is language that empowers and unifies people. English Language is therefore conferring power on a nation.

The culture of reforms initiated by the previous administration is designed to engender sustainable change in democratic governance. This reform is to be carried out through education, and language which is the tool for doing this. This is one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that

through the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). Youth empowerment is a rebranding enterprise, as the empowered vouths are likely to shun corruption, and make positive contribution to national economic growth, peace, security and political stability. Empowerment is the process whereby people are enabled or given the opportunity to improve in order to contribute to positive change. It takes varied and dimensions which include activities like individual self-assertion, selfimprovement, collective bargaining resistance in order to challenge existing power relations (Okeshola, 1995). Selfempowerment takes varied forms such as education. apprenticeship, usurpation. domination and force. Education is the most fundamental and important tool empowerment or for the achievement of social justice and equity. Social scientists prescribe education as a tool for the up-lift of the underprivileged, the marginalised, and the oppressed within the society (Graham-Brown, 1991). Education is therefore a veritable instrument for promoting empowerment, and best done through the medium of languages. Modern man can hardly contemplate communal life without the instrument of language. Performance, especially spoken language, defines personality. For the teacher, his credibility is almost entirely anchored on his competence in communicating ideas, and stimulating learning through the use of language. Articulate and well-spoken teachers always invariably win the hearts and respect of their students. Feminists have advanced the issue of empowerment women through education as a means of challenging patriarchal ideology of male domination and women subordination. Empowerment entails life-long struggle for survival transforming the structures and institutions (e.g. laws, social practice, political process, religious matters) that seem to perpetuate or reinforce gender discrimination and social inequality. According to Graham-Brown (1991), for the individual, empowerment through education promises an escape from poverty, oppression. It also promises greater social prestige, job mobility and better future prospect. Education empowers through language.

Language and language studies empower those who are engaged in them. Language as a means of communication is the cornerstone of any educational process (Ige, 2000). It plays a vital role in education as a subject and it is also a medium of instruction. Education, whether formal or informal, is carried out through the medium of some languages, and learning at any level is largely verbal (Awoniyi, 1978). English Language, whether spoken or written, is the vehicle through which knowledge is imparted, and knowledge is power. One of the cardinal points in the Federal Government's National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) is education, and language education is a key tool and bridge to the future (Olaove, 2004). It empowers children and the youth to take charge of their lives. This involves acquisition of skills and knowledge that would prepare them for the world of work.

English Language, Literature and National Development a tripartite relationship between or among languages, literature and culture (whether foreign or indigenous) has been well established and documented (Olaoye, 2002, Isyaku, 2004). According to them, there is no literature without language. Culture and language too are inseparable and the trios are intricately interwoven. They play a vital role in man's education and national development. Literature is an art which entertains and instructs. It warns people of danger, and instructs by opening people's eyes to a wide range of experiences and a deeper understanding of these experiences. According to Fatokun (1992) Literature interactions presents situations. oppositions. It suggests a wide range of values and attitudes. To understand an ethnic

group and their culture one may have to turn to their oral and written narratives, their drama and poetry. A good piece of literature can be regarded as an authentic mirror image of its society and time. Through satire, proverbs and symbolism, literary artists communicate ideas, thoughts and feelings about social ills in the society which they criticise with prussic diction. Proverbs, for instance, are a lesson in prudence, generosity, patience and wisdom all of which are indispensable to the guidance of mankind and the stability of the society. Literary artists use languages to ridicule or condemn anti-social behaviours such as corruption, assassination, political thuggery, religious intolerance, oppressive rule or dictatorship, any form of human degradation and undemocratic practices. Through historical literature, our knowledge of the society is widened. According to Asade (2000) we learn from literature historical about seemingly immortal despots and their ignoble and sorrowful end, and that their mysterious death was engendered by the avalanche of they atrocities carnage and masterminded and executed. This knowledge helps people in charting new and humanistic, socio-political and economic course, which leads to a new world order. This is the contribution of literature to national development. Language whether foreign or indigenous, is thus an indelible mark of a people's identity. According to Fani-kayode (2006) the core values of our people must be the pivot for national reforms. He enjoins that our traditional values should be embedded in transparency, respect institutions, constituted authorities and the sanctity of human person and life. These core values are reflected in the people's identity, cultures, traditions and systems, most times encapsulated in their languages. It is clear that the various communities of English speakers are experiencing an important communication evolution in which the literary, the cybernetic and social demands on the language leave indelible imprints. From the perspectives of cybernetic age for

instance, man exploits the provision of cyberjournalism to coin a special communicative medium in which the resources of English are exploited for e-mail and text shorthand. As the language continues to expand as one universal means of information storage and dissemination, different situations place peculiar demands on the form, structure and function of the language. No wonder English is a complex of many features. As the language expands to bear the fresh burdens and needs of local and international trade, communication, commerce and scholarship, it develops new expressive features to suit both the users and the use to which they put the language. And these new features do not always fall in line with core phonological, syntactic and semantic features of English; English language literature plays a crucial role in national development by providing a means for people to express their thoughts, ideas, and experiences. It also helps preserve and transmit culture, history, and values from one generation to the next. Additionally, English language literature offers a valuable source of knowledge and inspiration, which can contribute to the intellectual and moral development of a nation's citizens

