

## **REGENERATING FINE AND APPLIED ARTS EDUCATION FOR POVERTY ERADICATION, SELF RELIANCE AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

*Rhoda A. Ogunshina*

*Department of Fine and Applied Arts,  
Federal College of Education,  
Kontagora.*

### **Abstract**

Education is generally considered to be the key to effective development strategies. Fine and Applied Arts education is the key that can adequately eradicate poverty, improve the quality of life and help achieve self-reliance and National Development. This paper will examine the potency of fine and applied Arts education as a key for poverty eradication, self-reliance and national development. The paper concludes that no meaningful poverty eradication can be achieved by any nation without effective and efficient fine and applied arts education. Therefore it was recommended that emphasis should be laid on practical aspects of Fine and Applied Art education so as to enhance the production of productive members of the national labour force who will be self-reliant, thereby eradicating poverty and contribute to National development.

For any meaningful development to take place in any Nation Vocational Education remains a panacea, it is regarded as a key factor in the development of the individual and the nation. To obtain this growth and development by both individual and the nation the process of acquiring skills can not be haphazard, if the goals of vocational education must be achieved.

The purpose of Fine and Applied Arts Education has been variously examined by Arts educators. To Farrant (1990), in Akodu (2004), "Fine and Applied Arts Education is a process of learning to lives as a useful and acceptable

member of the society to which one belongs". To (Mbahi (2000) it has two folds objectives and these are clearly stated thus:

To develop an individual to the fullest extent of his abilities and aptitudes and secondly as a citizen, equipped fully to contribute to the social and economic stability of himself. Both objectives support each other and blend to make the individual self-confident, self-reliant and an asset to his himself and nation.

From these two definitions, we can see that Fine and Applied Arts Education is indeed an instrument per excellence as

Journal of Teacher Perspective  
 accentuated in our National Policy on Education (2004) which stated that “the Federal Government of Nigeria has adapted Vocational Education (Fine and Applied Art Education) as instrument per excellence for effecting National Development”.

Therefore, Vocational Education is sacro-sant in the life of any Nation that desires development. It is the basic foundation we all need to function effectively in any aspects of life. Fine and Applied Arts Education refines and reforms an individual, equipped him to face the challenges of life, which could always make him adapt to situations and have the capacity to change things/situations for better, indeed Fine and Applied Art Education is a life changing instrument.

### **Concept of Education**

Education is a process by which an individual acquires physical and social capabilities demanded by the society. Education as defined by Okohzie (2007), involves the socialization of individual to become integral part of the society in which they live. Education has a direct way of eradicating poverty in any country. According to Ojo and Vincent (2000), “Education means many things to man, a visa to success, a passport to the unknown, a catalyst to great heights. Education empowers (pg 65), refines, civilizes, enlighten, enriches and gives confidence to man”. Education inculcates proper values for the survival of the individuals and the nation. It helps to develop the intellectual

capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their internal and external environment. It is the bedrock for national development and poverty eradication. The level of development in a country is often considered to be an offshoot of the nature of her educational programmes and system. This point is true to the extent that the technological objectives of a nation are usually rooted in the education programmes of the country. Thus Fine and Applied Art education for poverty eradication, self- reliance is a veritable factor for socio- economic emancipation and economic self- reliance of every country.

### **Concept of Fine and Applied Arts Education**

Fine and Applied Arts Education is undoubtedly a very important aspects of the Nigerian educational system under the 6-3-3-4 programme. It develops occupational competence and teaches those skills which enable an individual earn a living as cited by Mamza (2007) in Ogunshina (2010). The National Policy on Education (2004) defined Fine and Applied Arts Education as that aspect of education that gives its recipients an opportunity to acquire practical skills as well as some basic scientific knowledge. Fine and Applied Arts education has been an integral part of national development strategies in many nations because of its impact on productivity and economic development, its geared towards the production of the skilled individual who can effectively work with his head, heart and hands. The development of the

economy and the crave for self-reliance, poverty eradication and national development is the driving force of any nation. Fine and Applied Arts Education is understood to be:

1. An integral part of general Education.
  2. A means of preparing for occupational fields and for effective Participation in the world of work.
  3. An aspect of life-long learning and preparation for responsible citizenship.
  4. An instrument for promoting environmentally sound national development.
  5. A method of eradicating poverty.
- Oloruko-oba (2006) (pg 8).

