

RE-ENGINEERING CITIZENSHIP/POLITICAL EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SELF PRODUCTIVITY IN NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

The present state of Nigeria's educational system is pathetic and alarming that urgent steps need to be taken to redeem the system from total collapse. Most graduants from our schools are unemployable have been subjected to series of interviews. The problem to a large extent is blamed on the system (Nigeria educational system) which is characterized by series of strikes, disrupted academic calendar, poor teaching/learning materials, unhealthy working conditions, etc. This paper attempts to examine the problems affecting education capable of creating employment and self productivity in Nigeria and prefer solution using citizenship education. The paper also looked at possible areas where employment opportunities abound as well as self creativity/productivity in re-engineering education for employment and self productivity in Nigeria was also considered. Recommendations were made and conclusion.

Looking at the immeasurable roles and contributions of education towards individuals, communal, societal and national development, there is no gain-saying that re-engineering education for employment and self-productivity is a worthy national issue for educationists and intellectuals to mediate on. Education is generally seen as the major employment of labour. Though some authorities claim that agriculture is the highest employer of labour, yet agriculture is an aspect of education.

Educational reforms or changes are not new, as no educational system is completely perfect. According to Obanya (2002),

All over the world, education continues to be subjected to questions like: what should be taught? Why? Where? How? By whom?

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Education is meant to serve the world. The world itself is not static. How can education be static? If it is to remain relevant? Political will is the key to success in all educational endeavors

This implies that the questions of what should be taught, why, where, how, by whom and for who should be tailored towards making education relevant to the society interims of job creation and self productivity.

Tertiary institutions are charged with the onerous task of grooming the youths with relevant skills and knowledge for useful living in all its ramifications through appropriate arrangement and adequate implementation of educational programmes.

In most developing countries Nigeria inclusive, education is seen as a public good and service industry. Education services industry by producing personnel and advances in research works. To this end, it is strongly believed that re-engineering citizenship education for the benefit of the Nigeria populace will create employment opportunities and increase self-productivity. Education is used as human capital formation agent for the supply of labour to different societies through conscious and proper planning. According to Omolewa (2001:1):

Educations of great importance to every nation. It therefore attracts considerable attention. At the family, community, state and federal government levels, education is discussed, planned and processed. It is believed that education makes both the person and the nation; it also influences values and attitudes. The professions are similarly built through training and preparing people for different career in life.

He was of the opinion that if employments are to be created in a nation, education should be used because education cut-across all human endeavors. He further buttressed the positive influencing values and attitudes of which is the major concern of citizenship education.

Education can be regarded as an industry-indeed a major one capable of providing employment for an individual or possibly making an individual self productive by way of self-employed. However, the problems of Nigeria educational system are so vast, fundamental, pathetic and alarming that it requires a total and radical re-engineering of the system to cure it of its ailment. The problems range from poor funding, inadequate teaching/learning materials, poor implementation of policies, unhealthy working conditions, to mention but a few have long been with us. At the wake of its entity as a nation, the Nigerian educational system has passed through series of evolutions and reforms. Different commissions, conferences and meeting have been put in place to examine the country's educational system (Gasau, 2008). Since the introduction of Western Education into Nigeria in 1842 by the missionaries, the educational system has been confronted with a lot of problems but in the most recent,

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they have become increasingly more complex with high rate of unemployment and over-dependent on white collars jobs.

At different times, various ears/regimes of governments have made series of omissions and commissions' which have been the bane of our educational system. Most of the omissions and commissions have been scratchy, inconsistent and ineffective. The system failed largely to value system and attitudinal mind set. The fact remains that no educational system can survive without positive value system and good attitudinal framework which is the nerve of citizenship/political education.

Human resources are "human beings that inhabit the earth (Aghenta, 2006). Human resources are agriculturist, clergies, clerks, electricians plumbers, grave diggers, the disabled, medical doctors, nurses, journalists, educationist, carpenters, lawyers, our fathers and mothers, whether or not they are educated or trained. If they are educated, they are called manpower and when employed they are known as personnel. Both manpower and personnel form the basis for the wealth of nations which are maximally explored through employment and self productivity.

Yesufu (1969) described human resources as people, humanity and society with all its aspirations, needs and capacities". He stressed that as an economic resource, human resources represent the aggregate of skills and attitude which result from education and training that equip the labour force with the capacity to plan, organize and carry out economic processes i.e. employment when properly allocated. He was of the view that education is as important as human resources because without education, available natural resources will remain dormant, unprocessed.

Education is seen as the only veritable tool of breaking-away from the vicious cycle of poverty. It is also the major way of fighting poverty. The role of education is poverty eradication. Not only is education important in eradicating poverty, it is also a key to wealth creation through employment and self productivity. No nation can succeed and develop if such nations fail to educate her citizenry. The major task of citizenship/political educationists is to ensure that educational resources (man, materials, money and time) are harnessed to achieve the nation's educational goals and objectivities.

