

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL OF CULTURE, CREATIVITY FOR SUSTAINABLE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The paper discusses with dissatisfaction the state that is lackadaisical in the provision of official plat form for the promotion and gainful utilization of the culture policy. Arguing that there is need to understand and tap the potential offered by the creative industry for sustainable educational development in Nigeria. As a result of these conditions, some recommendations were made such as the promotion of museum and indigenous Language/Cultural/Crafts centres which should be made part of requirements for building schools across the country's history and cultural values as part of their education and establishment of more stringent measure or legislation to protect nation monuments, from destruction across the country while. Theatre Art Regulatory Council bills need to be harmonized into one bill which government could present to national Assembly for assents etc.

Introduction

On March, 21, 2011 over 450 members of the creative community gathered at the banquet Hall of the Eko Hotel & Suites in Lagos. It was an event, which many, who attended would not forget in a hurry. It was a meeting initiated by the former president GoodLuck Jonathan with the objective of lifting the culture and creative industries (CCI). A few months earlier, he had launched the "Bring back the Book initiative", at which the potential of the creative sector was equally spotlighted.

So great was the enthusiasm of the creative entrepreneur's culture workers and missioners this period that many believed before long, the country's culture policy would be reviewed and implemented in full. At the presidential parley, virtually all the disciplines in the art, through their professional bodies, spoke on the challenges mitating their professional and career fulfillment. In summation of the various presentations, the then culture communication and Advocate, Ben Tomoloju, Speaking on the platform of the Coalition of Nigerian artists, CONA (which coordinated invitation of majority of the participants) urged the presidency to beat the records of past administrations and leaders by:

- ❖ Fast-tracking the realization of the National Endowment fund for the Arts, and facitating introduction of Tax Rebates as incentives for the sponsors of the arts of the Nigeria cultural policy.
- ❖ Ensuring the formal launch and operation of the Nigerian cultural policies.
- ❖ Giving prime place to the cultural sector in budgeting processes since it has capacity to create massive job opportunities.

- ❖ Establishing Infrastructure and relevant facilities to back up the mobility and diversity of the creative industry lucrative.
- ❖ Giving Artists deserved visibility in matters concerning their trades in government appointments, and
- ❖ Engaging the country's vast human resources in literature, movies, Music, Theatre, TV, Programmed, Visual arts, etc. as tools for building Nigeria's image abroad.
- ❖ Creating a book commission to take charge of all state matters dealing with issues of books, reading and writing.
- ❖ Setting up machinery for effective monitoring of all cultural agencies to ensure that they are well managed and performing to the best interests of the artistes and creative industry practitioners.

Four years after the parley, nothing again happened to the sector that would elicit enthusiasm. When the government of President Muhammadu Buhari came in, another opportunity to gather the CCLS came with a national summit on culture and Tourism with the theme "Repositioning Culture and Tourism in A Diversified Economy the summit held from April 27 to 29, 2016 in Abuja.

At the end of deliberation, the following recommendations, among others were considered and adopted. The summit observed that to create a positive image for the country's national buildings, private cooperate offices and edifices there is a compulsory need to adorn them with Nigerian artworks in order to empower arts creators; and that measures be put in place to protect the nation's cultural sites during times of conflict by engendering communal ownership of such sites.

According to the Guardian, Sunday newspaper July 1 2018. Stakeholders also harped on the need to imbibe the culture of documentation so as to increase availability of statistical data on the sector to aid planning. The availability of empirical data enhances funding opportunities. Government should engage stakeholder in conducting the nationwide mapping of creative industries whose pilot was conducted by the British council, NBS and SONTA in 2013. This is imperative because verifiable statistics on the performance of the sector will demonstrate clearly the viability of the industry and attract more investors. However, before discussing or moving into the nitty-gritty of the matter, it is imperative to argue that there has not been the required review or full implementation of policy. It still remains bogged down by wasteful bureaucracy both at political and technocratic level. Nigeria is one of the African countries that took a cue from Ghana to formulate its national cultural policy at the insistence of the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). According to Nwakuner (2018:26) since 1998, when Nigerian formulated it cultural policy full date, gaping loopholes exist; hinder the promotion of culture as documented in the policy. The policy highlighted four broad categories of state action namely:

- ❖ Preservation of culture
- ❖ Promotion of culture
- ❖ Presentation of culture and Establishment of administrative structure and the provision of fund for it implementation, the promotion of cultural property whether of concrete or no-concrete nature, past or present, written or oral, or relating to values or facts of history with the aid of research and documentation.