Therefore it can be said that fine and Applied Arts Education is an education designed to develop occupational skills, a planned programme of courses and learning experiences that begins with exploration, supports enquiry, acquisition of skills, enables achievement of academic standards, leadership, preparation for industry, defined work and advanced continuing education. A form of education that leads to acquisition of practical skills, which will enable an individual to be gainfully employed in a chosen occupation to become self-reliant, in order to contribute to over-all national development.

#### **The Meaning of Self Reliance**

Self-reliance simply means reliance on one's own efforts and abilities Mamza (2007). According to Igweh (2008) when somebody acquires skills in any occupation, such person can establish his

*Regenerating Fine and Applied Arts.....*  
 or her own business and even employ others, such person according to him is self-reliant. He went further to say that "it leads to national development". Ojo (2009), in her opinion declared, self-reliance as that which pre-supposes the attainment and autonomy without unnecessarily resorting to begging. She emphasized that, "a self-reliant individual is one that achieves steady supply on his needs, one that diversifies his resources to reduce depending on others for assistance".

Thus, self-reliance emphasizes growth and development in the life of a citizen, politically, socially and economically. Therefore, a man who is potentially self-reliant will ensure an effective control of his resources over national life for proper national development for example Dangote (Alhaji Aliko, Adenuga among others).

#### **Concept of National Development**

A country's well being depends on its economic development Nwogu, (2009). Read (1958), in Mamza (2007), asserted that national development in human society is a many sided phenomenon which is complex and means different things in different societies in different situations and to different people. Igweh (2008), stressed that the most suitable definition of national development may be that which is based on the experiences of the developing nations which is cited by Seers (1994) in Igweh (2008). He defined national development in terms of reduction in the levels of poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and income inequality.

Journal of Teacher Perspective  
 Nwogu (2009) emphasized that “National development encompasses social and political development as well as economic development which is defined as the attainment of a number of ideas of modernization such as a rise in productivity, social and economic equity, improved institutions and values”. National development is thus an important part of general development in any nation.

The main objective of national development is to raise the standard of living and the general well being of the people in an economy where almost everybody can be self-reliant, it involves changes in the structure of an economy.

Fine and Applied Arts education has been an integral part of national development strategies in many nations because of the impact on human resources development, productivity and economic growth. It is a means of preparing for occupational fields and for effective participation in the world of work, an aspect of lifelong learning and a preparation for responsible citizenship, an instrument for promoting sound environmental, national development amongst others. As a matter of fact every nation, especially developing countries are making efforts to develop vocationally, economically, technologically and socially. It is important to note also, that any type of development, effort or initiatives requires, vocational skills amongst others.

### **Definition of Poverty**

Hornby (2007) defined poverty as the state of being poor: condition of abject/extreme poverty. Poverty is the state of human beings who are poor, that is they have little or no material means of surviving-little or no food, shelter, clothes, healthcare, education, and other physical means of living and improving one’s life.

Ojo (2009) said a poor person is considered as one without job, who cannot help himself or cater for his family, who has no money, farm or business. A poor person is described as one who is undernourished and ageing fast, one without self-confidence, looks dirty and lives in filthy environment. Akerele (2007), said poverty is pronounced deprivation in well-being, and comprises many dimensions, it includes low incomes and the inability to acquire the basic and services necessary for survival with dignity. It also encompasses low levels of health and education, poor access to clean water and sanitation, inadequate physical security, lack of basic needs and insufficient capacity and opportunity to better one’s life.

