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Benchmarking the philosophy of Nigerian policy on education with the United Nations' sustainable development goals and traditional ethical principles of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church

Ihekwoaba Michael Festus Chidozie

School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS)
Strathmore University

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**BENCHMARKING THE PHILOSOPHY OF NIGERIAN POLICY ON
EDUCATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS' SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND TRADITIONAL ETHICAL PRINCIPLES OF
THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

IHEKWOABA MICHAEL FESTUS CHIDOZIE

**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of
Masters of Art in Applied Philosophy & Ethics at Strathmore University**

**School of Humanities and Social Sciences
Strathmore University
Nairobi, Kenya**

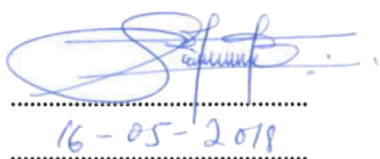
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Michael Festus Chidozie Ihekwoaba

Approval

The thesis of Michael Festus Chidozie Ihekwoaba was reviewed and approved by the following:

Dr. John Branya,
School of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Strathmore University.

Prof. Christine Gichure,
Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Strathmore University.

Prof. Ruth Kiraka,
Dean, School of Graduate Studies,
Strathmore University.

Abstract

This dissertation seeks to benchmark the philosophy of Nigeria's education policy with the United Nations' sustainable development goals as well as the traditional ethical principles of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church, with the primary aim of identifying where there is a total, partial or zero relation for a possible improvement of Nigeria's education policy philosophy.

Igbuzor (2006) in stressing the importance of education stated that "Education is a human right that should be accorded to all human beings solely by reason of being human".

The utmost importance attached to education in Nigeria was clearly emphasized in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004). The Federal Republic of Nigeria, in this policy, adopted education as an instrument "par excellence" for effecting national development. But despite the government's commitment to education, the quality of education in Nigerian schools has been declining tremendously, thereby giving successive government's serious concern. The question has become, what is wrong with the Nigeria educational system?

The investigation utilized a philosophical approach that leverages on a personalistic anthropology which underscores the centrality of the person as the primary focus of investigation. This involves the systematic identification, location, and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem. The researchers use the information derived to evaluate whether the philosophy of Nigerian education policy can be improved.

While the results of the benchmarking of the philosophy of Nigeria's education policy against the United Nations' development goals as well as the traditional ethical principles of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church were highlighted, the findings revealed that

there are areas where the NPE philosophy needs partial and total improvement at the same time.

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List of Abbreviations

CSD	Catholic Social Doctrine
FCS	Future for Catholic Schools
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR's	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPE	Nigeria Policy on Education
RDECS	The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNDP	The United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGA	UN General Assembly
USEPA	United States Environmental protection Agency
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development

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Dedication

To my brothers and Sisters who through thick and thin have shown incredible support and love to me.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Education is believed to be the bedrock of any country's development. This is based on the philosophy of the nation's education system, which encapsulates her needs, goals, objectives and aspirations. It is considered as the cornerstone for meaningful and sustainable growth, development and achievement in art, science and technology. Umo (2005) affirms that, worldwide, education has been recognized as a catalyst for achieving socio-economic, scientific and technological development. For instance, the Federal Government of Nigeria declared in its National Policy on Education (2004) that education is an instrument par excellence for achieving national development. Any meaningful growth and development of any country must be preceded by a sound educational planning. Abiogu (2014), notes that education is not just a mere discipline, but a philosophical force of its own with positive implications for human development, further adding that, any such education without a philosophy may not achieve its envisioned end for national development.

Educational philosophy does not only connect the societal ideology with the goals and objectives adoptable in education, it goes further to intermittently critiquing ideologies to ensure that such ideologies are worthwhile and fitting for societal development. As an anchor, philosophy of education coordinates the various inputs from other disciplines of education (psychology, sociology, history and economics, inter alia) into the policy as a complementary whole. Without such efforts, the whole of education and policy process will remain "a jig-saw puzzle whose bits and pieces hang together in a crazy quilt" (Akinpelu, 2005, p. 167).

Philosophy of education is at the very centre of the whole educational enterprise. Mango (2011) highlighted that philosophy of education played a central role by being interested

in the views of the other foundations, as well as the various methods they used by employing the tools and techniques of philosophy. In addition, Reid (1972) stressed that philosophy of education was the use of philosophical instruments, and the application of philosophical methods to educational questions. It inquires how the results of such philosophical thinking are related to education. This presents philosophy of education as an intelligent thinking about education. Philosophy of education like philosophy itself performs many tasks. The tasks advanced by various philosophers of education as Shaaba (2010) noted, depended on their conception of the aims of education intended.

Akinpelu (2005) indicated that education for Plato (427 BC-347 BC) aims primarily at political and social cohesion of the nation it serves. Good education promotes the good conduct which in turn breeds peace and concord necessary for building a nation. Analytically, the aim of education from Plato's philosophical thought is to put a man in the right order, to show him the right path and to instil in him the spirit of dedication towards social stability and cohesion.

This is achievable only when people are educated according to their talents and natural potentials in the society. Such educative method will lead to the knowledge of different areas of sciences for the development of society. The findings of these different areas of sciences are co-ordinated by philosophy, while philosophy of education interprets such findings as they bear on education.

Being the core of a nation's development, an adequate philosophy of education is important. As quoted above it seems that there is room for improvement in Nigeria's philosophy of education, and this is what motivates this research.

1.1 Background

In its quest for the moral and social education of the individual, this dissertation seeks to examine the philosophy of Nigeria's education policy. This is a starting point for Nigeria having a system of education that addresses its social problems. The education policy should therefore have a clear social ethical content. An education with a social ethical content is believed to create the environment for a total education of man and platform for flourishing of humanity. On the contrary, education in Nigeria *-is considered* an instrument "par excellence" for effecting national development. It appears functional in orientation, therefore missing out on the core ingredients of humanities education anchored on a well-defined philosophy. It has witnessed active participation by non-governmental agencies, communities, and individuals as well as government intervention. It is therefore desirable for the Nation to spell out in clear and unequivocal terms the philosophy and objectives that underlie its investment in education. The National Policy on Education seeks to fulfil that role (2004).

Every human society, according to Ukeje (1986, p.8) has a system of values (philosophy) and ideals born out of experience that guides social orientation of its environment. It is to this extent that Nigeria having evolved a set of national goals that aim to direct its quest for national development, also derived its education philosophy for a similar mission as the national goals, but in this case in the realm of education. Philosophical ideas have been responsible for shaping the direction of development of societies through the channels of education. The importance of education is highly documented in the government policy statements, but as Nwafor (2014) observes, that Nigeria has no Philosophy of Education she could call her own because of the eclectic nature of the philosophical ideas expressed in her National Policy on Education; further noting that some aspects of education were

not provided for in the nation's educational Magna Carta. As a result, the national policy on education for Nigeria could be just technical or economical and not take into consideration the important social ethics that bind society together in a common destiny. Ukeje maintained this position because of the loosely hanging nature of the collective aspirations of the principles that have come to characterise the Philosophy of the Nigerian education policy. This philosophy has been widely noted and referred to, in the Policy (2004) as the guiding light of the Nigerian education system. They are, as stipulated in the policy, direct reflection of Nigeria's national goals.

Nigeria's national goals are articulated as thus: to live in unity and harmony as one indivisible and indissoluble democratic and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom, equality and justice; to promote inter African solidarity and world peace through understanding (2004). The national goals provide the basis for the Nigerian education Philosophy. In Elobuiké's (2008) view, "although Nigerian people have had education exposure for a very long time, yet education for them had been to prepare the youth in such a way that they would be able to live a meaningful and fruitful life. This meaningful and fruitful life is what the National goals seek to achieve through the education policy".

Drawing from the National goals, the Nigeria education policy summarises her education philosophy as an instrument for national change with strong emphasis on the inalienability of the right of all Nigerians irrespective of ethnicity or social status, to education; provision of equal opportunities to all citizens, development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen, through a functional education that is relevant to the needs of the society (2004). The philosophy lays the path for the orientation and basic aspiration of the Nigerian education policy. Although the properties of Nigerian education policy philosophy give semblance of humanistic approach to education, the goals it sets out to achieve demonstrate

its inclination lies towards functionalism that is intended to foster national development. This ultimate goal seems to have a strong influence as to the manner in which the philosophy is framed as well as its orientation. The only problem that one could cite with this approach is tendency to ignore man and place focus on the material outcome of education.

Thus, for education to achieve its intended aims and objectives, it needs a well fashioned philosophy of education. If philosophy of education is to be relevant in the development of any form, it should take into great consideration its (education) relevance to men, since men and education are central elements of development.

The term development could be used interchangeably with evolution, depending on the context in which it is used, (either positively or negatively) to refer to situations, trends, or issues. Development, ordinarily means “man’s effort to make the necessary impact on nature; his environment, and on himself with a view to transforming and improving himself and his environment” (Nwafor, 2006). It is clear therefore that development and improvement are synonymous.

Philologically, development is multi-dimensional in its meaning. It has economic, social, political, cultural, human or personal dimensions. Babarinde & Farayola (2005) highlighted that; development involves increase in the quality and quantity of life of a people. It includes gradual eradication of poverty, unemployment, social inequalities, bad leadership, and monopolization of opinion by the government, and of the negative practices which unfortunately have become the major characteristics of human society. Education is thus, seen as a machinery for driving development, whether materially or humanly. This seems to explain the significant emphasis placed globally on equal access to qualitative education.

United Nations through its education centred arm understand the critical role an educated mass play in the social capital development of the society. Thus “it views education as a means to empower children and adults alike to become active participants in the transformation of their societies. Learning should also focus on the values, attitudes and behaviours which enable individuals to learn to live together in a world characterized by diversity and pluralism” (2011). To underscore the important role of well-articulated philosophy in making this a reality, Bokova reiterated that “philosophy is an art of living together, with due regard to rights and common values. It is the ability to see the world with a critical eye, aware of the viewpoints of others, strengthened by the freedom of thought, conscience, and belief”. “The practice of philosophy is a process benefiting the whole of society. It helps to build bridges between peoples and cultures and heightens demand for quality education for all,” said Irina Bokova, Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).”

The importance of philosophy to education cannot be underestimated. Philosophy enlivens education and challenges it to its mandate of transforming and reshaping the mind. It introduces the critical temper required to make an ultra-reflective and inquiry into the reality of man and his surrounding environment. Many institutions, such as the Catholic Church place premium on the value of Philosophy to education.

The Catholic Church is not an outsider on the issue of education. The Church deploys all the deliberate, systematic, and sustained efforts in both formal and informal educational settings to develop the skills, knowledge, and values needed for life.

In today’s pluralistic society, the Church offers the harmonizing perspective of faith and philosophy to human culture and history. The Second Vatican Council, for instance, declared that it is the religious dimension that makes the Catholic school distinctive. This

religious dimension can be found in (a) the context in which education is delivered, (b) the means by which the personal development of each student is achieved, (c) the relationship established between culture and the faith of the Church in the message of Christ, (d) the fact that all knowledge is informed by and derives its ultimate meaning from the faith within whose context it is pursued. (cf. RDECS paragraph 1). The Catholic school has a single Christian vision, an integrated concept of what makes a fully authentic and mature human being. The educational process is not confined to the curriculum, nor to the academic, technical, artistic and sporting achievements of the school. (cf. FCS).

Consequently the functional nature (Adetunji, Bamidele, Awodele & Ojediran, 2013) of the Nigerian policy of education philosophy as represented in the Nigerian Education policy document (2004) seems to distant it from responding to the various humanistic issues that arises from lack of subsidiarity in administration of education in Nigeria, Poverty, Sustainability of human and natural resources, gender equality (2015) etc.

Thus, this research will explore the various ways in which correlation occurs between NPE with SDGs one hand and NPE with SDC on the other hand, with the primary intention of improving the philosophy of Nigeria's education policy and better reposition it to respond to various humanistic issues of its time.

1.2 Problem Statement

The researchers intend to benchmark the philosophy of Nigeria's education policy as outlined in the introductory part of the Nigeria's education Policy, with two moral standards generally accepted: the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and traditional ethical principles of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church. The purpose is to see whether there are areas where the Nigeria's philosophy of education policy could be improved?