# **Concept of National Development and Humanities**

Nigerian Journal of Social Psychology, Volume 1, and No. 1 (2018); the quote describes national development as a progressive change in the sociopolitical life of a nation. However, I couldn't find a specific author or paper that this quote is attributed to. National development and Humanities refer to the overall growth and progress of a country in various aspects, including economic, social, political, and cultural development. It encompasses efforts to improve living standards. infrastructure. education. healthcare, governance, and the overall wellbeing of the population. Nigerian Journal of Social Psychology, Volume 1, No. 1 (2018) also added that, Humanities, refers to the study of human society and culture, including disciplines such as history, literature, philosophy, religion, and the arts. It involves exploring and understanding human experiences, beliefs, values, and behaviors through critical thinking, analysis, and interpretation.

The term 'development can be defined by the Oxford Handbook Development of Economics" edited by Ashwini D. (2018) as; 'transformation' or "growth", "positive change'. It is a progression from a low state to a much higher state. Development has many economic, aspects such as: social. environmental. political and human dimensions. All of them interplay to create a balance that is needed for a sustainable earth. Business Dictionary development as "the process of economic and social transformation that is based on complex cultural and environmental factors and their interactions" (web). National development cuts across economic growth, attainment of economic targets such as: increase in Gross National Product (GNP) and Gross Domestic Product (GDP). These are indicators of National Progress in many countries.

The concept of national development and humanities are interconnected as they both contribute to the growth and advancement of a society. Humanities play a crucial role in shaping national development by providing insights into the cultural, historical, and moral aspects of a nation, which is essential for building a cohesive and inclusive society. Additionally, the study of humanities helps in fostering critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills, which are essential for driving innovation and progress in various fields.

Furthermore, national development provides the necessary infrastructure, resources, and support for the study and promotion of humanities. It recognises the importance of preserving and promoting cultural heritage, supporting creative expression, and fostering a society that values diversity, inclusion, and human rights. Humanity plays a crucial role in national development. The actions, decisions, and behaviours of the people within a nation can have significant impacts on its overall progress and success. Here are several ways in which humanity affects national development:

#### 1. Economic Productivity:

The productivity and efficiency of the workforce directly impact a economic development. When people are educated, skilled, and healthy, they are better able to contribute to economic growth and innovation and also economic implications of English Proficiency: The economic benefits of English language proficiency are a focal point of discussions on national development. Countries weigh the advantages of a multilingual workforce against the potential economic gains from having a highly skilled English-speaking labour force. There are also debates on the impact of English language skills in driving innovation, entrepreneurship, and foreign investment. Access to diverse and quality literature is also crucial. Libraries, schools, and community centers that provide access to a wide range of English language literature can help individuals develop a deeper understanding of their own culture and the world around them. Additionally, the availability of English literature in translation can help bridge cultural gaps and facilitate cross-cultural understanding and cooperation.

#### 2. Social Cohesion:

The interactions and relationships between individuals within a society can influence social stability, cooperation, and unity. A cohesive and harmonious society fosters an conducive environment is that development and progress. Scholars and policy makers explore the influence of English literature in shaping national identity, values, and attitudes. Discussions often revolve around the balance between preserving indigenous literary traditions and embracing the global perspectives offered by English literature. Questions also arise about the representation of diverse cultures within the English literary canon and how it can contribute to a more inclusive national narrative.

#### 3. Political Participation:

The level of civic engagement and participation in political processes can shape the directions and effectiveness of government policies and initiatives. A well-informed and active citizenry can hold leaders accountable and drive positive change.

#### 4. Environmental Impact:

Humanity's consumption and interaction, the environment can have significant implications for natural resources, biodiversity, and climate change. Responsible for stewardship of the environment is essential in sustaining development.

#### 5. Cultural Diversity:

The diversity of cultures, traditions, and perspectives within a nation can enrich its social fabric and contribute to creativity, innovation, and inclusivity. Embracing and celebrating cultural diversity can strengthen national identity and unity.

#### 6. Human Rights and Equality:

The protection of human rights and the promotion of equality and justice are national fundamental to development. Safeguarding the well-being and dignity of all individuals in creating a conducive environment for progress and prosperity as a Tool for Diplomacy and International Relations; the role of English as a lingua franca in global diplomacy and international relations is a significant topic. Discussions center on how proficiency in English can influence a country's ability to engage effectively with the international community, negotiate trade agreements, and participate in multilateral forums.

