

**ENTREPRENEURIAL AND FUNCTIONAL SOCIAL STUDIES/CITIZENSHIP
EDUCATION AS A MEANS OF ACHIEVING THE NATIONAL OBJECTIVES OF VISION
2020 IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Over the years, the Nigerian ship of State has continued to float on the political, economic and social water without the captain of the ship having the faintest idea of where the ship is heading to. On the strength of this, the human cargoes on board the ship have become apprehensive and are beginning to demand that the captain of the ship steer the ship to a specific destination. In this wise therefore, this paper has argued that the role of entrepreneurial and functional social studies/citizenship education is one of the surest ways of achieving Vision 2020. It further identified internal and global challenges facing the achievement of Vision 2020 and also highlighted some prospects. The paper recommends among other things that entrepreneurial and functional social studies/ citizenship education should be embraced so as to achieve Vision 2020.

Introduction

Nations across the globe are striving either peacefully or antagonistically to position themselves in vantage and strategic positions that would enable them dictate the pace of political, social and economic happenings around the world. Nigeria, the self acclaimed giant of Africa is also not left out of this struggle for political, social and economic relevance in world affairs. On the strength of the above, this paper has dispassionately looked at critical issues relating to entrepreneurial and functional social studies/citizenship Education as a means of achieving the National objectives of Vision 2020 in Nigeria. Whether Vision 2020 is achievable or not remains a matter for thorough scrutiny.

What is Social Studies? According to National council for social studies, social studies is the integrated study of the social science and humanities to promote civic competence.

Social studies should be part of the curriculum for the purpose of helping students understand human interactions that occurred in the past, are occurring now, and that are likely to occur in the future which is the aim of Vision 2020. According to Kizlik (2010) the reason for these understandings is that they may help students develop and nurture values that will make it more likely that they will be able to determine for any situation what the right thing is and do it, especially when doing the right thing is hard to do.

To this end therefore, Olebunne (2006) asserted that, social entrepreneurship is a key element to advance societies and address social problems in an innovative and effective manner. To him, social entrepreneurship is about applying practical, innovative and sustainable approaches to benefit society in general with an emphasis on those who are marginalized and poor.

What is Citizenship Education? Citizenship Education is not about trying to fit everyone into the same mould, or creating the model or good citizen. It is about enabling citizens to make their own decisions and to take responsibility for their own lives and their communities. In its simplest meaning,

citizenship is used to refer to the status of being a citizen-that is to be a member of a particular political community or State. Citizenship in this sense brings with it certain rights and responsibilities that are defined in law, such as the right to vote, the responsibility to pay tax and so on.

From another perspective, citizenship is used to refer to an educational activity that helps people learn how to become active, informed and responsible citizens. Citizenship in this sense is also known as citizenship education or education for citizenship. It encompasses all forms of education from informal education in the home or through youth work to more formal types of education provided in schools, colleges, universities, and the workplace. According to Huddleston and Kerr (2006), the principal justification for citizenship education derives from the nature of democracy. Democracies need active, informed and responsible citizens who are willing and able to take responsibility for themselves and their communities and contribute to the political process.

If citizens are to become genuinely involved in public life and affairs as is the case with Vision 2020 in Nigeria, a more explicit approach to citizenship education is required. This approach should be, inclusive, pervasive and life long. Skills and aptitudes, critical thinking, analyzing information, expressing opinions, taking part in discussion and debates, negotiating, conflict resolution and participating in community action are all underpinning objectives of citizenship education.

Vision 2020, a General Overview

There is no iota of doubt that many past administrations have attempted to reform or transform Nigeria which some people have christened a failed state. Today, the sleeping giant of Africa has begun a new optimistic journey that would see Nigeria become one of the top 20 economies in the world by the year 2020. This journey is called Vision 2020. Vision 2020 is a comprehensive framework which is premised on infrastructure, education, health, agriculture, macro-economy, polity and manufacturing, designed to stimulate economic growth in the country. This framework also offers a blue print for sustainable political development in Nigeria which in the final analysis is aligned with the goals of the National Development Plan (NDP). For instance, our late president, Umaru Yar'Adua harmonized has Seven-point Agenda, National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) and Vision 2020 to form the National Development Plan (NDP).