The philosophy of Nigeria's education policy must have a humanistic base, and as such contain the ideals and aspirations of the society. A humanistic base will enable it to foster a more sustainable human and material development index and offer it a place in the comparative scheme of international standard. But arguments abound on whether the policy is clear enough and capable of inspiring the education system to the challenge pose by global standard. The idea of clarity for instance has been questioned, with various researchers arguing that it imported "lock, stock and barrel" foreign philosophical but out of context ideas into the Nigerian educational system which seem to beleaguer the system (Adesina et al., 1983). Whether this contributed to the pragmatic approach of the policy to education, is not yet clear. However, others argue that the contents of the National Policy on Education (including its philosophy) could at best be described as mere objectives of the system (Daramola & Jekayinfa, 2007). This general concern sheds light on the inadequacy of Nigeria's philosophy of policy on education in championing education for the future, and further draws attention to the questions of whether the philosophy inspires the policy to engage the future by being conscious of the realities of its time such as sustainability question? What is its stance on the respect for the dignity of human person? Does it aim for material progress of the human person such as eradication of hunger and

poverty in isolation? How does it view Information technology in its current scheme of things? These questions beg for answers and quickly invite attention to the need to benchmark the Philosophy of Nigeria's education policy with a globally established standard such as (SDGs) and the traditional ethical principle of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church (CSD). SDGs and CSD are respected for their consistent but deliberate engagement with the prevailing realities of their time, without loss of emphasis on the core values that underline the foundation of human society for future preservation.

1.3 Research Aim

To suggest improvements to the NPE, in order to update it to the SDGs and traditional ethical principles, with the primary aim of improving the Philosophy of Nigeria's policy on education. This is because the two principles share some basic themes across, which can be seen to affect the general human population. The strengths contained in the above principles can be greatly used in improving the Philosophy of Nigeria's Policy in Education.

1.4 Research Objectives:

1. To correlate the philosophical principles of Nigeria's education policy with the principles of the United Nations development goals.
2. To correlate the philosophical principles of Nigeria's education policy with the principles of the social doctrine of the Church.
3. To suggest improvements to the philosophical foundations of the Nigerian education policy for the total human development of the Nigerian society.

1.5 Research Questions

The Dissertation will be guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent does the philosophy of Nigeria's Policy on education benchmark with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals?
2. How does the Policy benchmark with the traditional ethical principles of the Social doctrine of the Catholic Church?
3. What Improvements can be made in the policy following the UN Sustainable Development Goals on education and the traditional ethical principles of the social doctrine of the Church?

1.6 Scope and limitations of the dissertation

This research seeks to benchmark Nigeria's policy on education with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals and the traditional ethical principles contained in the Social doctrine of the Catholic Church. Using the Nigeria education policy (NPE, 2004), this research will focus on the introductory part which contains among other things, the philosophy of the policy. The Philosophy of the policy constitutes the base of the research. Thus, the other parts of the policy will not be relevant to this dissertation since they deal more with the structures and curriculum of Nigerian Education system.

Accordingly, the dissertation shall endeavour to benchmark the philosophy of this policy with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and Traditional ethics contained in the social doctrine of the Catholic Church (CSD). UN was chosen due to its globality and its universal aspirations as well as affinity to the Philosophy of NPE. The latter is expedient due to its

philosophical dimension and enduring moral principles (Humanistic) that articulated in accordance with the dynamics of human nature and social economics of human society.

1.7 Significance of the dissertation

The significance of this work is anchored on its prospect of adding to the body of knowledge on philosophy of policy of education in Nigeria and West Africa, when such policy is universalised using relevant global networks. Accordingly, it will make recommendations that will guide the Nigerian Education Authority in framing education policy philosophy that will respond to concrete humanistic issues and further add to the already knowledge of moral philosophy .

1.8 Definitions of key terms

Nigerian Policy on Education: “The National Policy on Education is national guideline for the effective administration, management and implementation of education at all tiers of government. Therefore, the National Policy on Education is a statement of intentions, expectations, goals, prescriptions, standards and requirements for quality education delivery in Nigeria” (NPE, 2004, p. 3).

SDGs: The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), otherwise known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity (UNDP, 2015).

Catholic Social Doctrine, (CSD): The Catholic doctrines on matters of human dignity and common good in society. (Vatican.va, 2006).

1.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher has given the background to the research problem. This was done by outlining the importance of education in any state, and its connection to national development, showing the critical role that philosophical anchorage plays and the implications for human development; and how this connects the societal ideology with the goals and objectives in education. The researcher also mentioned that there are gaps in the current Philosophy of policy on Education of Nigeria and introduced United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Traditional ethics contained in the social doctrine of the Catholic Church as the standard for benchmarking, with the view of improving NPE philosophy. The research objectives and related research questions are also highlighted. The scope is clearly defined and the chapter ends by outlining the significance of the dissertation.

Our attention will now be turned to the literature review which constitutes our chapter two.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature on Nigeria Policy of education philosophy, Social Doctrine of the Church and Sustainable Development goals. It explores multiple arguments that border on the interactions/relationships existing among these subjects.

2.2 Nigeria's Policy on Education Philosophy

The philosophy of Nigerian education policy borders on Realism which in turn constitutes the core of Realist theory of education. According to realism as a philosophy “the ultimate reality is the world of physical objects” (Cohen, 1999). Drawing from the philosophy, a “realist curriculum emphasizes the subject matter of the physical world, particularly science and mathematics. The teacher organizes and presents content systematically within a discipline, demonstrating use of criteria in making decisions. Teaching methods focus on mastery of facts and basic skills through demonstration and recitation” (Ibid. 1999). While this is not succinctly stated, it is evident in the ideas of the philosophy of the policy when put together. A detailed examination of the policy, for instance reveals a certain tilt towards science subjects, anchored on a philosophy that sees “education as a functional tool for facilitating national development, social change and various needs of the society” (2004. p. 1-3). One may be forced into erroneously thinking that this is peculiar to Nigeria. Ikpe (2010) does not quite seem to agree with this. In her essay she maintains that Africa and many other developing countries predicate their education policy on the need for relevance which is further linked to their economics of subsistence and the need to direct their meagre resources towards developmental objectives. Therefore, Ikpe continues, in a situation where disciplines are unable to justify their relevance to the economy and sometimes to

the wider society, there is usually the pressure for government to reduce or completely stop funding such programmes (Ibid. 529).

The issue of national development has always been a subject of great concern to both developed and developing nations of the world. As a result of its importance to the socio-economic and the political well-being of its citizens, no nation has ever failed to place her overall development on the front burner of her policies and programmes. The policies and programmes are expected to touch every facet of societal needs and aspirations in terms of material development. This seems to characterise African countries in general. But does this justify nullity of personal development over choice of material and scientific advancement? It is known that development in any society begins with its human elements, which in turn brings about material progress. Going by Ikpe's logic the realistic nature of Nigeria's philosophy of policy on education should be considered as normal within the scheme of Nigeria's identity as a developing country. To what extent has this helped Nigeria advance as a society? Is it better or worse off with that approach?

As a sovereign entity Nigeria, aspires to attain social, economic and political development. "Thus, Nigeria like most other countries of the world is undergoing rapid social, economic and political reforms" (2004. p.1). As such education is embraced as a veritable tool for the actualisation of this basic fundamental aspiration. In doing so it explores all possible legal and social frameworks as a guide to this quest.

"The Nigerian policy on education is the national guideline for the effective administration, management, implementation of education at all tiers of Nigerian government. As aptly captured in the document the policy will help the Nation align its educational system with her current developmental goals and that of the emergent global village" (2004). Hence the policy document contains the philosophy, goals, aims and objectives of the Nigerian

education system. The Philosophy guiding the policy is anchored on the goals of Nigeria as a country. These goals validate Nigeria as a nation that strides towards a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society; a united, strong and self-reliant Nation; a great and dynamic economy; and a land full of opportunities for all citizens (2004). Logically the philosophy of the policy echoes the national goals as its guiding light. The diagram below shows how the philosophy is informed through the national goals.

Fig 1. Philosophy of Nigerian Education

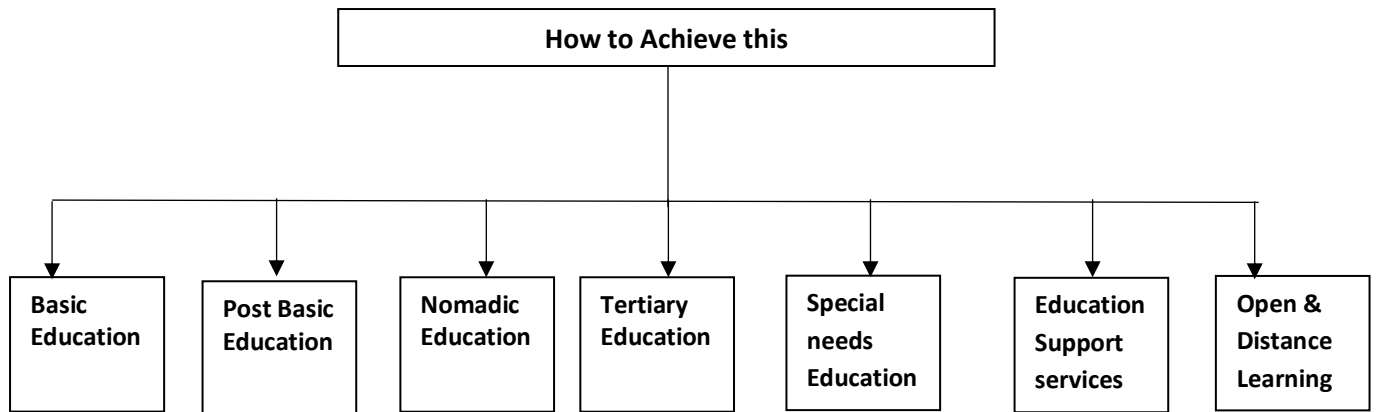


Debate abounds on whether the aforementioned ideals truly constitute the philosophy of the policy or could they at best be defined as the foundation of a philosophy that is non-

existent? According to Olatunji (2015), “there is no definite statement in the said edition of national policy document that shows specifically what the nation’s philosophy of education is. In addition to the unstated philosophy of education, most of the values on which the unstated philosophy of education is based are also vague” (Olatunji, 2015, p.1). From his argument Olatunji seems to pick on the apparent lack of concreteness in articulation of the philosophy of the policy. This according to him further makes it difficult if not impossible to distinguish the philosophy from the basis of the philosophy as outlined in the policy document. Adiele (2006, p.2), disagrees with this view. According to him, there is existence of Nigerian Philosophy of education. This philosophy he maintains draws its thrust from the five national goals. The five national goals lay the foundation for what today had come to be referred to as the Nigerian philosophy of education contained in the Education policy.

Among other things NPE captures the overall spirit, aspirations, goals and ideals of Nigeria as a country. According to the document, the philosophy of Nigeria’s policy on education is based on education as an instrument of national development; promotion of progress and unity; maximising creative potential of the individual for self-fulfilment and general development of the society; the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen; promotion inter-African solidarity and global peace through understanding and finally freedom, equality and Justice. The policy document echoes its readiness to foster education for all. Through the following areas it viewed education as the potential tool for accomplishment of the national goals. Thus it sets up a clear plan of implementation as stated below:

Fig 2: Education as a tool



Thus, the national goals constitute the basis upon which the philosophy is conceptualised. An understanding of the national goals paves the way to an understanding of the Philosophy of the policy from which it draws its character. Many aspects of the policy resonate with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which like NPE seek to foster solidarity and Partnerships as enablers for Social, economic and environmental progress etc.

The development of any nation, to a large extent is predicated on its philosophy of education. This implies designing an adequate philosophy of education which must take into consideration all the essential ingredients that would be almost flawless. This could be possible in some countries that have their philosophy as an off-shoot of an ideological revolution, e.g., Bolshevik's Russia, Fidel Castro's Cuba and Mwalimu Julius Nyerere's Tanzania (Akinpelu, 2005). Akinpelu further states that this is quite different in the case of Nigeria that follows the British gradual evolutionary approach, which even borrowed from most western philosophies.