Promotion of cultural according to Nwakunor entail providing revenue to ensure cultural, education, consciousness vis-a-vis encouraging the integration of traditional values in the day-to-day life of the people. Presentation of culture as stipulated in the policy refers to the means by which culture is disseminated in its bid to facilitate the accessibility of arts and culture to the widest spectrum of Nigeria, for example through theatre, films, exhibitions, seminars, workshop and publication or the mass media.

Establishing administrative structures and institutions for promoting the objectives of cultural policy, providing the framework to enable these administrative structures and institutions to generate funds through private source.

For the culture advocate, there is need to fast-track the realization of the national endowment fund for the Art. Led by the pioneer president Mahmood Ali Balogun, the then secretary, Segun Ojewuyi (now a professor in the US) and Israel Eboh, also one time president, members of the Association raised money among themselves. They went to the Guardian to place a full page advert canvassing for a legislation to back up the NEA. Efforts were made to bring the group to limelight but unfortunately the revise was the case. Twenty years after the formation, attempt was also made to review the policy in 2008. According to UNESCO guidelines, a cultural policy skill is reviewed at least once in eight years. So it was more than an belated exercise many have reasoned that given the water tight content of the policy, it should stimulate the mind of the people intellectually and enable them to appreciate and imbibe ennobling values as enunciated in the constitution.

Stakeholders and experts in the sector insist that there are national action plans and policies to meet almost every need like energy, as well as address problems faced in education and infrastructure sectors, but the key area of culture, which requires preparing people for bigger cerebral challenges, has been left to makeshift arrangements. The country's constitution mandates the preservation of a distinct culture and practices, which imply accepting plurality in its cultural discourses. As a creative level, this finds expression in literature, art, Music and crafts. It is disheartening, therefore, to note that the state has been lackadaisical in the provision of official platform for the promotion and gainful utilization of the culture policy. There is the need to understand and tag the potential offered by the creative industry. According to Tomolom in Nwakunor (2018:27), there is a disconnect between the "luminaries of arts, protagonists and decision-makers and resource allocators.

In a two-day Annual Roundtable on Cultural Orientation (ARTCO) Organized by the National Institute for Cultural Orientation (NICO) and held between March 8 and 9 in Benin, Edo state capital. At the roundtable, government was charged to encourage the recreation of traditional festival. This will not only enhance the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), but will also boost tourism and make festivals relevant to the contemporary society.

The creative is one of the highest employers of labor in the country. Yet this has never been proportionately reflected in the country's fiscal allocation. Culture, the centerpiece of creative references has been treated perfunctorily at the formal sectorial planning process, leaving the teeming millions of culture producers in the spasmodic grip of a subsistence trap. Culture is both an enabler and driver of sustainable development. Cultural and creative industries (CCLSI) generate yearly revenues of US\$ 2.250 billion and global exports of over US \$ 250 million. Moreover, these sectors often make up around 10% of national GDP and employ

more people aged 15-29 than any other sector. Culture has also the potential to enable key development. The 2030 United Nations sustainable development Agenda mentions culture explicitly with relation to education, economic growth, sustainable cities, and consumption and production patterns. Deploying cultural and among countries as well as achieve gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

Sustainable Educational Development there can be no meaningful development if there is no proper unlocking of potential of culture and creativity. In other words, sustainable development is a general outcome of unlocking of potential of culture and creativity. This assertion is in line with the philosophy for sustainable development which was first defined in 1987 by Brunt land Report of the world commission on Environment and Development as “meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generation (Oluimi, Todaro and Smith, Jhingan). Implicit in this definition is that development should “keep going” and seriously speaking, this is what sustainable development stands for. Furthermore, sustainable development emphasizes the creation of sustainable improvements in the quality of life of all people through increases in real income per capital, improvements in education, health and general quality of life and improvement that is everlasting. It prescribes a process of raising real income and the quality of life. Natural resources based it not allowed to deteriorate.

