

CREATIVE AND FUNCTIONAL EDUCATION AS A TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN PRIMARY STUDIES

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Abstract

Creativity is a key in the global economy. However, the majority of national curricula creativity is perceived as secondary in most subjects. Unfortunately, this means that students leave school without knowing how to create and innovate. Consequently they will be under prepared for challenges that our society and economics are facing. African economics have over the years undergone series of reforms, since the late 1950s and 1960s when many of the countries gained political independence. Many of the reforms have been largely economic, in the quest to enhance the living standards of their peoples since independence. Across Africa, varying result have been obtained with majority of these not yielding the desired outcomes. In today's world of global competition and complex problems creative intelligence and innovative capacity are fast becoming requirements for personal and professional success. Creative intelligence and imagination exist in all children therefore it should be fostered. To cultivate and educate the "right minds". We need educational curricula that include exploration, problem solving and diversity it is important that school system respond to the changing world. This paper undertakes a need for new approaches needed for functional education for the promotion of a progressive and United Nations. To this end school programmes need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive for the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competence as equipment for the individual to line in and control to the development of its society.

Keywords: Public Sector, Creative, Functional Education, Africa Economic, Developments and Reform

The current drive to improve the performance of the economies of African countries through public service has been aimed at increasing efficiency, effectiveness and the delivery of quality service to the public. The relationship between the government and the public

service in Nigeria for example has endured through the various administrations in the country since independence. The role of education as the foundation of social, economic, political and cultural development is undisputed. All over the world education is expected

to be highly rated in national development plan. School programs need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive while interest and ability should determine the individuals direction in education for the acquisition of appropriate skills and development of mental, physical, social abilities and competences as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the society (Udoh and Akpan, 2014).

Almost all African Countries are caught in the web of public sector which has taken place in Africa, during the last two decades, are part of a global phenomenon that has touched all parts of the world-developed, developing and countries in transition (Mutahaba and Kiragu, 2010). In Nigeria, public sectors reforms have been on the agenda for a number of years. Given the performance of the public service in the first few years of independence, there was great hope that the expectation of Nigerians for rapid socio-economic development would be fulfilled with reasonable efficiency. The ills of the Nigerian public sector have been identified at various times.

Teaching and learning for a new age require a new educational model of education. It means an interactive and creative education based on individual need and abilities. Education throughout the world faces challenges, which may be economic, technological, social and personal. This requires a high degree of flexibility and adaptability of educational system to these challenges. New approaches are needed to find a way to promote students motivation, self-esteem and skills. Good educational system gives

children the freedom to recognize their capabilities and individual potentials. Education should make children to act creatively about ideas and issues across a range of disciplines. As creative thinkers they should explore alternatives. Such an approach is required for a solid academic foundation, to enhance their intelligence.

This is no time for doubts. We are already in recession as economic indicators have already shown. If we keep waiting for the long period of official release of the figures we might be engulfed and the condition might be worse. This is the time too. It is the time for real charged actions.

The Economy in a Coma

In spite of the good intentions contained in goals and policies, the economy is in a critical situation, with a combination of different factors such as depreciation of the naira, huge budgetary cuts, debt burden, high unemployment, investment contraction, banks speculation and lack of transparency. The economy is in steady decline and already at its lowest point ever in recent history with necessary linkages, for instance, between education and industry, agriculture and manufacturing. The administration lacks a policy framework but needs to devise one as quickly as possible. For example unemployment is high at the official rate of 12.1percent; export dipped by 34.6% while imports dipped by 7.8percent in first quarter of 2016. Meanwhile the president of Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), Prof. Segun Ajibola, succinctly puts it this way; “there are

pockets of problems associated with every segment of our national life". It is left for us as a people to implement what we believe will help us as a country and economy. "We are still where we are talking about export promotion and import substitution nearly 60years after independence. This is why we are still exposed to foreign exchange crisis and vulnerable to global shocks, yet relying so much on our reserve to survive as a people". The economy is in shambles. We are indebted to the tune of \$60b.while the federal government borrows money to pay workers, most states and local governments are owing workers' salaries for months (Fwa, 2015). Inflation is at 16.48 percent and still rising, most Nigerians are finding it increasingly difficult to meet their basic needs, as the economy entered into full blown recession following two quarters of consistent negative growth. Nigeria is facing unprecedented and tremendous political and economic challenges with global and local dynamics. As Nigeria's economy is contrasting, domestic and global headwinds ensure that downside risk will escalate. Without aggressive economic moves and harsh security measures, the economy could face a disastrous free fall. Nigeria has so far achieved theoretical quantitative macroeconomic fundamentals, but a lot needs to be done particularly on stabilizing her bearish Naira currency. Although Naira is relatively stable it is weak when compared to major currencies like the Dollar and Euro. Presently Nigeria is having one of the lowest debts to GDP ratio in the world.

This is attributed to her recent payment of foreign debt and the reasonably macro-economic stability she achieved through economic reform measures with a huge foreign reserve. For now, there is unusual delay in implementing the budget, maybe due to paucity of resources, which raises issues around budget planning and revenue forecasting from the 2016 federal budget. We are not aware that the National Assembly appropriated the bailout funds in the 2016 federal budget or under any supplementary appropriation. Under what authority is the executive negotiating and disbursing this bailout funds? Where is the money coming from at a time when the federal government cannot implement its capital budget due to paucity of funds.

The country can start somewhere. The full implementation of the automobile policy which encourage local manufacture and assembly of vehicles is imperative in this regard. Nigeria manufacturers need to be supported to export their products and this calls for the reinstatement of the expansion. Grant, which was stopped due to abuses. But the holes for corruption need to be plugged. The value of the naira continues to be depressed (Chiakwel, 2016). Regardless of these challenges, opportunities and possibilities abound. If we address some fundamental issues and have a developmental plan that is anchored on realizing inclusive and sustainable growth we will get out of the woods.