2.2.1 Nigeria's Philosophy of Education background

The national curriculum conference of 1969 (Adaralegbe, 1969) marked a turning point in the history of Nigeria education. The conference under the auspices of the Nigerian Educational Research Council (NERC) was not only concerned with curriculum development, the objectives of education, among others, but also with the task of reviewing the old national goals and identifying new ones (Nwafor, 2009). The conference did not ignore the function of education in preparing Nigerians for the task of living in the 20th century and beyond. According to Ezewu, Fasokun, Akpe & Oluduro (1981), “three statements of belief about the role of education emerged. They are: the belief in the value of individual child and in the development of all Nigerian children for the development of society; the belief in giving every child equal educational opportunity so that he can develop according to his ability and the belief in a functional education that can promote the development of an effective and informed Nigerians.

Nwafor (2014) maintains that the conference remains a watershed in the educational landscape of Nigeria because from the totality of its recommendations a national philosophy of education, among others evolved, as a result of subsequent seminars and conferences. He mentions many (Adesina, Akinyemi & Ajayi, 1983) who have questioned the appropriateness and adequacy of “Nigerian’s Philosophy of Education.” arguing that the participants of the various conferences imported “lock, stock and barrel” foreign philosophical ideas into the Nigerian educational system”.

Daramola & Jekayinfa, (2007) described the contents of the National Policy on Education (including its philosophy) as mere objectives of the system, while other critics maintain that the eclectic nature of Nigeria’s philosophy of education makes implementation of the educational policy on which it is based relatively difficult and unrealistic (Nwafor, 2007).

Okoh (2005) observes that “Nigeria cannot boast of her own philosophy of education because she is yet to have a national ideology. This is because as much as the National Policy on Education being reviewed three times since the first edition in 1977, 1981, 1998 and 2004, in each edition, some key elements are either lost or rendered contradictory, or inconsistent”.

Olatunji (2015, p.394) observes that the policy document cannot specifically answer the question of “what is its basic philosophy of education”, which according to him the aspects of the national policy document are ambiguous. He goes ahead and provides the example of Section 1, subsection 3 of Nigeria’s National Policy on Education (2004) which states that: “Nigeria’s philosophy of education is based on the following set of beliefs:

- a. Education is an instrument for national development and social change;
- b. Education is vital for the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria;
- c. Education maximizes the creative potentials and skills of the individual for self-fulfilment and general development of the society;
- d. Education is compulsory and a right of every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, ethnic background and any peculiar individual challenges; and
- e. Education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society.”

While the set of beliefs on which Nigeria’s philosophy of education is based are clearly itemized in the national policy document on education (2004) there is however no particular statement to show what the philosophy of education itself is. Yet there are foundations that lay the ground for what has come to be understood as the Philosophy of Nigeria’s education. The root of this foundation can be traced to the Nigeria’s national goals as a country. This seems to explain why Olatunji (2015) argues “in addition to the

unstated philosophy of education (in the policy document), most of the values on which the unstated philosophy of education is based are also vague. This further opens the room for an improvement of what today considered the philosophy of the education policy, despite its eclecticism. Thus, the SDGs and CSD principles are earmarked as a guide for the improvement process.

2.3. SDG and Nigeria's education

The need to situate NPE philosophy on a universally accepted philosophy informed in part, our adoption of the SDGs. The 17-point United Nations Sustainable Development Goals constitutes a primary part of a resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on the 25th September 2015, titled “Transforming the world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (2015, p1). The document is a blue print that seeks to strengthen “universal peace in larger freedom and recognises the global challenge of poverty”. As outlined in the introduction of the document, “the Goals and targets are the result of over two years of intensive public consultation and engagement with civil society and other stakeholders around the world, which paid particular attention to the voices of the poorest and most vulnerable” (2015, p2). Apart from fostering global partnership, the resolution highlights in a very fundamental way 17 goals and targets that are expected to drive social, environmental and economic development for the next 15 years. Below is a poster depicting the 17 goals.

Fig 3. Sustainable Development Goals poster



Source: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

2.3.1 Background

With the dawn of new millennium, the need for an urgent articulation of the goals guiding the direction of human development index became necessary. After the endorsement of the UN Millennium declaration, a meeting of experts was called, the purpose of which was to formulate the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As an outcome of the meeting, the goals were projected as an add-on to a report from the Secretary General to the UN General Assembly (UNGA). The acceptance of the report was followed by the logic that the UNGA had assented to the MDGs (Wisor 2012, Hulme & Scott 2010).

“This was an unconventional beginning, as the new agenda was challenged almost immediately by international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), with the

complaint that the MDGs had been devised in a top-down manner by international civil servants based in New York rather than through a democratic process of consultation with civil society” (Fukuda-Parr & Hulme 2011, p. 24). The open criticism of the manner of lack of inclusiveness in which the MDGs was endorsed seems to inform UN’s democratic approach in the formulation of the goals that replaced the MDGs (Ibid).

As reported in the UN website (2015), three years before, the then UN secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon, “appointed a 27-man panel that was co-chaired by the former British Prime Minister, David Cameron”. This panel was mandated with the responsibility of advising on the global development plan, which was expected to span beyond 2015. According to the United Nations website, “Ban Ki-moon, in July 2012 appointed a 27-member high-level panel, co-chaired by the British Prime Minister David Cameron, to advise on the global development framework beyond 2015” UN Secretary General(2015). “The 2013 report of the panel toed a different path compared to the MDGs, as it detailed wide ranging efforts of the panel in “consulting over 5000 civil society organizations to global alliances – working in about 120 countries across every major region of the world” UN, Secretary-General, (2015).

According to Sengupta (2016) “the high-level panel suggested twelve illustrative goals and targets as possible replacements for the MDGs”, and recommended putting “sustainable development at the core” of the post-2015 agenda”. This he maintained “signalled a decisive shift in the official discourse on the MDG-replacements from the idea of ‘human development,’ which had inspired the MDGs, to that of ‘sustainable development” (Ibid). This logic strikes a chord with the aspirations of the famous Brundtland report (1987).

Consequently, the Heads of State and Government and High Representatives, met at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 25 to 27 September 2015 on new global sustainable development goals as follows:

Table 1. Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable Development Goals	
Goal 1	To end poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2	To end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3	To ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages
Goal 4	To ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 5	To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 6	To ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
Goal 7	To ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
Goal 8	To promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
Goal 9	To build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 10	To reduce inequality within and among countries
Goal 11	To make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Goal 12	To ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Goal 13	To take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
Goal 14	To conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
Goal 15	To protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Goal 16	To promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Goal 17	To strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

The Brundtland Commission defined sustainable development as the:

“Ability to make development sustainable—to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland report, 1987).

The concept of sustainable development does imply limits “—not absolute limits but limitations imposed by the present state of technology and social organization on environmental resources and by the ability of the biosphere to absorb the effects of human activities” (Brundtland report, 1987. p.8).

Thus, under the heading “what is to be sustained,” the board identified three major categories—nature, life support systems, and community—as well as intermediate categories for each, such as Earth, environment, and cultures.

Similarly, there were three quite distinct ideas about what should be developed: people, economy, and society. Much of the early literature focused on economic development, with productive sectors providing employment, desired consumption, and wealth. More recently, attention has shifted to human development, including an emphasis on values and goals, such as increased life expectancy, education, equity, and opportunity. Finally, the Board on Sustainable Development also identified calls to develop society that emphasized

the values of security and well-being of national states, regions, and institutions as well as the social capital of relationships and community ties.

There was ready agreement in the literature that sustainable development implies linking what is to be sustained with what is to be developed, but here, too, the emphasis has often differed from extremes of “sustain only” to “develop mostly” to various forms of “and/or.” Similarly, the time period of concern, ambiguously described in the standard definition as “now and in the future,” has differed widely. It has been defined from as little as a generation—when almost everything is sustainable—to forever—when surely nothing is sustainable.

Still another way to define sustainable development is in how it is measured. Indeed, despite sustainable development’s creative ambiguity, the most serious efforts to define it, albeit implicit in many cases, come in the form of indicators. Combining global, national, and local initiatives, there are literally hundreds of efforts to define appropriate indicators and to measure them.

2.3.2 Key factors

Although the seventeen goals, seem an upgrade to the MDGs, yet the fewer number (8) of the MDGs offers it a vantage point over the SDGs. This further explains why the MDGs became a communication success. The long list however seems to better represent the length and breadth of sustainable global development.

In addition to tackling the mandate of the MDGs, SDGs extend to areas that were hitherto ignored. This is more evident in the area of poverty, where an interest in the latter is conjoined with a keen interest in governance. This it appears highlights global governance processes such as access to justice, transparency etc. as critical in reducing global poverty to its barest minimum. Accordingly devoting some goals to Sustainability is remarkable

given the impact that urban migration and development of cities have on climate change. (For a good review of the limitations of the MDGs, see Fehling, Nelson, and Venkatapuram 2013).

While the above improvements in the SDGs offers glimmer of hope to many, there are still areas that give concern to some. “For example, while there is a welcome shift in the (proposed) agenda’s flagship poverty goal, from the language of reduction to that of eradication, and from the focus on poverty and hunger to that of ‘poverty in all its forms,’ no measure of poverty, other than the money-metric of \$1.25 per day, a 2005 purchasing power index, is mentioned” (Pogge & Sengupta 2015). A critical look at the metric reveals its failure to capture the hardships that constitute poverty in the real world, such as child labour, chronic undernourishment, illiteracy, exposure to violence, and lack of access to safe drinking water, shelter, sanitation, and essential medicines. This contradicts the SDG-1’s core aspiration. A similar concern seems to resonate across SDGs 8 and 13. Thus “Amartya Sen, argued with Sudhir Anand (1994) for the integration of human development with “the safeguarding of their fruits for the future, but also stressed that this safeguarding of future prospects has to be done without giving up the efforts towards rapid human development and the speedy elimination of widespread deprivation of basic human capabilities which characterize the unequal and unjust world in which we live” (Anand & Sen, 1994).

Brown (2016) reiterates that “Agenda 2030’s commitment to human rights is affirmed in its preamble and reinforced by several proclamations that the SDGs are “grounded in” the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights treaties, and “other instruments such as the Declaration on the Right to Development.”

Sengupta (2016) notes that essential resources, such as food and water, are not characterized as human rights. Moreover, despite being much stronger than the MDG on gender equality, SDG-5 “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” does not overtly recognize the human rights of women and girls. He further observes another oversight that, while children are identified as a vulnerable group to whom we owe special responsibilities, there is no reference to children’s rights. Recognizing the human rights of children would have brought the new agenda into alignment with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and entitled children to protection from a host of violations, such as being tried and punished as adults in courts of law. Sengupta (2016) further assert that “this vein is the failure (in SDG-1.4, for instance) to recognize community land rights, including the rights of indigenous peoples to land, even though a large amount of land in developing countries is held by communities based on a shared culture or heritage rather than by individuals”.

In further analysing the SDGs, Sengupta (2016) notes that the most striking omission, is the absence of references to some of the most important provisions of the ICCPR, such as the freedoms of thought, expression, and association. In addition, the principles of equality and non-discrimination received explicit recognition in the SDGs, i.e. SDG-10.

Some of goals, e.g. SDG-3.4, seek to reduce mortality from non-communicable diseases and promote mental health. There is a clear paradigm shift in the language being used from “reducing” to “eradicating” and “ending all forms everywhere”. This signifies a change indicating global recognition that poverty, hunger, torture, discrimination, and other violations which are morally unacceptable.

During the Open Working Group’s intergovernmental consultation sessions, developing countries, led by the Group of 77 (G77) and China, referenced the principle of common

but differentiated responsibilities and argued that “while the SDGs should be made relevant to all countries, the roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the goals should be differentiated in relation to the different national realities, capacities, and levels of development of developing countries and also to national policies and priorities “ (Muchhala, 2014). This demand, led to the inclusion of nationally determinable targets and language on respecting national policy e.g. in SDG-17.

A general analysis by Pogge & Sengupta (2015, p585-586) reveals that SDG-17, which was intended to be a more robust version of the paltry MDG-8, ended up suffering from its key defect. The world’s most powerful agents – affluent states, international organizations, multinational enterprises – are once again shielded from any concrete responsibilities for achieving the SDGs.

In summary Sengupta (2016), notes that “the main strength of the SDGs is that they provide official, global recognition to a broad spectrum of achievements, besides economic growth, that have come to be associated with the term ‘development,’ such as sustainability, gender equality, poverty eradication, and participatory decision-making”, thereby bringing to life by a new agenda that should be marvelled at.

