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# Planning as an Instrument for Achieving the Seven (7) Point Agenda in Nigeria for National Development

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By

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## **Abstract**

*This paper considered educational planning as an instrument for achieving the seven (7) point agenda in Nigeria for national development. Educational planning was conceived in this paper as the application of rational systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aim of making education more effective and efficient in responding to the needs and goals of the students and society. National development was portrayed in this paper as concerted efforts to bring about development in the social, economic, political, technological and cultural spheres of the economy, so much so that the individual and the society are made better in line with global trends. The relationship between the various approaches to educational planning and the seven point agenda actualization was x-rayed. Among others it was recommended that there should be a complete over hauling of the present economy apart from the issue of improved funding.*

## **Introduction**

Every government or administration has its vision and mission. It is in the light of this that the present administration in Nigeria has fathomed out a seven point agenda. The seven point agenda according to the daily sun (26<sup>th</sup> February, 2008) borders on the following:

- (1) Energy: we need to solve the problem of power and energy. National council on energy to drive the energy policy and advice on power, energy and gas...energy emergency to be declared.
- (2) Security: treating security as a critical infrastructure.
- (3) Wealth creation: 70% of all revenue from oil: we need to keep this focused and extended to other areas.
- (4) Education: Need to address the various problems in the education sector.
- (5) Land reforms: To provide proper ownership and give a chance to take the land to capital market.
- (6) Mass transit: To develop capacity for mass movement of people and goods.
- (7) To implement the master plan already developed.

The realization of the above agenda rest solely on the utilization of education as a tool for the overall national development. In fact, in the world over, education is the bedrock of any country that plans to take itself to greater height. No wonder Jackson in Odiba (2008) commenting on the development of America opined that “what but education has made us to advance beyond our neighbours:.

The kind of education we are talking about is a life long process and perhaps an instrument of change, a potent channel for ensuring the welfare of people and equalization of life chances (Okeke, 1997). Okeke in Odiba (2008) opined that education is a process of learning itself which helps in the provision of suitable skills, training the youths for economic, social cultural and political responsibilities, transmission and transportation of social, economic and cultural structure from generation to generation. This sows that education is the key that opens the door of modernization and globalization, which the seven point agenda is all about.

Education that can actualize the above is education that is planned. Combs in Odiba (2004) opined that educational planning in its generic sense is the application of rational, systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aims of making education more effective and efficient in responding to the needs and goals of its students and society. In the same vein, Okeke (1989) posited that educational planning is conceived as a continuous and systematic decision-making process that would provide the basis for economic and effective action pertaining to the future of educational development.

### **The Meaning of National Development**

National development is a concerted effort to bring about an improvement in the social, economic, political, technologies and cultural spheres of the economy so much that the individual and the society are made better in the line with global trends. In line with this stipulation, Iziren in Odiba (2005) contented that national development means urbanization, social-cultural transportation, mass literacy vertical and horizontal mobility, employment opportunity and emergency of specialized and independent occupational roles.

Suffices one to say that the term development conjures different meaning to different people, here the economists, sociologists, political scientists, biologists, technologists to mention but a few, tend to look at development from different perspectives. These specialists dominate the theories of development and tend to confuse the realities of the approaches to the study. Okeke (2004) opined that to some people, development refers to growth plus change. This term defines a complete process in which not a single aspect of human life, education, health and aspiration can be ignored. In fact, to other people, the term approximates to economic growth plus increase in welfare which may be politically and socially determined. Again, Oladokun (2003) felt development involves the re-organization and re-orientation of the whole economic, political and social system. Osagie in Odiba (2007) gave a more appetizing definition of development as the qualitative positive transformation of the lives of people that does not only enhance their material well-being but also ensure social well-being including restoration of human dignity. On the whole, development could be taken to mean a multi-dimensional process involving change in structure,

attitude and institutions, as well as the acceleration of economics growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty.

### **Approaches to Educational Planning and the Seven Point Agenda**

To attain the vision and the mission of the seven point agenda, three approaches render themselves available. These include the social demand approach, man power approach and the cost-benefit approach. Each of these approaches will be discussed in relation to the actualization of the seven point agenda briefly.

