

SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR JOB CREATION AND SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper looked at secondary education for job creation and sustainable national development. An overview of education in Nigeria was discussed as well as objectives of secondary education and secondary education in Nigeria as it relate to teaching that will bring about job creation and national development. Recommendation such as entrepreneurship orientation as well as proper teaching of technical, vocational and commercial subject in secondary school amongst others was presented.

Introduction

Education is the veritable means of knowledge generation and national development. It is the medium for imparting knowledge through learning. Learning brings about changes in skills, behaviours, attitude and interest.

Education happens to be the building block for social, economic and industrial development. The only way to detach from the realm of underdevelopment, poverty, economic dependency as well as political instability is by adopting wholistic educational strategies. It has to do with situation whereby the technical, vocational, cultural etc knowledge of individual is developed. The education system that promotes national development must be dynamic easily accessed by many and the curriculum must be relevant to the society

and its content should be of good quality and adequate. But here in Nigeria, its education system has been faced with challenges that make it incapable of meeting the development needs of the nation.

Suffice to say that the education system in Nigeria has not completely broken loose from the influence and the impact of the objectives and philosophy of education of the British colonial masters (Oni, 2000). The colonialist educational policies were targeted at producing educated Nigeria to serve the government and to assist the colonialist in ruling the people and exploring the resource of the land for the benefit of Britain. It is interesting to note that for as late as the 1960s, education in African schools and Nigeria grammar school in particular (same as secondary school today) was still

too literary, not practical, not adapted to the needs of a developing agricultural nation and are met to serve colonial purposes.

Since the attainment of political independences, the government and other agencies in educational sector have been working assiduously towards a functional and goal-oriented educational system (Bolaji, 2007). According to Enemu (2007) in consonance with the national objectives, the federal government of Nigeria enumerated the following as the role of education viz a-viz; the acquisition of appropriate/creative skill, abilities and competences both mental and physical as tool for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society.

In view of this, an educated individual should be creative and enterprising in order to contribute to the national development. Creativity in this sense involves the translation of unique gifts, talents and vision eternal realities that are new and useful.

This paper tends to look at the secondary education for job creation and sustainable national development. It had an overview of education in Nigeria, objectives of secondary education; secondary education in Nigeria as it relates to teaching that will bring about job creation and national development.

Objectives of Secondary Education

The national policy on education (2004) sees secondary education as the form of education children receive after primary education and before the tertiary

education. The objectives of secondary education are as follows:

1. Provide an increasing number of primary school leavers with the opportunity of education of higher quality irrespective of sex, social, religious and ethnic background.
2. Diversity if curriculum to cater for the differences in talents opportunity and roles to students after secondary schools course.
3. Equip students to live effectively in our modern age of science and technology.
4. Develop and project Nigeria culture, art and language as well as world cultural heritage.
5. Raise a generation of people who can think for themselves, respect the dignity of labour and appreciate those values specified under our broad national aims and live as good citizen.
6. Foster Nigeria unity with an emphasis on the common ties that unite us in our diversity.
7. Inspires the students with a desire for achievement and self improvement both at school and in later life.

From the above stated objectives, it is pertinent that secondary school leavers should be creative, entrepreneurially developed and be able to contribute to national development. Therefore, as a secondary school graduate, it is expected that he/she should be able to carryout activities that are resourceful and contribute to national development, but these are not seen in our secondary school,

Oduolowu (2001) observed that there are stands of evidence of creativity in Nigeria child. The issue is, will the Nigeria children be able to cope with the workforce of the twenty-first century which requires manipulative skills and a much greater ability to solve problems on their own than it has been in the past.

Furthermore, there is no positive impact be made in a system that promote theoretical knowledge, places emphasis on paper certification than the one that promote the development of innate abilities in a learners evolving through training or practice. In view of the above, methodology that will aid self discovery and problems solving ability which allows learners the opportunities for creativity should be entrenched in the school curriculum. Also such curricula should be of quality and relevance to the developmental needs of the country. Therefore, the need for curriculum transformation becomes imperative (Bolaji, 2007).