The Impact of Crisis Economy on Education

The financial melt-down has ushered in dramatic shift in the economic landscape, with direct implication on education at all levels. The crisis comes at a time of impressive progress in getting more children into school, with primary school enrolment across sub-Saharan Africa increasing at a much faster rate. This is especially true in the case of Nigeria which has made little progress to widen access to primary education. Low-income countries face the challenge of expanding access, building more classrooms, training and hiring more teachers and improving the quality of learning. The world's poorest children and youth are most at risk of dropping out of school because of poverty. Like most of the nations, our public schools are in dire financial trait nearly every state has less to spend on education. Already before this worldwide recession, the Nigerian educational system has been on the downward slope. A visit to any of our public schools at all levels will reveal a nation whose education policy makers have perfected official deceit as an art. How could Nigeria possibly be among the world's twenty economies by 2020 with the state of our public education at all levels, vision 20:2020 amounts to a mirage (Bamigboye & Adeyemi, 2016).

The impact of the economic crisis on higher education in Nigeria will even be more profound. Already Federal education institutions are facing continuous decrease in funding from the governments. The national politics

determines the quality of education policies, programs and processes and eventually products.

Government underfunding and commoditization of education is likely to worsen the crisis in education. The current economic crisis confronting many governments is creating severe conflicts in the educational sector of many nations. On one hand they have to reduce, their budget deficits to avoid excess indebtedness. On the other hand they have to promote education firstly to alleviate unemployment as a short run crisis measure and secondly to avoid the deterioration of human capital in the long run. High percentage of national budgets focus on the public funding which greatly affects the education sector. Some governments carried out overall budget cuts. These had negative effects on teachers, students and families (Bamigboye & Adeyemi, 2016).

Nigerian education has been experiencing a geometric setback since the past two decades. And its' pathetic situation has always been a source of concern. Classes are always crowded with up to ninety students in a class designed for about thirty students. In most cases especially in public primary schools chairs are not enough, students share seats and desks, when they are receiving lectures. Nigerian schools at all levels are lacking the essential materials for learning, especially for science practical classes. This no doubt affects the learning process. Most secondary schools lack science materials, and those that claim to have are managing the old ones. Hence, the

students only cram theoretical steps rather than carrying out practical. Education for all and assurance of quality education should be the prime objectives of any government (Barnamala, 2015). Education is the basic human right that should be feasibly accorded to all human beings. It is the key index to economic and social development of a country (Ekanem, 2015). No nation can develop beyond its educational standard or level. Thus education is a catalyst for socio-economic and political development of a nation. The success of many nations in tackling major developmental problems such as poverty, unemployment, among others can be traced to their educational system. Today, we are facing major challenges in our global economy, in our environment and in social issues. The need for creativity in education has never been greater.

Prospects of Education in Nigeria Economy Crisis

Education is foremost a human basic need. Any country can reach the peak of development if it can educate its people. In the global knowledge economy education has a crucial role in nurturing human capital. Education has enormous potential to promote prosperity in the developing nations (Mobasser and Muhammed as cited in Barnamala, 2015). It ensures economic growth, leads to social transformation and finds solutions to national developmental challenges. Education endorses social mobility and a high standard of living (Chaudhary as cited in Barnamala, 2015). The development of a modern society depends

to a large extent on the nature and standard of education. By educating an entire population, economic growth is a natural effect. A country's Gross Domestic Product can increase by 1 percent annually by providing education to its entire population. Increasing a country GDP creates innumerable opportunities for trade and development. No country in the world has achieved rapid and consistent growth without at least 40 percent of its adult population being literate. Education can motivate people to become harder workers and can give people the drive to move up in the workforce. Increasing literacy rate in a country can drastically improve economic development. Education is the key to giving poor farmers the tools they need to increase their yields, maximize profits and limit waste.

Education in every sense is one of the fundamental factors of development. No country can achieve sustainable economic development without substantial investment in human capital. Education enriches peoples understanding of themselves and the world. It improves the quality of their lives and leads to broad social benefits to individuals and society. Education raises people's productivity and creativity and promotes entrepreneurship and technological advances. In addition it plays a very crucial role in securing economic and social progress and improving income distribution. The economic growth of a country largely depends on technological improvement and on its scientific and technical manpower. Technological education

therefore has a crucial role in speeding up a country's industrial development. It provides one of the most potent means for development of skilled manpower as required by various sectors in a country's economy. Technical and vocational education has been an integral part of national development strategy in many societies because of its impact on productivity and economic development. Vocational technical education gives individuals the skills to live, learn and work as productive citizens in a global society.

Conclusively, times of crisis call for making choices and setting priorities. The economic crisis has not swept the knowledge society on the contrary, early childhood education, girl's education, literacy and skills training for youth and adults are foundations for inclusive social and economic development. The Nigerian education system is facing monumental challenges, poor quality of schooling from elementary to tertiary level.

Recommendations

The following are recommendations based on the challenges

1. There should be a proper budgetary allocation for the educational sector. Funds should be channeled to each institution and proper managing of funds must be ensured by the government.
2. Curriculum modifications must be enhanced with modern teaching instrumentation.
3. There should be economic diversification

4. Government should tax the rich and wealthy corporation to fund public education.

5. It is important to create skilled, well trained, motivated and ethical teachers who will help students to learn in a pragmatic way and proper for the global employment market.

6. Educational regulatory bodies should ensure that syllabuses are strictly followed and well implemented.

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