

INTRODUCTION
to
TEACHING
METHODOLOGY

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CHAPTER FIVE

EDUCATIONAL AIMS AND THE NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION (NPE)

A. F. Oyelade *Ph.D* & A. J. Olaniyi *Ph.D*

Introduction

At the end of this chapter, you are expected to be able to:

1. state the educational aims in the National Policy on Education.
2. discuss the educational aims in the National Policy on Education.

The theme of this chapter would be discussed in terms of the aims of education in the National Policy on Education. The 2013 edition of the National Policy on Education would be the reference document. In the National Policy on Education the thinking of government about education that is worthwhile, education that is valuable, is stated in general terms and subsequently in less general terms.

The thinking of government about education that is worthwhile and valuable, stated in general and less general terms, constitute the aims of education in the national policy on education. This is discussed in the "philosophy of the nation" (p. 13) and then in the "national philosophy of education" (p. 13), and subsequently in the clarification under various levels of education: basic, secondary, and tertiary.

Educational Aims Stated in General Terms

In the "philosophy of the nation", the government states that the nation values:

- i. living in unity, harmony; democracy and sovereignty. It also values recognition of the principles of freedom, equality and justice.
- ii. the promotion of inter-African solidarity and world peace. (p. 13).

In the "philosophy of education", the government states that the nation values education that:

- i. promotes unity of the country;
- ii. serves as instrument for social development, and national development;
- iii. promotes maximum development of potentials of the individual and the society;
- iv. is comprehensive, functional, qualitative;
- v. is relevant to the needs of the society;
- vi. is compulsory; and

- vii. serves as the right of every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, ethnic background, and any peculiar individual challenges (p. 13). Thus, the government values education that recognises the principles of equality, freedom, and justice as stated in the "philosophy of the nation".

It is clear from the foregoing that the "philosophy of education" in Nigeria is based on the "philosophy of the nation". In addition, the government states that the national philosophy of education values development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen; and provision of equal opportunities for all citizens at the basic, secondary and tertiary levels of education both inside and outside the formal school system (p. 14).

Clarification about citizenship education and value of education inside and outside the formal school system is contained in statements about Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs) and Innovative Enterprise Institutions. While the formal school system is promoted at the basic, secondary and tertiary levels of education, the non-formal system of education is also promoted through encouragement and recognition of institutions like Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs) that pursue such non-formal specialised skills acquisition as: craftsmanship in indigenous fabric making, artisanship, and apprenticeship in the technologies of "tie-and-die" dresses (e.g. "Adire", "Aso-oke" and "Akwaete"); and all other vocations (pp. 38-40).

Moreover, Innovative Enterprise Institutions that are also non-formal institutions are encouraged to educate learners in various trades and careers such as: Information and Communication Technology, Oil and Gas Technology, Fashion Designing, Film making, Manufacturing, Hospitality and Tourism, Banking, Agriculture, Co-operative and Allied Careers and Entrepreneurship. The Innovative Enterprise Institutions, which are private-sector-driven, are promoted through government regulation of their activities and recognition of the certificates that they award (pp. 60-62).

In effect, the government values education at all levels within and outside the formal school system and pursues the actualisation of the value by taking steps that culminate in the recognition of formal and non-formal education. This is with the intention of enabling all citizens to have equal and functional education for maximum realisation of individual potentials towards individual development, and social and national development.

Educational Aims Stated in Less General Terms

Apart from educational aims stated in general terms, the government makes statements about educational aims in less general terms. The following statements of educational values contain the educational aims in less general terms:

- i. respect for the worth and dignity of the individual;
- ii. recognition of man's ability to make rational decisions;
- iii. moral and spiritual development of the individual and the society;
- iv. physical, emotional and psychological development of the individual and the society;
- v. skills acquisition towards functional citizenship and societal development;
- vi. development of potentials toward individual self-realisation and national development and global relevance;
- vii. shared responsibility for the common good of the society. (p. 16)

It follows that the aims of education in the National Policy on Education in less general terms emphasise the values of democracy which are in the "philosophy of the nation" (p. 13). The aims emphasise the values in the "philosophy of the nation" which include: unity in diversity, harmony, freedom, equality and justice. The aims further emphasise inter-African solidarity and world peace.

Moreover, the aims recognise the "philosophy of the nation" and the "educational philosophy of the nation" both of which emphasise development of all citizens (pp. 13 and 14). It is in this connection that the government promotes: Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education (for children, youths and adults who have been out of school); Special Needs Education (for special needs people); and Open and Distance Learning. All these are in addition to the education that goes on in the Vocational Enterprise Institutions, and Innovative Enterprise Institutions (which have been discussed earlier). Thus the education that is promoted in the formal school system at the basic level, secondary level, and tertiary level; and the education promoted in the Non-formal Institutions at various levels are in pursuance of values of democracy which are stated in the philosophy of the nation (p.13); and alluded to in the "educational philosophy of the nation" (pp. 13 and 14).

Conclusion

It follows that the aims of education in the national policy of education which are in consonance with the philosophy of the nation and the educational

philosophy of the nation are (in general and less general terms) in recognition of the values of democracy and promotion of the values of democracy in education (FRN, 2013; and Crittenden, 1973, pp. 130, 131, 139).

However, it can be observed in the policy (and even in practice) that the government values the promotion of science and technological education more than the promotion of moral, spiritual, rational and arts-oriented education, as the education progresses from basic level to tertiary level (see FRN, 2013 pp. 13 and 55-56).

Since democracy and democratic values have been recognised as the values in the "philosophy of the nation" (p. 13) and the "philosophy of education in the nation" (pp. 13, 14), it would be expedient for the policy to pursue the values of democracy in education (which also constitute the aims of education in Nigeria) without bias for a particular type of education from the basic level to tertiary level of education.

Democracy, as it has been observed, involves the pursuit of freedom, equality and justice. It also promotes living in unity, harmony and peace. It recognises arts-oriented and science and technology-oriented education equitably. To de-emphasise arts-oriented education progressively in the policy is to de-emphasise education in moral, spiritual, rational and allied disciplines. Such a de-emphasis portends great danger for the individual citizens and the society in terms of moral, spiritual, and rational development which the nation needs for all-round development. The policy therefore needs to pursue the aims of moral, spiritual, and rational education equitably with those of science and technology education at all levels of education for all-round development of the individual citizens and the nation.

Review Questions

- (1)
 - (i) State the "philosophy of the nation" in the National Policy on Education.
 - (ii) Discuss the relationship between the "philosophy of the nation" and the aims of education in the National Policy on Education.
- (2)
 - (i) State in brief the "philosophy of education" in the National Policy on Education.
 - (ii) Discuss in brief the relationship between the "philosophy of education" and the aims of education in the National Policy on Education.
- (3) Highlight the nature of two non-formal education institutions that the government promotes in Nigeria, with a view to promoting equality of education for all.

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