Educational Goals in Nigeria

The aim of this paper is to focus on re-engineering citizenship/political education for employment and self productivity in Nigeria. However, this will not be effectively discussed without looking at the goals of education in Nigeria along side the primary objectives of political science Education at the colleges of education level in Nigeria. Fafunwa (1975) identified seven goals of education in Nigeria as follows:

1. To develop the child's latent physical skills.
2. To develop character.
3. To inculcate respect for elders and those in position of authority.
4. To develop intellectual skills

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5. To acquire specific vocational training and to develop a healthy attitude towards honest labour.
6. To develop a sense of belonging and to participate actively in family and community affairs
7. To understand, appreciate and promote the cultural heritage of the community at large.

The primary objectives of political science education programme are:

- a. To produce proficient teachers of Government who possess sound knowledge of political science.
- b. To produce inspiring teachers of the subject who, not only possess confidence, skills and techniques necessary for the teaching of the subject but also possess the proper values and attitudes towards political science as a discipline of study.
- c. To inculcate within the scope of the students' training the necessary values, skills and techniques for effective and moral leadership.
- d. To produce the necessary training in citizenship and broaden students' sense and scope of participation in community as well as national affairs.
- e. To produce teachers that can inspire and inculcate in the students the values and attitudes of Pan-Africanism, African nationalism and African brotherhood.
- f. To produce teachers who can foster the growth of international and mutual assistance. In the same vein, citizenship education which scientifically study the governments of nations, the rights, duties, and obligations of citizens of those nations, also inculcate values, social justice, economic emancipation, spirit of patriotism and nationalism.

As laudable as these objectives, citizenship/political education cannot effectively provide employment for all graduates of the subject, hence the need for self productivity.

Importance/Role of Citizenship/Political Education in Nigeria

Citizenship education does not only teach moral and values, it also educates individuals on their roles towards national development.

The relevance of re-engineering citizenship education for employment and self productivity in Nigeria are not far-fetched.

They include:

- i. Constitutional awareness: citizenship education enables individuals to know the provisions of the constitutions.
- ii. Constitutional enforcement: it helps the students/learners and other individuals appreciate the implementation of the constitution if well implemented.
- iii. Self identification: the course enable individuals identify their status as citizens of this country Nigeria and also know their worth, rights duties and obligations.

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- iv. Patriotism: it helps individuals to be patriotic and nationalistic in handling issues about the nation.
- v. Sound Education: citizenship education equips individuals with sound knowledge needed for all round development.
- vi. Environmental Management: The course helps students to understand their environment and how to protect the environment from pollution and degradation.
- vii. Political Consciousness and Awareness:- the knowledge of citizenship education encourages individuals to be actively involved in politics
- viii. Peaceful Co-existence: the course grooms individuals on their rights, duties, obligations and responsibilities as well as the need to tolerate one another.
- ix. Functions of Government: the functions of government such as the provision of security, social amenities, employment, etc are made known through citizenship education.

Problems of Citizenship Education for Employment and Self Production in Nigeria

The problems confronting the re-engineering of citizenship/political education for employment and self productivity in Nigeria are enormous such as; Poor teaching/learning materials, poor working conditions, access to quality education, inadequate funding, lack of synergy between education and society, indiscipline, poor policy implementation, poor supervision and inspection, ethnic rivalry.

Conclusion

Conclusively, this paper considered the age-long problems affecting citizenship education for employment and self productivity. It re-emphasized the way forward so as to make the graduates employable either in the public or private sector as well as self employed. The importance of re-engineering citizenship/political education was highlighted. Possible areas of employment were mentioned. The presenters encouraged a synergy among all stakeholders in education in order to attain the goals and objectives of citizenship education aimed at sustainable employment cannot do it along.

The Way Forward

Looking at the relevance of education (citizenship/political education) for employment and self creativity, the emphasis should now be on education that can create employment for oneself and not having to search for it (employment) in government and private establishments.

It is obvious that jobs in the public and private sectors are limited in supply compared to the numbered of graduates turned out by Nigeria's tertiary Institutions yearly. Education must take the people out of poverty, empower and enrich them. It must produce job creators and not job seekers. It must produce visionary and upright citizens. Sequel to the above, there is the urgent need for a strategic plan that will

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involve a drastic re-engineering of citizenship/political education as an aspect of the total re-engineering of the entire educational system aimed at employment provisions and self productivity in Nigeria.

Besides, teaching/learning materials must be provided in the right proportion and made functional. There must be suitable and conducive working conditions for those involved in citizenship education.

Since education is a social good, eligible citizens should be given easy access to quality and functional should be available and accessible at minimal cost.

There should be a synergy between education and the society in order to meet the demands of the society in terms of job creation and self innovation.

The government at all levels should adequately fund education and ensure proper supervision and inspection to justify the financial allocation to education.

Moral values and positive attitude should be vigorously pursued whilst religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence maintained.

Possible Employment Areas in Citizenship Education and Self Productivity

With the re-engineering of citizenship/political education in Nigeria, employment opportunities and self productivity abound in the following areas namely: political appointment, electoral positions, legislature, board members, educationist, human right activists, electoral officers, recreational park administrators, entrepreneur ability.

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