#### **1) The social demand approach and the seven point agenda**

The social demand approach to educational planning is founded on the consumption variable of education and as the name suggests, it seeks to protect the needs and aspirations of the people.

This approach looks at education as a service that is demanded by the public. In this regard, educational planning is considered as the process of forecasting demand and providing sufficient places in schools and colleges to satisfy the demand (Odiba, 2005). The social demand approach is a traditional method which takes educational needs in terms of the current demand for education at the different levels and projections than on the basis of population increase, age distribution, long term national and social goals and on what is known about state consumer preferences for education. According to Okeke (1989), the goals and preferences of the social demand include universal literacy and objectives. The crucial policy that underlines the social demand approach can be found in the quotation provided by the Netherlands economic institute cited by Akangbou (1985). This states that:

*If a sufficiently qualified citizen stands at the door of any type of school, he must be admitted and it is the responsibilities of the appropriate government authorities to anticipate his request so that school capacity will be adequate to accommodate him. Pg. 12.*

Since the seven point agenda of this administration is geared towards welfarism, it is the responsibility of the appropriate government authorities to prepare ahead of time, though comprehensive forecasting and projection. This type of education is functional and qualitative education that can put the entire nation a head of our neighbours.

#### **2) The man power approach and the seven point agenda**

This is an economic approach of educational planning. It is concerned with planning the man power requirement of the society. This approach is purely concerned with the projection and analysis of labour market needs for the various level of man power. Economics who are the major speculators of the index of any given economy, prefer man power on the premises that economic growth is the main spring of the nations overall development and this should be the

consideration of the makers of policy in allocating scarce resources (Okeke, 1989).

To actualize the seven point agenda in Nigeria so as to bring about the desired national development, the man power development milieu should be taken seriously. No nation can develop beyond the level of her man power or labour force. This development of man power should be such that there would be adequate production of engineers, technologists, medical personnel, technicians and a measure of improved or redesigned curriculum that will meet the challenges of the seven point agenda.

Education as stated earlier in this paper, is the key that opens the door to modernization. If Nigeria must go on the path of development which is the major focus of the seven point agenda, education should be put into the main stream of the nation's economic, social, technological and cultural development. In the words of Enaohwo (1990), Odiba (1999) and Okoh (2002) the human resources specifically constitute the overall wealth of a nation and a such, investment in human capital form the major parameter of income distribution other things being equal.

This is so because education and the levels of income have strong positive correlation and move paripasu in the same direction.

### **3) The cost – benefit approach and the seven point agenda**

This is another approach to educational planning. It is also called the rate of returns approach. The doctrine of this approach is the application of cost verse benefit factors in the allocation of scarce resources of the economy. According to Odiba (2005), the cost benefit analysis is the systematic comparison of the level of the costs and benefits of some forms of investments in order to assess its economic profitability. Through planning, remember that all categories of investment involve a scarifies of present consumption in order to secure future benefits in the form of high level of output or income. The cost – benefit analysis of these seven point agenda needs to be x-rayed so as to avoid a colossal loss of resources. In fact, the rate of returns of the seven point agenda should be critically viewed vis-à-vis the benefits derivable there from the programme.

### **Conclusion**

Education is the tool for social change if properly planned. Adequate and concerted efforts in educational planning will serve as a miracle drug for our ailing economy and pave way for the desired national development. Education therefore, is what we need in order to achieve the goals of the seven point agenda in Nigeria for national development.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations would suffice

- (1) There should be adequate collaborative relationship between the private and public sector of the economy. The employers and the major players in the economy should be allowed to create a friendly environment for sustainable

development and actualization of the seven point agenda. The government alone cannot do everything for the people. All hands must be on deck to move the nation forward.

- (2) There should be a complete over hauling of the present economy. The mode of implementation should dove-tail the state of the economy. This over hauling could be in the form of collapsing the seven point agenda to three that is education, economic and social development.
- (3) Funding: the government should commit more funds to the actualization of the seven point agenda. Since education is the foundation and major tool for achieving development, the government should allocate at least 26% of the budget to education. At least 2.5% of the gross national product should be devoted to education.

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