According to Okhawere (2005), the effect of poverty was seen among children as young as two years of age. Poor people, especially women and children, suffer most from various forms of social and economic deprivation, including hunger and malnutrition inadequate healthcare, limited accesses to quality education, and low self-esteem. Young unemployed people without any productive usage of their time are easily entrained into

crime and violence. The risk is more with unemployed youth in conflict or post-conflict areas. Poverty is therefore a threat to national development.

http:www said poverty may also be understood as an aspect of unequal social status and in equitable social relationships, experienced as social exclusion, dependency, and diminished capacity to participate, or to develop meaningful connections with other people in society. According to UNESCO (2004), people make decisions based on the roles and values of the class to which the individual belongs. For low income group whose lives are based in the present and meeting their immediate needs are based on survival, relationships and entertainment. The middle class, decisions are made based on work and achievement, planning and preparing for the future. The wealthy groups make decisions based on social, financial and political connections that consider traditions and past history.

#### **Causes of Poverty**

The causes of poverty includes among others:

- i. Corruption
- ii. Bad Governance
- iii. Unemployment
- iv. Low productivity
- v. Unfocused Government policies
- vi. Lack of effective skills training
- vii. Failure to adjust or re-adjust when situation demands

#### **Challenges Facing Fine and Applied Arts Education in Poverty Eradication, Self-Reliance and National Development**

There are numerous challenges which are affecting negatively, self-reliance poverty eradication and national development. Among the numerous challenges are:

1. **Poor Funding:** UNESCO (2004), the success and developmental advancement in Fine and Applied Arts Education which have been actualized over the years has been frustrated to failure as a result of poor funding.
2. **Inconsistent Government Policy:** Inconsistency in the formulation and implementation of vocational (Fine and Applied Arts Education) policies has been a major set back to its advancement. There is great need for increased funding to procure needed materials and equipments as it's the crucial factor that determines the range of equipment, materials and services that can be provided.
3. **Poor State of Studios, Workshops and other Infrastructure:** Most of the vocational institutions in Nigeria are stocked with obsolete equipments that have outlived their relevance in modern times. In this "computer age" Fine and Applied Arts Education should be established on the tripods of sound and sufficient equipments/materials.
4. **The Neglect of Vocational Education:** The neglect of Fine and Applied Arts Education is socially and economically injurious because

it is robbing the nation the contributions the individual would make on poverty eradication.

5. **Enrollment Upsurge:** The continuity enrollment into institution of higher learning should have been a plus to national development, but the demand is at variance with the physical capacity to accommodate them thereby creating problems of management. Ojo and Vincent (2000) pointed out that planning is very important because some educational programmes like the Universal Primary Education (UPE) failed because it lacked adequate planning and appropriate statistics for initial take-off.

#### **Regenerating Fine and Applied Art Education for Poverty Eradication, Self-Reliance and National Development**

1. **Economic growth and employment creation:** The key to poverty eradication (i.e improving the living conditions of people who are already poor) is economic growth and the creation of employment for all. However, poor people without employable skills cannot benefit from the growth process. The challenge then is to raise the productive capacity of the poor, the youth and the vulnerable of the society by the acquisition of job-specific competencies through Fine and Applied Arts Education.

2. **Teaching appropriate vocational subjects:** Haruna (2012) highlighted that government strongly believes that the objectives of national development, self-reliance, job creation and poverty eradication can only be realized through appropriate education which empowers the products of the education system with skills and competencies to become self-reliant. This agenda of the government can only be true and realized only if the vocational subjects are well taught in our schools.
3. **Entrepreneurship:** The acquisition of entrepreneurial skills is one of the major objectives of a credible vocational training system. Inevitably this measure will equip the individuals with necessary knowledge and skills towards production, when this is done, entrepreneurship will become a creative force. Mamza (2010) remarked that, “for the entrepreneur, the business serves as the hobby, vocation and creative force”.