Shortly after this harmonization, Senator Sanusi Daggash of the National Planning Commission (NPC) stated unequivocally that the task of ensuring a successful implementation of the harmonized development agenda over the next four years will not be easy. He however affirmed that the harmonized agenda over the next four years would be an important milestone towards meeting Nigeria's Vision of becoming one of the 20 largest economies in the world by 2020. It is expected that by the year 2020, through the instrumentality of Vision 2020, there would be high level of infrastructural development, high literacy level, health, food security, high level of manufacturing etc. all aimed at bettering the living condition of Nigerians.

On the contrary, the 2008 country review report of the African peer review mechanism (APRM) raised a procedural concern and concluded that the government's agenda is questionable because it lacks specification for structural transformation, and the blue print does not meet the requirement for a clearly defined Vision. This dissenting voice from (APRM) should not be relegated to the background by the protagonists of Vision 2020. Only an objective analysis of this dissenting voice would make us have a clearer picture of the role of entrepreneurial and functional social studies/citizenship education in achieving Vision 2020 in Nigeria.

The Role of Entrepreneurial and Functional Social Studies/Citizenship Education in Achieving Vision 2020 in Nigeria.

Any government that wants to excel and meet the needs of her citizens without strategic planning seems to be building a castle in the air. Modern day politics or 21st century politics which is inseparable from the economy has far evolved from partisan politics to tackling issues on ground and if we in Nigeria allow ourselves to be left out in the wind of change, we would be doing that at our peril.

It is therefore pertinent to note that, if we wish to make headway in respect to this obsession called Vision 2020, there are certain questions that need to be answered. First, what are the set goals we want to achieve?

Second, how does the present government intend to keep this Vision moving long after it might have left office? These include human, financial and other raw materials that are viable to the accomplishment of the set goals. Third, are the materials we have chosen relevant and coherent with the projects? Fourth, what plans do we have on ground to take care of short term and minor projects like the (Niger Delta) that would raise their heads on our way to achieving the long term projects?

All the above questions are salient questions that need sound and uncomplicated answers. No doubt, this is where entrepreneurial and functional social studies/citizenship education comes in. With entrepreneurial and functional skills and knowledge in social studies/citizenship education Nigeria will have an active, informed and responsible citizenry, willing to participate in the life of the nation and the wider world and play its part in the democratic process for the realization of Vision 2020.

With entrepreneurial and functional social studies/citizenship education, Nigerians will come to appreciate the fact that if we want to include maximum job creation in Vision 2020 project, we have got to look towards maximizing other resources that abound in this country rather than depend solely on crude oil. There is no economy that is 'service' and 'import' oriented that will succeed. This point is further buttressed by Nwogu (2010) that, we have to revive our production orientation, start producing for ourselves and by ourselves. There is however no doubt that our technology has not grown to where we can produce for ourselves but we have got iron ore, zinc, etc. that can be used to manufacture cars.

The point to note here is that, companies like Honda, Nissan, Toyota and other American, Korean and German auto makers do their sales business in Nigeria. What entrepreneurial and function social studies/citizenship education teaches us is to look at issues critically and participate fully. On the strength of this, we could get these auto companies to come and site in Nigeria, use our abundant human and mineral resources to produce these cars at lower labour cost. By so doing, our enormous unemployed youths would have been gainfully employed, the cost of these automobiles would be drastically reduced, our technological advancement would speedily improve and the Vision 2020 project would have been nearly achieved by the year 2020. Projects like these would definitely outlive this administration and the economy which is the base in any society would therefore be strong enough to support the superstructure.

Challenges of Vision 2020

The challenges facing the achievement of Vision 2020 in Nigeria are enormous. For the purpose of this paper, these enormous challenges are grouped into internal and global challenges.

Internal Challenges: - According to Oyebode (2007), for this Vision 2020 to be met, four critical institutions are in dire need of readjustments. These institutions are: (a) legal institution (b) banks and

other financial institutions (c) energy institution and (d) educational institution. To him, two fundamental challenges face these institutions. They are (i) changing the collective mind-set of the nation and (ii) seeking a collective commitment to policy implementation and accountability. The deficiencies in these four factors seriously undermine capacity building, relationship and productivity in all institutions in the country.