The stated objective is designed to develop school leavers to be entrepreneurially inclined, but one of the problem to this, is the limited amount of quality instructional materials to cope with the curriculum. This has affected the enhancement of technological literacy in the country.

According to Ivowi (1998), the problems of scarcity and the cost of learning material have hindered the successful implementation of many laudable educational programmes and curriculum projects. It should be of note that the challenges and

opportunities of the present information age have drastically refined the roles and responsibilities of education from mere teaching, research, analysis and postulation of theories to a more utilitarian and practical function that lead to technological development. It is of important therefore, that concerted effort should be taken to address this problem through vigorous consideration of the objective of secondary education when teaching.

Job Creation and Sustainable National Development

According to the Oxford Advanced learners Dictionary, creation has to do with the act or process of making something that is new or causing something to exist that did not exist before. To be creative is to be inventive. It involves the translation of unique gifts, talents and vision into an external reality that is new and useful (Bolaji, 2007). Runco (1994) opined that creativity is in terms of cognitive processes that lead to an origin and adaptive insight, idea or solution. In the word of Akinboye (2004) creativity is a tool that propels organizations catapults careers and generate potent growth and enable outcomes. For a sustainable national development in any field of human endeavour, creativity, generative thinking, perception dynamics and constructivism should be considered.

Osche (1993) asserted that the single criterion that mattered most is the willingness of people perceived to be

creative to work hard and put in the extra time necessary to turn out quality product in a given field. From the above assertion, it should be noted that teaching in secondary schools should be done to develop the creative ability instead of majoring on theoretical/cognitive knowledge. This does not promote sustainable national development.

To solve this problem therefore, the secondary education have been designed to inculcate creative ability in an individual. For instance, the secondary education is both vocational and academic, vocational in the sense that the following courses are offered, mental work, electronic, mechanic, local craft, home economics, business studies etc. The introduction of these subjects was to enable students acquire knowledge. And develop creative skills.

Therefore, secondary school leaver should have the ability to be resourceful, preoccupied and entrepreneurially balanced when he/she leaves school. This is possible when the students are properly taught and exposed to the practical application of knowledge and acquisition of relevant vocational, technical and business skills. However, to achieve these in the dispensation, reforms that will usher in functionality and responsiveness in the system should be entrenched. This will make secondary school leavers create job as well as wealth instead of seeking employment spaces that are few or not available.

Conclusion

In Nigeria today, unemployment has reached an alarming level and the loss of employment opportunity for young school leavers has led to frustration, insecurity and uncertainty about the future.. Students leave school without any entrepreneurial ability. This is a loss to the society considering the resources invested in their formal education. However, improper consideration of the objectives of secondary education as contained in the national policy in education (2004), non-exposure of students to entrepreneurial development due to poor teaching methodology amongst others have led non-creation of jobs on the leaving the secondary school. However, a number of recommendations have been given in this paper to remedy the situation.

Recommendation

Secondary education for job creation and sustainable national development is possible if the right steps in adopted. However, the following recommendations are forwarded to make secondary schools between leavers productive, resourceful and contribute to national development.

1. Since creativity is not only about the development of innate ability, but also about the development of skill, methodology that will aid discovery of potentials, problem-solving ability which allow the learners the opportunity to be creativity should be the focus of the secondary school curriculum

2. Since creativity leads to productivity, skill acquisition through vocational training should be given priority in the teaching of students in secondary schools.
3. Entrepreneurship orientation should be made a mandatory element in the secondary school. This is, students should be exposed to a course in entrepreneurship development.
4. There is need for a change of the mind set of the students to embrace self employment as an option before leaving school and be prepared psychologically and emotionally for it. This will enable them to be more motivated in identifying entrepreneurial opportunities.
5. Appropriate agencies should provide support and finance programme on self employment by secondary school leavers.

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