Omoyibo & Agbonzeke (2010, p.284) state that “the former Secretary of United Nations Organisation, Boutros, B. Ghali, in May, 1994, issued a document which categorizes development into five dimensions which are: peace, economy, environment, social studies and democracy”. “In the Nigerian context, these components are missing as democratic processes are absent and the government in power abuses the rule of law” (Orj & Maekae, 2013, p.314); While Oke (2004, p.31) stresses that sustainable national development starts with the ability of a nation to satisfactorily provide the food and fibre that are needed by its people and industry and Himmelstrend (1984, p.18-21) has supported this argument by

stating that food security must be given adequate attention in order solve the problem of mass hunger in Africa.

Hunger underlines one of the humanities crises today stresses United Nations Development Program (2015). Thus to avoid reducing man below his dignity, the Catholic church through his Social doctrine push for standards that preserve the dignity of man and also foster his wellbeing. These ideas are well documented in her *Compendium for the social doctrine of the Church* (2005). The CSD is characterised by its commitment to the ethical and social principles designed to foster and enrich the anthropology of man, both personally and within the social context. Thus this in part explains the decision of these researchers to adopting CSD as one of the guidelines in benchmarking NPE philosophy. We now turn our attention to the CSD and Nigeria's education.

2.4 CSD and Nigeria's education

The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2005) is designed to be a user-friendly synthesis of the principles of CSDC; the *Compendium* has proven to be an extremely practical and substantial resource. It was completed by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace at the request of the Servant of God, Pope John Paul II.

In a certain sense, the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church has been called "the Church's best kept secret." Why is this case? Before the publication of the *Compendium*, perhaps because the social teachings of the popes were responding to specific situations (such as the circumstances of the workers at the end of nineteenth century examined by Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891), a well-structured exposition of the social doctrine of the Church did not exist.

It was not until 1999 that Pope John Paul II, in his exhortation *Ecclesia in America* (1999), promised a document that would synthesize the social doctrine of the Church. He then asked the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace to prepare such a document—the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*—which was first released on October 25, 2004.

Faced with the triumphs and challenges of a globalized and increasingly secularized world, the late Pope John Paul II wrote in his 1998 Encyclical *Fides et ratio*, that “human beings *can* come to a unified and organic vision of knowledge” (1998, n. 85). The Church has a rich body of teaching that reveals central truths to believers and nonbelievers alike. These truths teach about who we are as individuals and as a human family.

The principles of Catholic social doctrine are part of the intellectual tradition of the Church. As explained by theologian and former president of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, Monika Hellwig (2000), this tradition of the Church is a “2000-year-old conversation between the Church and the world, a dialogue between the Christian community of believers and the culture in which it finds itself.” The tradition itself is broader and older than the formal institution of the Catholic university, but in large part the Catholic university has served as the steward of this “conversation,” preserving, transmitting, and developing it by engaging the questions and challenges of its own time and place.

Hellwig (2000) explained that the Catholic Intellectual Tradition can be thought of as comprising two main components: (1) Content, and (2) A Way of Doing Things. The *Content* refers to the classic treasures to be cherished, studied, and handed on; the *Way of Doing Things* is the outcome of centuries of experience, prayer, action, and critical reflection. I will explain each below in light of Hellwig’s description.

The *Content* of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition cherishes, develops, and employs a valuable treasury of “texts.” These include written texts, musical texts, art, customs and rituals, as well as modes of thought, expression and action.

The *Way of Doing Things* is the concrete response to the content that is treasured—the way of approaching knowledge that is the outcome of centuries of experience, prayer, action, and critical reflection. There are values and principles that are “characteristically Catholic” but at the same time shared by many religious traditions.

2.2.2 2.4.1 The Principle of Respect for Human Dignity

The first principle is *human dignity*. Catholic higher education has a unique opportunity and responsibility to implement this principle: Every human being is created in the image of God and redeemed by Jesus Christ and therefore is invaluable and worthy of respect as a member of the human family. Consequently, every person is worthy of respect simply by virtue of being a human being. This is the bedrock principle of Catholic social teaching. Every person - regardless of race, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, employment or economic status, health, intelligence, achievement or any other differentiating characteristic – is worthy of respect. It is not what you do or what you have that gives you a claim on respect; it is simply *being* human that establishes your dignity. Given that dignity, the human person is, in the Catholic view, never a means, always an end. “People can never forfeit their right to be treated with respect because God, not us, assigns it” (Himes, 2001, p.30).

The body of Catholic social teaching opens with the human person, but it does not close there. The principle of human dignity gives the human person a claim on membership in a community, the human family. Related to this seminal notion of human dignity is the

rich sense of human rights, enumerated in a number of social encyclicals but principally in *Pacem in terris* (1963).

Catholic human rights theory differs from a purely liberal theory in insisting on an important set of social and economic rights. This includes what are called positive rights to satisfy basic needs and encourage prosperity, and not just the negative rights to liberty from coercion and state restraints. In addition, CSD closely joins rights to responsibilities because of the social nature of human dignity. Humans are interdependent beings, radically rather than incidentally (Coleman, 2005, p.16).

Reflection on the inherent and equal dignity of every person allows for an authentic vision of the value and limits of human freedom. The *Compendium* states that “man rightly appreciates freedom and strives for it passionately. Rightly does he desire and guide, by his own free initiative, his personal and social life, accepting personal responsibility for it. Freedom not only allows man to modify the state of things outside of himself, but also determines the growth of his being as a person through choices consistent with the true good” (Compendium, n, 135).

2.2.3 2.4.2 The Principle of the Common Good

John Paul II wrote in *Ex corde Ecclesiae* that Catholic universities were “born from the heart of the Church,” and therefore their mission is to serve the Church and society (1990, p.11). This affirmation of the role of Catholic higher education calls to mind another principle of Catholic social doctrine highlighted in the *Compendium* and the key to the service to the Church and to the world: the *common good*. CSD espouses the notion that the common good is central to the good of the society, a well-functioning state, and to the international order.

The common good is understood as the social conditions that allow people to reach their full human potential and to realize their human dignity. The social conditions presupposed by Catholic teaching foster respect for the person, the social wellbeing and development of the group and the maintenance by public authority of peace and security. What constitutes the common good is always going to be a matter for debate. The absence of any concern for or sensitivity to the common good is a sure sign of a society in need of help. As a sense of community is eroded, concern for the common good declines. A proper communitarian concern is the antidote to unbridled individualism, which, like unrestrained selfishness in personal relations, can destroy balance, harmony and peace within and among groups, neighbourhoods, regions and nations. A community is genuinely healthy when all people, not only one or several segments, flourish. Dostoevsky (1861) summarized it this way: “The degree of civilisation in a society can be judged by entering its prisons”. “Every social group must take account of the needs and legitimate aspirations of other groups, and even of the general welfare of the entire human family” (*Gaudium et Spes: Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World* p.26).

Wilken, (2003) described the relationship between Christianity and social and political life in St Augustine’s *City of God*. In this work Augustine reflected the growing maturity of Christian thinking and provided an example of “how one Christian thinker thought about the community of Christians, the Church, in relation to the society in which he lived” (*Ibid*, 189). Unlike other treatises on the common good, “Augustine did not defend an idea or a set of beliefs; instead, he promoted the existence of a real community, ordered in a specific way, with a specific purpose, way of life, and form of worship” (*Ibid*).

2.2.4 2.4.3 *The Principle of Solidarity*

Catholic social teaching proclaims that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live. We are one human family. Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity means learning that 'loving our neighbour' has global dimensions in an interdependent world. The principle of preferential option for the poor and vulnerable captures the spirit of solidarity. For this reason these researchers subsumed it under the latter. Comparatively the principle of solidarity is broader in scope.

Solidarity, assumes that human beings have real and pressing obligations to come to the aid and support of others, even when these others do not have formal and explicit rights to such aid. The *Compendium* states that “the social nature of human beings does not automatically lead to communion among persons, to the gift of self” (*Compendium*, n. 150.). The principle of solidarity functions as a moral category that leads to choices that will promote and protect the common good. As observed by Pope John Paul II: “Solidarity is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all” (Pope John Paul II, 1987, *On Social Concern* 38).

Because of pride and selfishness, man discovers in himself the seeds of asocial behaviour and impulses leading him to close himself within his own individuality and to dominate his neighbour. It is out of love for one's own good and for that of others that people come together in stable groups with the purpose of attaining a common good (*The Encyclicals of John Paul II*, no, 38.6). Such a notion of solidarity in the Catholic tradition is aligned with

several other principles, such as the preferential option for the poor, subsidiarity, and the Catholic theories of justice.

The Principle of Preferential Option for the Poor and Vulnerable applies in a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, the catholic tradition recalls the story of the last judgement (Mt 25.31-46) and instructs “to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first”. The United States ‘Conference of Catholic Bishops put it well: “The needs of the poor take priority over the desires of the rich; the rights of workers over the maximisation of profits; the preservation of the environment over uncontrolled industrial expansion” (1994).

2.2.5 2.4.4 The Principle of Subsidiarity

The word subsidiarity comes from the Latin word *subsidium* which means help, aid or support. This principle deals chiefly with the responsibilities and limits of government, and the essential roles of voluntary associations (Byron, 1998). The principle of subsidiarity puts a proper limit on government by insisting that no higher level of organization should perform any function that can be handled efficiently and effectively at a lower level of organization by human persons who, individually or in groups, are closer to the problems and closer to the ground. Oppressive governments are always in violation of the principle of subsidiarity; overactive governments frequently violate this principle. It also means being wide-eyed, clearly determining the right amount of help or support that is needed to accomplish a task or to meet an obligation: “not too much” (taking over and doing it for the other: thereby creating learned helplessness or overdependence) and “not too little” (standing back and watching people thrash about, thereby increasing frustration and

perhaps hopelessness). “Instead of ‘the less government the better’, the principle might be better summarised as ‘no bigger than necessary, no smaller than appropriate’”, (Himes, 2001, p.55).

The Principle of Respect for Human Life where by every person, from the moment of conception to natural death, has inherent dignity and a right to life consistent with that dignity. Human life at every stage of development and decline is precious and therefore worthy of protection and respect. It is always wrong directly to attack innocent human life. The Catholic tradition sees the sacredness of human life as part of any moral vision for a just and good society. An implication of the first principle is that every person, from the moment of conception to natural death has an inherent dignity and a right to life consistent with the dignity that is ours as human beings. The Catholic tradition sees the sacredness of human life as part of any moral vision for a just and good society.

The Principle of Association is where the person is not only sacred but also social. How we organize our society - in economics and politics, in law and policy - directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. The centrepiece of society is the family; family stability must always be protected and never undermined. By association with others - in families and in other social institutions that foster growth, protect dignity and promote the common good - human persons achieve their fulfilment. The human person is not only sacred, but also social. Humans as simply put by Himes (2001, p.30) “are our true selves when we relate well to others, not when we are isolated individuals”.

2.2.6 2.4.5 The Principle of Stewardship

The Catholic tradition through *The Principle of Stewardship* insists that we show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. The steward is a manager, not an owner. In an era of rising consciousness about our physical environment, our tradition is calling us to a sense of moral responsibility for the protection of the environment - croplands, grasslands, woodlands, air, water, minerals and other natural deposits. Stewardship responsibilities also look toward our use of our personal talents, our attention to personal health and our use of personal property. Bryon observes that “We show respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. “We have a responsibility to care for the world’s goods as stewards and trustees, not primarily, let alone merely, as consumers” (1998). The Queensland Catholic Bishops issued a Pastoral Letter on the Great Barrier Reef in June 2004. They write: “We are all in the process of learning how to better safeguard creation, respect the rhythms of nature and live more sustainably. In the interests of planetary health we are all called to participate in respectful dialogue, to leave a lighter ecological footprint and firmer spiritual one, so that generations yet unborn will inherit a world, in the words of the Pope, ‘closer to the design of the Creator’ (2004, p.16).

The Principle of Human Equality is whereby Equality of all persons comes from their essential dignity. While differences in talents are a part of God's plan, social and cultural discrimination in fundamental rights are not compatible with God's design.