On his part, Akinyode (2007) argued that the problem facing the nation, particularly in education is not the lack of technical know-how, workable and well intentioned national policy on education nor the lack of capital to adequately fund education and other sectors, but that the main problem is the failure to implement a clearly defined and clearly articulated vision and goals of education and the reluctance by the leadership to hold individuals accountable for their actions, as corruption in all institutions is becoming rampant. As a result, programmes in Nigeria are often poorly conceived, poorly planned and extremely difficult to implement.

Global Challenges: - one of the challenges of Vision 2020 is globalization. To achieve Vision 2020, Nigeria would have to compete with nations like the United States, Japan, Germany, China and the United Kingdom which have traditionally maintained the top five ranking of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). According to Abdullahi (2009) IMF ranked Brazil 10th, India 12th, South Korea 13th and Indonesia 20th respectively. Nigeria is ranked 41st and is expected to compete vigorously with these countries in the global economy.

If we must sustain Vision 2020 and be globally competitive, we must pay attention to globalization which is the integration of political, economic, cultural, financial, ecological and technological systems in the global economy. It is the idea that the world has an interdependent and interconnected global village that allows national economies to compete and expand. In view of this, Oyebode (2007) quoting Nigeria's Ambassador to the United States of America, Ade Adefuye stated that Nigeria has completed an agreement on a bi-national commission. He said, a bi-national commission is the highest level of strategic co-operation you can have between two countries, and the one between Nigeria and the US has four aspects; one is called TGI (Transparency, Good Governance and Integrity) the second is energy and investment cooperation, the third is Niger Delta and regional security and the fourth is on food security and agriculture. He further affirmed that each of these elements contains vital elements of our Vision 2020 and if America can cooperate effectively with us in all these vital areas, we will go a long way in achieving the objectives of our Vision 2020. America as a nation is contributing mostly to the attainment of the objectives of Vision 2020 through this bi-national commission agreement, he concluded.

Prospects of Vision 2020: - A blind man needs not be told that it is raining. Every body in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world knows that the prospect of achieving Vision 2020 through entrepreneurial and functional social studies/citizenship education lies in our hands. We have the human and material resources. We also have the population and, market where our goods can be sold and bought. If China could do it, India could do it, why won't Nigeria? In fact, we have all it takes to be among the top ten economies in the world, but we have continued to squander our opportunities. We can still get it right with Vision 2020 through entrepreneurial and functional social studies/citizenship education - yes we can.

Conclusion

After a rigorous intellectual exercise carried out on this topic, one is left with no doubt that the realization of Vision 2020 by the year 2020 using entrepreneurial and functional social studies/citizenship education is achievable. This intellectual exercise has however brought to the fore some threatening internal and global challenges which if properly handled can be easily surmounted. These challenges notwithstanding, the prospect of Nigeria meeting the objectives of Vision 2020 is on the high side.

Recommendations

For Nigeria to meaningfully achieve the National objectives of Vision 2020 through entrepreneurial and functional social studies/citizenship education, it has to seriously take the following recommendations: -

- i. A sound curriculum should be developed that would lead to the teaching of entrepreneurial and functional social studies/citizenship education at all levels of our educational life.
- ii. Nigeria's educational leadership must embrace the principle of collective and democratic leadership and accountability as one of the ways to achieving Vision 2020.
- iii. With entrepreneurial and functional social studies/citizenship education, the development of human capital would be achieved. When this is done, both the Nigerian leadership and its citizenry will articulate a coherent shared Vision of where the nation is and what the nation will look like by the year 2020.
- iv. With entrepreneurial and functional social studies/citizenship education, Nigeria will know that our economy needs to be diversified as our over-reliance on the export of crude oil would continuously hamper our dogged march towards Vision 2020. This is because every time oil prices fall on the international market, our national budget is always affected.
- v. Entrepreneurial and functional social studies/citizenship education would make the citizenry to put pressure on the government to build infrastructure like roads, water, electricity, etc. when this is done, private investors would be encouraged to come and invest in Nigeria thereby creating jobs for the people.
- vi. The Nigerian government should continue to have bi-national agreement with countries that would help position Nigeria's economy on the global market.

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