#### 7. The Role of English in Education:

ongoing debate about the prominence of English as a medium of instruction in education systems around the Advocates argue that English global proficiency is essential for competitiveness and access to international knowledge networks. Critics, however,

contend that overemphasis on English may marginalise local languages, cultures and exacerbate inequalities in education.

Ultimately, the actions and values of humanity shape the trajectory of national development. By prioritising education, equality. and environmental health. sustainability, individuals and societies can contribute to a more prosperous and sustainable future for their nation and preserving indigenous Languages and Literature, critically important to the discussions about the role of English in national development is the need to preserve and promote indigenous languages and literature. Efforts to maintain linguistic diversity and safeguard traditional literary heritage remain essential components of the broader discourse on language and literature in national development. Support for writers and literary organisations are another important factor. Government funding, literary awards and programs that promote writing can encourage the production and dissemination of English language literature, providing a platform for voices to be heard and stories to be shared.

#### Factors that Facilitate English Language, Literature, Humanity and National Development

#### 1. Quality Education:

Providing access to high quality education programs that focus on English language and literature can greatly facilitate national development thereby producing educated citizens who are fluent in English and have a strong understanding of literature and humanities.

#### 2. Support for Teachers:

Ensuring that educators have the necessary resources, training, and support to effectively teach English language and literature can have a significant impact on the development of the country's human capital.

## 3. Investment in Libraries and Cultural Institutions:

Access to libraries, cultural institutions, and literary events can foster a greater appreciation for English language and literature, promoting a sense of national identity and contributing to the development of a more literate and culturally engaged society.

## 4. Promotion of Critical Thinking and Communication Skills:

English language and literature studies can help develop critical thinking skills, empathy, and effective communication which are important for national development in terms of problem-solving, civic engagement, and leadership.

## 5. Integration of Technology in Education:

Using technology to enhance English language and literature education can improve access to resources and provide interactive learning experiences, helping to bridge the digital divide and promote national development; the digital age has provided new platforms for English language and literature, allowing for wider dissemination and accessibility. The internet and social media have created new opportunities for writers to reach broader audiences, while also enabling the exchange of ideas and perspectives on a global scale.

#### 6. Embracing Diversity:

English language and literature studies can introduce students to diverse perspectives and experiences, fostering a more inclusive and tolerant society that can contribute to national development.

#### 7. Government Support:

Policies that promote the study of English language and literature, as well as funding for related programs and initiatives, can greatly facilitate national development by nurturing a well-informed and culturally literate population.

#### **Recommendations**

1. **Language Policy:** A well-designed language policy that promotes English

language education and literacy can facilitate national development.

- 2. **Literary Appreciation:** Encouraging literary appreciation and critical thinking skills through literature education can foster empathy, creativity, and critical thinking.
- 3. **Cultural Exchange:** Cultural exchange programs that promote cross-cultural understanding and exchange can facilitate humanity and national development.
- 4. **Education:** Access to quality education in English language, literature, and humanities can empower individuals and contribute to national development.
- 5. **Language Skills:** Developing strong language skills in English can enhance communication, collaboration, and access to global knowledge and resources.
- 6. **Literacy Programs:** Implementing literacy programs that focus on English language and literature can improve literacy rates and facilitate national development.
- 7. **Humanities Education:** Incorporating humanities education into school curricula can foster critical thinking, creativity, and empathy.
- 8. **National Identity:** Exploring and promoting national identity through literature and language can facilitate national development and unity.
- 9. **Global Engagement:** Encouraging global engagement and collaboration through English language and literature can facilitate national development and international relations.
- 10. **Inclusive Access:** Ensuring inclusive access to English language, literature, and humanities education for all can promote social equity and national development.

These recommendations highlight the interconnectedness of English language, literature, humanity, and national development, and suggest ways to facilitate their growth and development.

#### **Conclusion**

In summary, this paper concludes that, national development and humanities are interconnected and mutually beneficial. It

also opines that, study and promotion of contribute to the overall humanities development of a nation, while national development provides the framework and support for the growth and advancement of humanities. It discusses the factors that facilitate English language literature. humanity and national development. They all play a vital role in shaping a society that is prosperous, inclusive, and culturally enriched for national identity, history, and values in contributing to the development of a shared cultural and societal framework. This essay will explore the interplay between the English language, literature, and national development, examining how they have mutually shaped and influenced each other throughout history. These discussions underscore the complexities and nuances of the relationship between the English language. literature. and national development, reflecting varied the perspectives and interests of diverse stakeholders in the academic, cultural, economic, and policy realms. As such, these conversations continue to shape the strategies and approaches employed by countries as they navigate the intersection of language, literature, and development.

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