Treating equals equally is one way of defining justice, also understood classically as rendering to each person his or her due. Underlying the notion of equality is the simple principle of fairness; one of the earliest ethical stirrings felt in the developing human person is a sense of what is "fair" and what is not. Given that every human being is entitled to respect and dignity merely because she/he has been created in the image and likeness of

God, it follows that there is a radical equality among all human beings. After all, as Cladis (1999) points out: “competition is alien within God”.

2.2.7 2.4.6 The Principle of Participation

People have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable. Without participation, the benefits available to an individual through any social institution cannot be realized. The human person has a right not to be shut out from participating in those institutions that are necessary for human fulfilment (Byron, 1998). This principle applies in a special way to conditions associated with work. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected – the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property, and to economic initiative. Every person has a **right**, indeed a **duty** to participate in shaping a more just and human society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable. “All people need to take an active role in the development of socio-economic, political and cultural life. They should be shapers of history (subjects), not just passive recipients of other people’s decisions (objects), (St Columbian’s Mission Society *Catholic Social Teaching*).

The principles of **human dignity, the common good, solidarity** and **participation** are a few of the principles that must guide a society worthy of the human person. Alongside these principles, the Church’s social doctrine also indicates fundamental values such as truth, freedom, justice, and love. These are rightly called social values, and are inherent in the dignity of the human person, whose authentic development they foster. Putting these

values into practice is the sure and a necessary way of obtaining personal perfection and a more human social existence. “They constitute the indispensable point of reference for public authorities, who are called to carry out substantial reforms of economic, political, cultural, and technological structures and the necessary changes in institutions” (*Compendium*, n. 150).

This dissertation seeks to benchmark the philosophy in the NPE against the ones for CSD, and will focus only on 6 principles of the CSD, i.e.

1. The Principle of Respect for Human Dignity
2. The Principle of the Common Good
3. The Principle of Solidarity
4. The Principle of Subsidiarity
5. The Principle of Stewardship (Common Destiny of the Goods of the Earth)
6. The Principle of Participation.

From the foregoing, the NPE together with the SDG and CSD have a common interest on the issues pertaining to the dignity of the human person and how this person ought to be educated, nourished and preserved. Different authors have different views on the status of NPE philosophy, nevertheless there is unanimity on the basic ideas that it fosters. Some of these ideas, as our review showed, are reflected on the basic principles of SDG AND CSD, while others are not.

This dissertation will not focus on the principle of preferential option for the poor and vulnerable; the principle of respect for human life; and the principle of human equality as

its principles are not directly linked to education philosophy. The parts of these principles that are aligned to philosophy in education are covered already in the other principles.

This leads to Chapter 3, which will deal with the research methodology and procedure to be adopted for this intellectual exercise.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter three describes the procedure and methods that will be used in the dissertation to achieve the three objectives identified in Chapter one. This chapter covers the research design, data collection instruments, data analysis and presentation.

3.1 Research Design

Qualitative researchers now have the option to choose from an increasing array of theoretically and technically sophisticated methods. Research design is the plan and structure of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions (Cooper & Schindler, 2007). The purpose of qualitative research is to promote greater understanding of not just the way things are, but also why they are the way they are (Amin, 2005).

The research method to be used is critical analysis of texts, but using a realistic method and a personalistic anthropology, also referred to as personalism. In its various strains, personalistic philosophy always underscores the centrality of the person as the primary locus of investigation for philosophical, theological, and humanistic studies. It is an approach which regards or tends to regard the person as the ultimate explanatory, epistemological, ontological, and axiological principle of all reality, although these areas of thought are not stressed equally by all personalists and there is tension between idealist's, phenomenological, existentialist's, and Thomist's versions of personalism (Barker-Plummer, 2009).

Though personalism comprises many different forms and emphases, certain distinctive characteristics can be discerned that generally hold for personalism as such. These include an insistence on the radical difference between persons and non-persons and on the irreducibility of the person to impersonal spiritual or material factors, an affirmation of the

dignity of persons, a concern for the person's subjectivity and self-determination, and particular emphasis on the social (relational) nature of the person.

In order to compare the philosophies contained in the NPE, SDG and SCD we have made a matrix relating each of them, which we shall compare in detail in the core of the dissertations as shown in table 1 below.

The matrix will be derived from the literature review, this will provide the basis for the variables to be used by employing the following format.

Nigeria Policy on Education	UN Sustainable Goals
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Table 2, NPE vs SDG matrix

Nigeria Policy on Education	Social Doctrine of the Church
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Table 3, NPE vs CSD matrix

3.2 Data Collection Methods

The dissertation will adopt a literature based approach (Gay & Airasian2006). The Review of related literature involves the systematic identification, location, and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem. The term is also used to describe the written component of a research plan or report that discusses the reviewed documents. The literature for this exercise shall be selected based on primary, secondary and tertiary sources. The primary documents are the critical texts that constitute the corner stone of our analysis: Nigeria policy on education (2004), United Nations 17 sustainable development goals (2015) and Compendium of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church (2005). According we shall leverage on texts that reflects on the primary sources which are relevant to our work. These documents can include articles, abstracts, reviews, monographs, dissertations, other research reports, and electronic media. The relevant

tertiary texts will be leveraged on when the need for clarity and depth arise. These shall include texts that reflect on the secondary resources.

The literature review has several important purposes that make it well worth the time and effort. The major purpose of reviewing the literature is to determine what has already been done that relates to the topic, giving the understanding and insight, one needs to place the topic within a logical frame. Put simply, the review tells one what has been done and what needs to be done. Previous studies can provide the rationale for the research hypothesis, and indications of what to be done can help in justifying the significance of the dissertation.

This will be used to leverage on the documents such as National Policy on Education, UN's Sustainable Development Goals and the Social doctrine of the Church as its primary resources. Thus, this is a qualitative research that will depend on critique, analysis, logic and fundamentally, comparative and contrasting method as veritable tool for data collection.

Accordingly, it shall other tools serve the overall purpose of this research. Thus, it shall extract basic principles from the Philosophy of National Policy on Education with the primary intention of benchmarking them with similar principles in Sustainable Development Goals and ethical principles in the social doctrine of the church. This will be outlined in a matrix in form of a table where each principle will be stated against a correlating principle from both SDG and CSD.

3.3 Data analysis

Our data analytical technique will be aligned to content analysis of NPE and SDGs on one hand; then NPE and CSD on the other. The efforts will be carried out in separate tabular representations for the purpose of clarity. The researchers to seek relationships between

various themes; Implications for policy or practice will be derived from the data, and interpretation sought of findings from previous studies. This will then be compared against CSD and SDG.

“Since qualitative research is an interpretative and subjective exercise, and the researcher is intimately involved in the process, not aloof from it”, (Pope & Mays 2006). They further outline the following processes of deriving data and therefore findings.

1. Familiarization with the data through review, reading
2. Organization of data
3. Identification of themes
4. Development of provisional categories
5. Exploration of relationships between categories
6. Development of theory and incorporation of pre-existing knowledge
7. Testing of theory against the data
8. Summary writing

3.4 Ethical Considerations

The dissertation takes a literature review of different publications; therefore it will not require ethical considerations as it will not deal directly with human beings.

Chapter 4: Presentation of Research Findings

4.1 Introduction

The researchers will endeavour to benchmark the United Nations development goals and the Church's social principles against the philosophy of Nigeria's philosophy of education policy.

4.2 Contrasting SDGs and NPE Philosophy

Nigeria's policy of education lays the road map for the mission, "goals, prescriptions, standards and requirements for quality education delivery in Nigeria" (2004.pii). Accordingly, it outlines "the guideline for the effective administration, management and implementation of education at all tiers of government" (2004, p ii). Thus, in order to understand length and breadth of NPE's philosophy, it's fundamental to appreciate how it benchmarks with globally accepted best practices.

Table 4: NPE vs SDGs

Nigeria Policy on Education	UN Sustainable Goals
NPE 1. Functional and relevant to the needs of the society & National Development	Goal 8. To promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all Goal 9. To build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
NPE 2 Individual development	Goal 1. To end poverty in all its forms everywhere Goal 2. To end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture Goal 3. To ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages Goal 6. To ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

NPE 3 Education for All	Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
NPE 4 Sustainability	Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
NPE 5 International development	Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development
NPE 6 Equality	Goal 5. To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

Sources: SDG's, 2015, NPE, 2004

The matrix represents the crux of the NPE philosophy of education, the corresponding national goals and the United Nations' 17 sustainable development goals. For the sake of clarity and easy analysis, we have reduced the 17 SDGs to five broad categories. The categories are selected based on the similarity of the primary mission of the respective goals. This broad nomenclature, the researchers believe will enhance understanding of the benchmarking process. The sub-categorizations are based on the broad nomenclature used by the United Nations Development program (2015).

Table. 5: SDG Categories

SDG-A Social Development	SDG-B P Development	SDG-C Education	SDG-D Sustainability	SDG-E International Development	SDG-F Equality
Goal 8 Economic growth	Goal 1 Poverty	Goal 4 Education for all	Goal 7 Energy	Goal 17 Global	Goal 5 Gender
Goal 9 Infrastructure	Goal 2 Hunger		Goal 11 Cities	Goal 16 Peace	Goal 10 Countries
	Goal 6 Water		Goal 12 Consumption		
			Goal 13 Climate		
			Goal 14 Oceans		
			Goal 15 Forests		

Sources: UNDP, 2015 & Researchers' Nomenclature

2.2.8 NPE-1 & SDGs-A: Social Development

NPE 1	SDGs-A: Social Development
Functional and relevant to the needs of the society & National Development	<p>Goal 8. To promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</p> <p>Goal 9. To build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation</p>

SDG's-A and NPE-1 are similar in more ways than one. Both are concerned with what goes on in the work place and how that affects economic development, innovation and growth. Secondly, they share the similarity of having concrete strategies on how to realise their set objectives and targets.

According to the NPE-1, Nigeria's "education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society" (2004 p. ii). This guiding philosophy embodies Nigeria's goal of "ensuring periodic review, effectiveness and relevance of the curriculum at all levels to meet her needs and the world of work" (Ibid. ii). It is not

surprising that Nigeria is in need of a dynamic education philosophy, given its position as “the giant of Africa, with a GDP of over 500 billion dollars that makes her the largest economy in Africa” (Abuja-ng.com, 2017). As noted by Oshikoya (2008), “when compared to other African countries, the private sector in Nigeria is relatively well-established and diversified. Historically, the high cost of doing business, due to factors including corruption, administrative barriers, and poor infrastructure, has hampered the development of the private sector in Nigeria”. Thus, it is imperative that Nigeria evolves a policy that will enable it tackle problems of poor infrastructure, Skill-gap and innovation. To sustain and nourish a developing economy such as this requires an education philosophy that is dynamically robust and constantly redirecting its focus in line with the challenges of the time; an education system that prepares the youth for the challenge at hand, be it work or innovation. This seems to explain why the policy further highlights various education cadres that seek to address the needs of the society at different levels such as Basic education, Vocational schools, Tertiary education, Technical education etc. NPE, (2004, p. 4-40).

Contrastingly, SDGs-A, makes case for innovation, empowerment and wellbeing of workers. As noted in Goal 8, “according to the International Labour Organization, more than 204 million people were unemployed in 2015. Thus the “SDGs promote sustained economic growth, higher levels of productivity and technological innovation. Encouraging entrepreneurship and job creation are key to this, as are effective measures to eradicate forced labour, slavery and human trafficking” United Nations Development Programme, (2015). Similarly goal 9 complements goal 8, in that it lays emphasis on Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure. Essentially it maintains that “technological progress is also key to finding lasting solutions to both economic and environmental challenges, such as providing new jobs and promoting energy efficiency” (ibid, 2015).

NPE-1 and SDGs-a sufficiently correlate in that both are interested in addressing social problems such as poor skills development, unemployment, Infrastructural development, innovation, etc. Furthermore, while they recognize all these variables as existential social problems, they seem to disagree on the mode of solving it. NPE-1 adopts the route of education and curriculum development but SDGs-A is more confident in job creation and fostering entrepreneurship. However, this apparent disagreement can only be complementary, since it takes a dynamic education policy to fashion a relevant curriculum that lays foundation for innovation, Self-employment and adequate skills needed at the workplace.