#### **Conclusion**

An attempt was made in this paper to critically examine all the major concept and emphasized the role of Fine and Applied Art Education in poverty eradication, self-reliance and National development. The level or nature of development in a country is often considered to be an offshoot of the nature of her Vocational Education programme

that is an avenue for developing skills and potentials which leads to gainful employment, and wealth creation.

### Recommendation

1. It is suggested that the following measures if well articulated will mitigate and eradicate poverty and encourage / self – reliance national development.
2. Government should focus on Fine and Applied Arts Education as a self-reliant measure to National Development.
3. Policy implementation must be taken seriously if poverty eradication, self-reliance and national development is to be achieved.
4. Emphasizing the practical aspect of Fine and Applied Arts Education which will help to produce productive members of the nation's labour force that will be self-reliant.
5. Enough funds should be earmarked for the development of Fine and Applied Arts Education.

### References

- Akerele, W.O. (2007). Management of Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria: The challenges of the country. *Lagos Journal of Educational Administration and Planning* 3 (1) (pg 65-68).
- Akodu A, (2004) *Arts and Society in Nigeria*, Zaria Northern Nigerian publishing Co. Ltd
- Dike V.E (2009). Technical and Vocational Education: Key to Nigerian's Development (1) *Daily Triumph* March, 27 (pg 3).
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2004). *National Policy on Education*. (Fourth Edition). Lagos: Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council Press.
- Haruna, F.R. (2012). *Towards Transformation of Education in Nigeria. A case of Colleges of Education*. A paper presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Conference of the committee of Provost of Colleges of Education at College of Education, Akwanga, on 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> March.
- Hornby, A.S. (2006). *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary* 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. Oxford University Press.
- Igweh, A.U. (2008). Vocational Technical Training: A strategy for self-reliance and National Development. *Ebonyi. Technology and Vocational Education Journal*. Vol 2(1)112-117.
- Mamza, M.P. (2007). Contemporary Issues in Fine and Applied Arts Education in Nigeria. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Research Development*, 8 (4),
- Mbahi, A.A. (2000). *Art Teacher* Maiduguri Kingwell : Publishers Ltd.

- Mamza, P.M. (2010). *Vocational Technical Education and Rebranding*. Nigeria. A Lead paper presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> National Conference of the School of Vocational Education. Federal College of Education Kontagora 18<sup>th</sup> May.
- Nwoju, P.O. (2009). *The Global Economic Crisis: A challenge to Entrepreneurship Development in Technical and Vocational Education (TVET)* A paper presented at NATT 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference Bauchi, 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> October.
- Osuala, E.C. (1995) *Foundations of Vocational Education*. Nsukka: Fulladu Publishing Company 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.
- Ojo, A. & Vincent, O. (2000), *Education, Unity and Development in Nigeria*, Lagos Central Educational Service.
- Okojie, M.U. (2007) “*The State of Social Studies Education in Nigeria*” Paper presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual National Conference of Association for Encouraging Qualitative Education (ASSEQEN), Asaba, 10<sup>th</sup> May.
- Ojo, T.O. (2009), *Vocational and Technical Education: A Panacea for Achieving Vision 2020*: A Lead Paper presented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual National Conference of the School of Vocational Education Federal College of Education Kontagora. 25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> May.
- Okhawere.P.Y.O.(2005). *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*. Kontagora: Unique Printing Press.
- Ogunshina, R.A. (2010). *The place of Fine and Applied Arts as an Effective Sector for achieving vision 2020*. A paper presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> National Conference F.C.E Abeokuta, Ogun State.
- Oloruko-oba, B.K. (2006). “*Promoting Creative and Artistic Education in Nigeria Schools*”. Zaria, A paper presented on the occasion of the Golden Anniversary Celebration Zaria Art School. 22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> November. (pg 8).
- UNNSCO (2004). *Final report on meeting of higher education partners* World conference on higher education, Paris, UNESCO, 23-28 June 2003 <http://www.wikipedia> Free Encyclopedia (2007) retrieved in June 2012.