According to Jhingan in Nzulumike (2018:83) emphasizes the hitherto unappreciated role of both environmental is increasing economic growth and meeting basic needs. Other specific goals which aim at lifting living standard include bettering people’s health and education opportunities, giving everyone the chance to participate in public life, helping to ensure a clear environment and promoting intergenerational equity. Thus, meeting the needs of the people in the present generation is essential in order to sustain the needs of the future generations. To achieve this is to a great extent, predicated on effective unlocking potential of culture and creativity for sustainable educational development.

Examples of countries that used culture and creativity for sustainable educational development

In Nigeria bad governance and leadership failure is indeed the socio-political virus that has eaten deep into the fabric of Nigeria’s nationhood, leaving in its trail languishing economy, infrastructural hemorrhage and decay in almost all sectors. Vision is one of the critical factors that separate transactional leaders from transformational ones. The political economy of Nigeria is intentionally skewed to serve political end at the expense of real development political consideration are often valued at the expense of the survival of most corporations established by Nigerian government. Ethiopia as a country has increasingly integrated culture into its national sustainable development plans, notably through the second Growth and Transformation plan (GTP II: 2015-2020). The country’s CCIS are expected to contribute to not only economic growth and job creation, but also social cohesion nationally and image building internationally. Following the Launch of UNESCO’S 2018 Global Report: Re/shaping Cultural policies, UNESCO is using the lessons learned and recommendations on the report to support the efforts of national authorities to review their culture policy and strengthen their capacities to effectively implement the UNESCO 2005 Convention.

South South Sudan is equally following the path of Ethiopia by its incorporation of culture in the development frameworks, which experts say will help the country to achieve the

2030 sustainable Goals and ensure human right and fundamental freedom of expressions, information and communication, promote gender equality to leverage women's contributions towards creative economy. UNESCO is confident that the participatory process of culture policy review provides an opportunity for south Sudanese to have a say on what policies and measures they want to support the richness of the cultural expressions of the people of South Sudan (Umar in Nwakunor 2018:26).

To increase European Union Collaboration on the European Commission (EU) adopted on May 22 2018 a proposal for a New European Agenda for culture, accompanied by a staff working document. The Agenda explains how the EC will support EU member's state in tapping into culture's potential to foster innovation, creativity, sustainable growth and jobs. The Agenda has three strategic objectives, focusing on social, economic and external dimensions. The social dimension is about using the power of culture and cultural diversity for social cohesion.

Among other objectives, the document emphasizes the need to protect and promote Europe's culture heritage as a shared resource. Under the economic dimension the New Agenda supports job and growth in the cultural and creative sectors, by promoting arts and culture in education. The Agenda also calls for boasting relevant skills such as digital, entrepreneurial, traditional and specialized, and encouraging innovation in culture. The external dimension focuses on strengthening international cultural relations, as well as reinforcing cooperation on cultural heritage.

Conclusion

Given the volume of explanations concerning the unlocking of potential and creativity for sustainable educational development, there are certain bucks that may be passed in terms of the delay in reviewing our cultural policy and there is a sense in which we are all accountable. Basically government is expected to provide leadership in the formulation and even the implementation of national policies in all spheres of human endeavour by galvanizing all available resources, human or otherwise.

Recommendations

1. The Mop icon and the Theater Art Regulatory Council bills need to be harmonized into one bill which government could present to the national assembly for timely processing we need to urgently regulate the sector and maintain high ethical standards.
2. More stringent legislation need to be in place to protect nation monuments from the growing cases of willful destruction across the country. A law should be promulgated to compel local government councils to establish and maintain community museums and craft centers and fund at least one community festival in a year.
3. Museums and indigenous languages/ cultural/craft centres should be made part of requirements for building schools across the country in order to reorientate the younger generations on the country's history and cultural values as part of their education.
4. In order to maximize the gains of digitization of broadcasting in Nigeria, proper framework needs to be worked out between players in the creative sectors and broadcast organizations produce adequate culturally relevant content, and

5. That action on the reviewed cultural policy for Nigeria and Endowment fund for the Arts has been unnecessarily delayed. Action must therefore be taken to establish and make them functional for effective development of the sector.

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