2.2.9 NPE-2 & SDGs-B: Personal Development

NPE 2	SDGs-B: Personal Development
Individual development	Goal 1. To end poverty in all its forms everywhere Goal 2. To end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

The broad category under which SDG-B belongs is Personal development. This as reflected in the matrix will be benchmarked with NPE-2. The aim is to establish whether NPE-2 can be improved and extent at which it correlates with the SDGs-B.

Nigeria's development as a nation is anchored on the personal development and empowerment of her citizens. This empowerment according to the National policy takes different dimensions. Accordingly, the NPE-2 sees education a tool necessary for "maximizing the creative potentials and skills of the individual for self-fulfilment and general development of the society" (2004, p. ii). This philosophy predates the document's goal of developing the individual into a morally sound, patriotic and effective citizen"

(Ibid, p. iii) and further underlines its mission of “total integration of the individual into the immediate community, the Nigerian society and the world” (Ibid. p iii). Thus, the instruction mode is expected to “ensure respect for the worth and dignity of the individual as well as moral and spiritual principles in inter-personal relations” (Ibid. p. ii).

Contrastingly, SDG-B also focuses on personal development of the individual; as such it makes bold statement on the problem of Poverty, Hunger and Water. According to United Nations Development program report (2015), “eradicating poverty in all its forms remains one of the greatest challenges facing humanity. While the number of people living in extreme poverty dropped by more than half between 1990 and 2015 – from 1.9 billion to 836 million – too many are still struggling for the most basic human needs. Globally, more than 800 million people are still living on less than US\$1.25 a day, many lacking access to adequate food, clean drinking water and sanitation.” Thus goal 1 makes strong commitment to “end poverty in all its forms everywhere” (ibid. 2015). Simultaneously Goal 2 “aims to end all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030, making sure all people – especially children – have access to sufficient and nutritious food all year round. This involves promoting sustainable agricultural practices: supporting small scale farmers and allowing equal access to land, technology and markets” (Ibid). Relatively Goal 3 makes strong claim to “achieve universal health coverage, and provide access to safe and affordable medicines and vaccines for all. Supporting research and development for vaccines is an essential part of this process as well” (Ibid).

A close look at the realities presented by the NPE-2 and SDG-B reveals a sharp contrast. While the latter a more concrete approach to resolving the global social problems, the former is vague and therefore deviates from addressing the more concrete humanitarian crises, (poverty, Hunger, poor health etc.) that Nigeria is struggling with. NPE fails offer

a concrete direction to its cause of personal development. The concrete dimension of the SDGs 1, 2 & 3 gives it more focus and better hope of achieving its set objective. Thus it evident that NPE-2 needs to be updated in this light, if it hopes to be more impactful and result oriented. By and large, we can reach the conclusion that while both variables have interest in development of persons, the goal implementation strategies differ. NPE-2 can be improved by giving it a more concrete character, as embodied in SDGs-B.

2.2.10 NPE-3 & SDG-C: Education for all

NPE 3	<i>2.2.11 SDG-C: Education for all</i>
Education for All	Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

The researcher aims to analyse the perspectives of NPE-3 & SDG-C on education and see whether the former can be improved. Education is a veritable tool for human development.

According to the UN Declaration of Human Rights Document (und); “Everyone has the right to education, and therefore education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms”. This makes it inalienable rights to every person regardless of race or human existential condition.

As a very important process in social and national development, it occupies a central place in national discourse. Underlining the very important role of education in human society, Orji & Maekae (2013) maintains that “education is a crucial sector in any nation. Being a major investment in human capital development, it plays a critical role in long-term productivity and growth at both micro and macro levels”. This they further noted, explains why the state of education in Nigeria continues to be our national discourse at all levels”.

The idea of “education for all” is well documented in the philosophy of the Nigerian policy of education. According to NPE-1(2004) “education is compulsory and a right to every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, colour, ethnic background and any peculiar individual challenges”. This philosophy ensures that Nigeria aligns with the United Nations mandate, that “Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages.

Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit” UNCHR, (und). NPE (2004) details the different levels of education within the Nigerian education system as a way of ensuring “provision of equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education within and outside the formal school system” (Ibid).

Accordingly, SDG-4 as demonstrated in the matrix captures the Goal 4 aspiration for ensuring equal access to education for every human person. Thus, as noted in the document “the aim of goal 4 is to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (2015).

Relatively, there is a strong link between NPE-3 and SDG-4, in that they both share in the common mission of ensuring qualitative and inclusive “education for all” which is in line with the UN declaration of education as a fundamental right to all men regardless of race or human condition.

2.2.12 NPE-4 & SDG-D: Sustainability

NPE 4	SDG-D: Sustainability
Sustainability	<p>Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all</p> <p>Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</p> <p>Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</p> <p>Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</p> <p>Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</p> <p>Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</p>

The concern for the continuity of life in the present ecosystem is no doubt generating serious attention on concept of sustainability. According to United States Environmental protection Agency, (2017) “Sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. To pursue sustainability is to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony to support present and future generations.” Human beings have the responsibility to nurture their immediate environment such that it will maximize its potential and set it forth for future regeneration. Thus, for man to maintain his existence on earth, he is invited as a key player to preserve and responsibly manage the resources surrounding him. It is important to state that Man’s sustainability depends so much on the sustainability of the Ecosystems- Terrestrial, Water bodies etc. Globally countries are united in the struggle to sustain the ecosystem. This is evident in the rate of proliferation of organizations and platforms championing this case. The roadmap for this campaign was laid out in a Brundtland Report, also known as “Our Common Future” (1987). According to the Report (1987), Sustainable development is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of

future generations to meet their own needs." As noted by Karaman (2012) "the basic philosophy brought about by Sustainable Development is to determine present and future prosperity under the guidance of economic and social criteria and to ensure the rationalistic use of natural resources while enhancing human efficiency". Furthermore Karaman maintained that "the report is one of the seminal environmental documents of the 20th century. The Commission's brief was to re-examine the critical environment and development problems on the planet and to formulate realistic proposals to solve them; to create a 'global agenda for change'" (Ibid). Thus Brundtland report as part of its objectives laid the path for the subsequent sustainable development campaigns that will characterize the dawn of new millennium and beyond.

Maintaining the culture of the campaign set out in Brundtland Report, SDGs 7, 11,12,13,14 & 15 make a strong commitment to ensuring the sustainability of the ecosystem. Goal 7 is committed to ensuring expansion in the generation of clean energy and responsible consumption among industries and buildings. As documented by United Nations Development Program (2015), "ensuring universal access to affordable electricity by 2030 means investing in clean energy sources such as solar, wind and thermal". The ultimate target is to expand infrastructure that will encourage the use of affordable clean energy consumption among developing countries. This it is believed will encourage and help the environment. Similarly goal 11, commits to sustainability of cities in the wake of urban rising urban migration. Thus "making cities safe and sustainable means ensuring access to safe and affordable housing and upgrading slum settlements. It also involves investment in public transport, creating green public spaces, and improving urban planning and management in a way that is both participatory and inclusive" (Ibid). In the same vein, Goal 12 makes case for sustainable consumption. It is convinced that "the efficient management of our shared natural resources, and the way we dispose of toxic waste and

pollutants, are important targets to achieve this goal. Therefore “encouraging industries, businesses and consumers to recycle and reduce waste is equally important, as is supporting developing countries to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption by 2030” (Ibid). In a more fundamental way goal 13 calls for a climate action. There is a growing concern that global warming is causing long lasting effect on our ecosystem, giving rise to natural disasters such as the recent Hurricane Harvey in Houston, Texas (CNN.com, 2017). It is well documented, that the annual average losses from earthquakes, tsunamis, tropical cyclones and flooding, amount to hundreds of billions of dollars, requiring an investment of US\$6 billion annually in disaster risk management alone” (Ibid). The aim of goal 14 is “to sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems from pollution, as well as address the impacts of ocean acidification. Enhancing conservation and the sustainable use of ocean-based resources through international law will also help mitigate some of the challenges facing our oceans” (Ibid). This goal raises concern to the over exploitation of the oceanic life due to the dependence of over three billion people on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods which results to a drastic reduction to the level at which they can produce sustainable yields (Ibid) while goal 14 dwells more on oceanic life, Goal 15 makes case for life on Land. It “aims to conserve and restore the use of terrestrial ecosystems such as forests, wetlands, drylands and mountains by 2020. This it plans to do by halting deforestation as a way of mitigating the impact of climate change” (Ibid).

The above effort highlights the importance of conservation of our natural habitat and biodiversity as part of man’s heritage. Thus, little wonder why it is central in the global discourse on sustainability of human race. In obvious reflection of the panoramic stretch of this awareness, one is forced to wonder: how does Nigeria’s education system participate in this all important global discourse?

Nigeria as a developing country forms part of the larger core that should be fronting this campaign. The reason for this is bifurcated: first, Nigeria as a country in Africa (3rd world region) lacks the wherewithal to drive the technology necessary for clean and affordable energy supply. Secondly, as a developing country, there is still substantial need for quality education and awareness critical to appreciating the length and breadth of discourse of this nature. In reality, being the giant of Africa, Nigeria's education system ought to embrace this challenge both at the philosophy and policy level. Surprisingly, an analysis of the philosophy of Nigeria's education policy reveals a huge gap in this direction.

As reflected in figure 2, there is nothing in the philosophy of the policy document that suggests Nigeria's readiness neither to participate nor to tackle the global issue of sustainability through her education system or curriculum. Even though of national development as part of the goal of education, is made in the policy yet it remains too vague to be understood as making commitment to sustainable development. Thus to be considered as relevant and also a key player in the issues of global importance, Nigeria needs to improve the philosophy of her education policy in this regard.

This is more important in this era when the force of globalization is erasing national boundaries and forcing nations into a global village that is neatly interconnected. Thus, an event that happens in one corner of the world reverberates in another, making it difficult for a country to operate in isolation.

There is no link between Nigeria's philosophy of education and the SDGs in the area of sustainability of earthly resources. Hence the philosophy of the policy should be improved in this regard to be able to make Nigeria (giant of Africa) a participant in a discourse that reflects on an issue that affects nations, globally.

2.2.13 4.2.5 NPE-5 & SDGs-E: International Development

NPE 5	SDGs-E: International Development
International development	<p>Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</p> <p>Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development</p>

It is evident that “the world today is more interconnected than ever before. Improving access to technology and knowledge is an important way to share ideas and foster innovation” (2015). In the face of sustainable crises, nations are challenged to reach out to one another in order to combat what has come to be regarded as a common enemy. Globalization has made the need for collaborative efforts that foster international development more compelling. Thus SDG 17 “aims to enhance North-South and South-South cooperation by supporting national plans to achieve all the targets. Promoting international trade, and helping developing countries increase their exports, is all part of achieving a universal rules-based and equitable trading system that is fair and open, and benefits all”.

Contrastingly, while there is no express commitment in the national policy to ensuring global partnership in the area of Sustainability, equality, Sustainability, social and personal development, yet it makes reference to fostering inter-African solidarity, as one of the goals of her education policy. The length and breadth of this solidarity is not clearly stated. In its specific goal of education, the policy makes a faint willingness of collaborating with development partners, such as private sector, NGO, and local communities to support education (2004). Just like in its commitment to functional education, there is lack of clarity as to the concrete detail or nature of this partnership and how it hopes to achieve the set global practices in this regard.

Nigeria’s “big brother” role in Africa is well documented. As noted by Oni & Taiwo (2016) “Nigeria’s leadership role within the West-African sub-region and on the continent of Africa is incontestable given her tremendous and unparalleled financial and human capital contributions to the freedom, peace and stability of brother and sister nations in Africa”. Thus, while it is evident that Nigeria plays a vital role in international development of other emerging countries, especially in Africa, there is gnawing gap in NPE, which fails to capture this apparent partnership as a matter of education policy.

Consequently, our analysis reveals that for NPE to be relevant in addressing the bigger problem confronting Nigeria and the world in general, it is important that the education policy detail the place of Nigeria’s education system in scheme of global partnership for International development. Thus, the aspirations of the SDG’s should be captured in the policy to reflect its (policy’s) readiness to dealing with the challenges of its time in collaboration with other countries of the world.

2.2.14 NPE 6 & SDGs-F: Equality

NPE 6	2.2.15 SDGs-F: Equality
Equality	Goal 5. To achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

SDGs goals 5 & 10 make a strong commitment to equality. Even though both focus on Equality, there is still a point of divergence. While goal 5 channels its focus achieving “gender equality and empower all women and girls”, goal 10, commits to achieving “reduction in inequality within and among countries”.

According to United Nations Development Program (2015), “ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls is not only a basic human right, but also crucial to accelerating sustainable development. It has been proven time and again, that empowering women and girls have a multiplier effect, and helps drive up economic growth and development across the board”. It is well documented that women and children remain the most vulnerable globally. “There are still huge inequalities in the labour market in some regions, with women systematically denied equal access to jobs. Sexual violence and exploitation, the unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work, and discrimination in public office, all remain huge barriers” (Ibid). In the same vein “income inequality is a global problem that requires global solutions” (Ibid). Developing countries, in which Nigeria constitute a member, make up the bulk of the countries with a huge problem of income disparity. “In developing countries, inequality has increased by 11 percent if we take into account the growth of population. The poorest 10 percent earn only between 2 percent and 7 percent of total global income” (Ibid).

Similarly, NPE-6 makes case for equal access to education. Thus, the philosophy of the policy (2004) maintains that education is compulsory and a right to every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, colour, ethnic background and any peculiar individual challenges”. This is given credence to the structure and Organization of Nigerian education cadres in which different forms of learning process are introduced to accommodate those with minor/major learning disabilities.

Contrastingly NPE seem silent on the issue of gender parity. There is absence of a special attention given to empowerment of women. Thus, this silence opens a huge gap between NPE’s and SDGs commitment to equality.

On this note, it is imperative that NPE, in addition to giving equal education access to all, also leaves room for woman empowerment by creating an environment that encourages woman education.

The benchmarking process reveals that there are instances in which SDGs and NPE linked and also areas in which the NPE is shortcoming. Thus, to complete this chapter attention will be channelled to benchmarking the six traditional ethical principles of Catholic Social Doctrine with the philosophy of Nigeria's education policy.

4.3 NPE vs CSD

This part will compare Nigeria's philosophy of education with the traditional ethical principles of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church. As stated earlier, this research will compare NPE with six relevant CSD principles. This is because the selected six are more relevant to the area of education and the topic being discussed. The second reason for this selection is that the selected six broadly, directly or indirectly captures the aspirations of the other principles. Thus, this effort is being made to avoid repetition of sort.

The following matrix outlines the pattern that will be used in the benchmarking process.

Table 5: NPE vs CSD

Nigeria Policy on Education	Social Doctrine of the Church
<p>NP. 1.</p> <p>Individual & National Development</p>	<p>CSD 1</p> <p>The principle of the common good</p> <p>This is central to the society, a well- functioning state,</p>

Functional and relevant to the needs of the society and national development.	and to the international order. It is also understood as the social conditions that allow people to reach their full human potential and to realize their human dignity.
NPE 2. Individual development	CSD 2 Dignity of Life The Principle of Respect for Human Life where by every person, from the moment of conception to natural death, has inherent dignity and a right to life consistent with that dignity.
NPE 3 Education for All	CSD 3 The Principle of Participation Whereby people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all. Without participation, the benefits available to an individual through any social institution cannot be realized. The human person has a right not to be shut out from participating in those institutions that are necessary for them
NPE 4. Equality	CSD 4 The Principle of Subsidiarity Deals with the responsibilities and limits of government, and the essential roles of voluntary associations.
NPE 5. Unity	CSD 5 The Principle of Stewardship Insists that we show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Being conscious about the physical environment, and having a sense of moral responsibility for the protection of the environment - croplands, grasslands, woodlands, air, water, minerals and other natural deposits.
NPE 6	CSD 6

Inter African solidarity	The Principle of Solidarity This principle teaches 'loving our neighbour' which has global dimensions in an interdependent world. It assumes that human beings have real and pressing obligations to come to the aid and support of others, even when these others do not have formal and explicit rights to such aid.
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2.2.16 4.3.1 NPE-1 & CSD-1: Common Good

NPE 1. Individual & National Development	CSD 1. The principle of the common good
Functional and relevant to the needs of the society and national development.	This is central to the society, a well- functioning state, and to the international order. It is also understood as the social conditions that allow people to reach their full human potential and to realize their human dignity.

Both NPE-1 and CSD-1 are interested in overall development of the society. They believe that sustaining the good of the society is imperative to ensuring the happiness of man.

According to the NPE-1, Nigeria’s “education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society” (2004.pii). This guiding philosophy embodies Nigeria’s goal of “ensuring periodic review, effectiveness and relevance of the curriculum at all levels to meet her needs and the world of work” (Ibid...ii). It is not surprising that Nigeria is in need of a dynamic education philosophy, given its position as “the giant of Africa, with a GDP of over 500 billion dollars, that makes her the largest economy in Africa” (Abuja-ng.com, 2017). As noted by Oshikoya (2008), “when compared to other African countries, the private sector in Nigeria is relatively well-established and diversified. Historically, the high cost of doing business, due to factors including corruption, administrative barriers, and poor infrastructure, has hampered the development of the private sector in Nigeria”. Thus, it is imperative that Nigeria evolves a

policy that will enable it tackle problems of poor infrastructure, Skill-gap and innovation. To sustain and nourish a developing economy such as this requires an education philosophy that is dynamically robust and constantly redirecting its focus in line with the challenges of the time; an education system that prepares the youth for the challenge at hand, be it work or innovation. This seems to explain why the policy further highlights various education cadres that seek to address the needs of the society at different levels such as Basic education, Vocational schools, Tertiary education, Technical education etc. (2004, pp 4-40).

In the same vein, CSD-1 makes strong case for the creation of common good in the society, insisting that the common good should be the ultimate goal in the ordering of the society. Within the logic of CSD-1, “this principle is central to the society, a well- functioning state, and to the international order. It is also understood as the social conditions that allow people to reach their full human potential and to realize their human dignity”. As noted by Jaede (*und*) “the concept of the common good has played a prominent role throughout the history of Western political thought and can be traced back to ancient Greek philosophy. Aristotle (384–322 BC) in particular is widely regarded as a foundational thinker on this subject”. For Aristotle, Jaede maintains “the city-state is a particular type of community, and that, like all communities, it is “established for the sake of some good”. He specified that the good of the city-state is the most authoritative good, which encompasses all other goods. Aristotle argued that the purpose of political communities is to secure not merely the conditions of living, but those of living well”. Similarly Argandona (2011), pointed out “the formation of any community requires a common good, because the end of the city is living well. The object of the political community is good actions, not only life in common. For that reason common good is constituted first of all by virtue i.e. by that which in stable way develops human beings in accordance with virtue”. Ultimately this implies that the

moral status of the subjects is very fundamental in establishing the common good in a society. “Thus, the common good relates the good of the people insofar as they are part of a community; and to the good of the community in so far as it is oriented towards the people that are its members (Argandona, 2011).”

Viewing the “functional and relevant to the needs of a society” (NPE-1) in light of the “principle of the common good” (CSD-1), one notices a strong correlation between the two. The CSD-1 principle of common good corroborates NPE-1 commitment to a functional and relevant education philosophy that has the primary goal of nurturing students into “morally and upright individuals” (NPE, 2004). Thus, when an individual is of sound mind, and morally upright, they will tend to do good or the right thing. If many individuals within a society take this stand, then it is possible to have a nation that is morally upright and devoid of corruption and other vices that undermine common good. This is the point that Argandona (2011) is making, that common good is achieved when individuals make commitment to living in a more virtuous way. This in turn reduces unbridled individualism, like unrestrained selfishness in personal relations that are antithetical to the realisation of the common good in the society.

Consequently NPE-1 needs to be more specific on how to ensure that an individual gets the right foundation to become morally sound and effective, thereby also ensuring development within the nation (Common good).

2.2.17 4.3.2 NPE-2 & CSD-2: Dignity of life

NPE 2	CSD 2. Dignity of Life
Individual development	The Principle of Respect for Human Life where by every person, from the moment of conception to natural death, has inherent dignity and a right to life consistent with that dignity.

These two variables make case for the proper management and training of the human person in such a way that validates his dignity as a rational being with multiple capacities for self-realisation. While CSD-2 ensures and canvases for respect of the dignity of the human person, NPE-2 makes commitment to the nurturing of the potentials in such a way that underlines his dignity as a person.

Consequently, every person is worthy of respect simply by virtue of being a human being. This is the bedrock principle of Catholic social teaching. Every person - regardless of race, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, employment or economic status, health, intelligence, achievement or any other differentiating characteristic – is worthy of respect. It is not what you do or what you have that gives you a claim on respect; it is simply being human that establishes your dignity. Given that dignity, the human person is, in the Catholic view, never a means, always an end. “People can never forfeit their right to be treated with respect because God, not us, assigns it” (Himes, 2001, p.30).

The body of Catholic social teaching opens with the human person, but it does not close there. The principle of human dignity gives the human person a claim on membership in a community, the human family. Related to this seminal notion of human dignity is the rich sense of human rights, enumerated in a number of social encyclicals but principally in *Pacem in terris* (Pope John XVIII, *Pacem in terris*).

Nigeria’s development as a nation is anchored on the personal development and empowerment of her citizens. This empowerment according to the National policy takes different dimensions. This includes education at different cadres, as specified in the policy. Accordingly, the NPE-2 sees education as a tool necessary for “maximizing the creative potentials and skills of the individual for self-fulfilment and general development of the

society” (NPE, 2004, pii). This philosophy predates the document’s goal of developing the individual into a morally sound, patriotic and effective citizen” (Ibid, p iii) and further underlines its mission of “total integration of the individual into the immediate community, the Nigerian society and the world” (Ibid. p iii). Thus, the instruction mode is expected to “ensure respect for the worth and dignity of the individual as well as moral and spiritual principles in inter-personal relations” (Ibid. p. ii).

Along the same line, the Principle of Respect for Human Life where by every person, from the moment of conception to natural death, has inherent dignity and a right to life consistent with that dignity, underlines the special dimension of the uniqueness of the human person. Thus, a respect for the dignity can only lay the foundation for nurturing and realisation of the creative potential of the human person.

The two variables are fundamentally correlative in that both point towards the same objective and therefore recognise the intrinsic value of the human dignity. There seems to be an unalloyed agreement that between the two, to the effect that recognising and respecting man’s dignity paves the way to understanding how to unleash his creative potential and therefore turn him into an important social development (common good) agent.

2.2.18 4.3.3 NPE-3 & CSD-3: Participation

NPE 3	CSD 3. The Principle of Participation
Education for All	Whereby people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all. Without participation, the benefits available to an individual through any social institution cannot be realized. The human person has a right not to be shut out from participating in those institutions that are necessary for them

According to Byron (1998) “the human person has a right not to be shut out from participating in those institutions that are necessary for human fulfilment (including

education). This principle applies in a special way to conditions associated with work. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected – the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property, and to economic initiative. Every person has a right, indeed a duty to participate in shaping a more just and human society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable. “All people need to take an active role in the development of socio-economic, political and cultural life. They should be shapers of history (subjects), not just passive recipients of other people’s decisions (objects), (St Columbian’s Mission Society Catholic Social Teaching). This principle has more relevance in the area of Work and Education, highlighting each person’s right participates in the good of education and work, as a way of contributing to the social development of the society of which he or she is an active member.

Consequently, the above teaching of the Catholic Church aligns with Nigeria’s education policy’s aspiration to ensuring “provision of equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education within and outside the formal school system” (2004) regardless of race, gender or physical condition (Ibid). The policy further highlighted its goal of “totally integrating the individual into the immediate community, the Nigerian society and the world” (2004). By ensuring total integration of all citizens into the larger society, Nigerian education policy underlines its intention to ensuring active collective participation of her citizens in the area of education and work.

Accordingly, there is a strong correlation between the two principles in their commitment to ensuring the participation of the individual in the social institutions of the society in

which he/she is a member. Without participation, the benefits available to an individual through any social institution cannot be realized.

2.2.19 4.3.4 NPE 4 & CSD 4: Subsidiarity

NPE 4	CSD 4. The Principle of Subsidiarity
Equality	Deals with the responsibilities and limits of government, and the essential roles of voluntary associations.

This principle deals chiefly with the responsibilities and limits of government, and the essential roles of voluntary associations (Byron, 1998). In the context of CSD, the principle of subsidiarity puts a proper limit on government by insisting that no higher level of organization should perform any function that can be handled efficiently and effectively at a lower level of organization by human persons who, individually or in groups, are closer to the problems and closer to the ground. Oppressive governments are always in violation of the principle of subsidiarity; overactive governments frequently violate this principle. It also means being wide-eyed, clearly determining the right amount of help or support that is needed to accomplish a task or to meet an obligation: “not too much” (taking over and doing it for the other: thereby creating learned helplessness or overdependence) and “not too little” (standing back and watching people thrash about, thereby increasing frustration and perhaps hopelessness). “Instead of ‘the less government the better’, the principle might be better summarised as ‘no bigger than necessary, no smaller than appropriate’”, (Himes, 2001, p.55). This seems to make subsidiarity, a function of equality i.e. a respect for, and belief in the other’s capacity to contribute to the pot of common good according their assigned capacity, and depending on them to do such.

NPE-4, in this light fosters equality and subsidiarity in broad sense. As stated ab initio Treating equals equally is one way of defining justice, also understood classically as rendering to each person his or her due. Underlying the notion of equality is the simple

principle of fairness; one of the earliest ethical stirrings felt in the developing human person is a sense of what is "fair" and what is not". Thus ensuring justice, as a manifestation of equality is another way of making subsidiarity. By recognising the justifiable role of all stakeholders in the scheme at stake, an attempt is made at facilitating subsidiarity.

Accordingly, Nigerian policy of education under the philosophy of equality and total involvement of all stakeholders makes room for an integrated devolution of responsibilities among the key stakeholders: The Government, Communities (Family) and the Private sector. This is aptly captured in the policy document. According to the policy document, the administrative machinery for national education system shall be based on the following cardinal principles: a) *Shared responsibility for the funding and management of basic education as provided for in the constitution*; b) *Close participation and involvement of the communities in the administration and management of their schools*; c) *Appropriate devolution of educational functions and responsibilities to States, FCT and Local government*" (2004, p.41). This gives a semblance of respect for subsidiarity principle as championed by the Catholic Social Doctrine. There is a clear attempt by the policy formulators to outline the respective areas of operation among the three tiers of the government in Nigeria, while almost silently mentioning the important role of the community (Private sector inclusive) in the management of education delivery in Nigeria.

One may argue that the use of community in the policy lacks precise or concrete definition as it does little to paint the picture of families, who are the ones that are socially and educationally responsible for the children. Thus, there is need to categorically stipulate the place of the family in this subsidiarity arrangement. Again, the post-modern age seems to be witnessing a gradual withering of communitarian voice and on the other hand the rise of the voice of the family, is it nuclear or extended.

A critical observation reveals that while it may be true that the place of the family in the postmodern era is becoming more vital, it can also be maintained that the family has never lost its role in shaping the nature and mode of education curriculum in a democratic set up. Thus, the voice of the family is still very much heard in those social groupings such as Parents Teachers Association etc., which is very prominent across societies that cherish and promote education for the development of human capital. Secondly the family still exercise its duty to educate by providing the initial basic moral foundation that lays the path for the outcome of the formal school education and lifelong learning.

By and large, while it is clear that Nigeria's philosophy of equality for all, expressed through its policy of education correlates with the CSD's subsidiarity principles, there is still room left in the policy for specifically outlining the respective roles of the Government, Non-Governmental Organisations, Private sector practitioners and more importantly, the family, in the subsidiarity scheme.

2.2.20 4.3.5 NPE 5 & CSD 5: Stewardship of Earth Resources

NPE 5.	CSD 5. The Principle of Stewardship
Unity	Insists that we show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Being conscious about the physical environment, and having a sense of moral responsibility for the protection of the environment - croplands, grasslands, woodlands, air, water, minerals and other natural deposits.

Although the researchers benchmarked NPE 5, which makes case for Unity, and CSD 5 which argues for the stewardship of the earth resources, there seems to be parameter for comparison. This is done to further highlight the gap in the NPE with regard to sustainability of the earth resources.

As noted earlier in the literature review, the Catholic tradition through The Principle of Stewardship insists that we show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation.

The steward is a manager, not an owner. In an era of rising consciousness about our physical environment, our tradition is calling us to a sense of moral responsibility for the protection of the environment - croplands, grasslands, woodlands, air, water, minerals and other natural deposits. Stewardship responsibilities also look toward our use of personal talents, our attention to personal health and our use of personal property. Bryon (1998) observes that "We show respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. We have a responsibility to care for the world's goods as stewards and trustees, not primarily, let alone merely, as consumers". The Queensland Catholic Bishops issued a Pastoral Letter on the Great Barrier Reef in June 2004. They write: "We are all in the process of learning how to better safeguard creation, respect the rhythms of nature and live more sustainably. In the interests of planetary health, we are all called to participate in respectful dialogue, to leave a lighter ecological footprint and firmer spiritual one, so that generations yet unborn will inherit a world, in the words of the Pope, 'closer to the design of the Creator'" (2004, p.16). This concern for the future based on the activities of the present is conspicuously missing in the NPE document. The idea of Unity as reflected in the policy points towards inculcating national unity, values and consciousness. Could the idea of national consciousness as used in this context translate to respect and stewardship of the earth resources? Is Nigeria through her education policy conscious of the idea of sustaining earth resources or educating to ensure that? Going back to the National goals that informed the philosophy, there seems to be nothing that points to that.

Thus it stands to confound that an education policy that seeks "total integration of the individual into the immediate community, Nigerian society and the world" (2004), is missing out on the major global discourse dominating the world in which it exists. What hope does it offer then to her claim of educating for the future?

Clearly it is evident that the philosophy of NPE will be incomplete, without a concrete commitment to participating through education, in the table that discusses and adumbrates the most pressing issue of global concern; an issue that has the prospect of defining the prospect of human sustainable existence.

2.2.21 4.3.6 NPE 6 & CSD 6: Solidarity

NPE 6	CSD 6. The Principle of Solidarity
Inter African solidarity	This principle teaches 'loving our neighbour' which has global dimensions in an interdependent world. It assumes that human beings have real and pressing obligations to come to the aid and support of others, even when these others do not have formal and explicit rights to such aid.

There is a commitment to the idea of solidarity among men, between the two principles.

CSD-6, for instance, proclaims that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live. We are one human family. Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity means understanding that 'loving our neighbour' has global dimensions in an interdependent world.

Solidarity, assumes that human beings have real and pressing obligations to come to the aid and support of others, even when these others do not have formal and explicit rights to such aid. The Compendium of the catechism of the Catholic Church states that “the social nature of human beings does not automatically lead to communion among persons, to the gift of self” (n. 150.). The principle of solidarity functions as a moral category that leads to choices that will promote and protect the common good. In Pope John Paul II’s words, “Solidarity is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering

determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all” (Pope John Paul II, 1987).

Similarly, NPE-6 makes strong case for solidarity, not only in Nigeria, but across Africa. The manifestation of this worldview seems to give credence to the tag-Giant of Africa, which Nigeria has worn as a cloak for many decades now. As aptly captured in NPE “part of NPE’s philosophy (enshrined in the National goals) is to promote inter-African solidarity and world peace” (2004). It remains unclear how the policy intends to transmit this through its curriculum; however there no doubt that it aspires more broadly towards this ideal.

While it is evident that both variables promote solidarity, but they seem to do that at different levels. NPE-6 fosters this ideal only as part of the overall general philosophy of Nigeria as a sovereign nation. It is silent on how the education policy participates in making this a reality. To this extent, these researchers are convinced that NPE-6 can take a cue from the piece-meal approach of CSD-6, in fashioning its idea of solidarity (whether nationally or internationally) while at the same time leveraging on the critical importance that the knowledge of the human nature plays in ensuring that common good is realised. This is more significant when it is considered in the light of John Paul II’s assertion that “because of pride and selfishness, man discovers in himself the seeds of asocial behaviour and impulses leading him to close himself within his own individuality and to dominate his neighbour. It is out of love for one’s own good and for that of others that people come together in stable groups with the purpose of attaining a common good” (*John Paul II, “Sollicitudo rei socialis, no, 38.6*).

Conclusion

In this chapter, we benchmarked the NPE philosophy against SDGs and CSD principles in separate tabular representations. We did this by utilising the basic philosophical principles of NPE, matched them with SDGs and CSD principles respectively. This analysis reveals that Nigeria's policy of education philosophy, though adequate in some areas, regrading education, still struggles in the face of the realities of serious contemporary discourse on fundamental issues that affect man and threaten to put a limit to his collective existence.

The benchmarking process reveals that NPE should be improved in many directions in order to better prepare it for education for the future. In chapter 5, the researcher will discuss the results of the benchmarking process done in chapter 4. The discussion will be conducted with the primary objective of answering the research questions outlined in the introduction part of this dissertation.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings

5.1 Introduction

The researcher has identified the key philosophies in the NPE and analysed them with the basic principles in Sustainable Development Goals and Traditional ethical principles of Catholic Social Doctrine. The aim of this chapter is to discuss the findings of the analysis done in chapter four.

The discussion will be conducted in such a way as to answer the three research questions guiding this intellectual effort. To find out this, the researcher will answer the following questions. 1. To what extent does the philosophy of Nigeria's Policy on education benchmark with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals? 2. How does the Policy benchmark with the traditional ethical principles of the Social doctrine of the Catholic Church? and 3., What Improvements can be made in the policy following the UN Sustainable Development Goals on education and the traditional ethical principles of the social doctrine of the Church? Thus, at the end of this chapter, the researchers would have succeeded in providing answer to the aforementioned research questions.

5.2 To what extent does the philosophy of Nigeria's Policy on education benchmark with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals?

The benchmarking process revealed startling results about the relevance and adequacy of the Philosophy of Nigeria's policy on education as against United Nations' sustainable development goals. The researcher discovered that Nigeria's policy on education shows signs of strong correlation in some areas such as: "social development" and "education for all"; partial correlation in "Personal development" and "Equality". There is absolutely Zero

correlation in the area of sustainability and International Development. Social development under SDGs articulates Goal 8.

On the issue of social development, NPE-1 matches SDGs-A in its aspiration for the development of persons through education. Both are interested in addressing social problems such as skill-gaps, unemployment, Infrastructural decay, dearth of innovation etc. While they accepted the aforementioned as existential problem, there seem to be a subtle disagreement on the strategy of solving them. NPE-1 believes in using education as tool for resolving the problem, which seems to diametrically oppose SDGs-A's preference for an approach that directly fosters entrepreneurship. What initially looks like a disagreement turns into a complementarity when the researcher found out NPE's commitment to entrepreneurship education. Besides it takes a dynamic education policy to adapt itself to the needs of its time and create an enabling environment for innovation, self-employment and adequate skill-set needed at the work place. Thus to this extent, NPE and SDGs correlate and therefore leave no room for the improvement of the other. Similarly there is a strong correlation of NPE and SDGs in the area of facilitating education for all. Relatively there is a strong correlation between NPE and SDGs, in that both share in common the mission of ensuring qualitative and inclusive education for all, in accordance with the UN declaration of education as a fundamental right to all men regardless of race or human condition.

Hence it is easy to conclude that the NPE does not need improvement against the SDG's in these areas.

Furthermore, despite the absolute correlation witnessed in the areas of Social development and Education for all, there seems to be a partial correlation in the area of "Personal Development" and "Equality" in that where one is more general in approach, the other is

more concrete and particular. Under SDGs, Personal development articulates Goals 1, 2 and 6 while Equality articulates goals 5 and 10.

Regarding Personal development for instance, NPE tended to adopt a more general approach in its commitment to the course and thus seem to side step in the process the more concrete humanitarian issues such as hunger, poverty, ill-health etc. It fails to offer a concrete direction to challenge of personally developing the citizens, who ironically constitute the anchorage of the social development that the Nigeria aspires. On the hand the SDGs gives more hope of achieving its set objectives. It outlines the various areas of basic personal needs such as health, poverty, hunger, education etc. As such, they (SDGs) are better informed on how to deploy resources and strategy in actualising the aspirations. Hence, even though NPE commits to personal development in its philosophy, yet there is need to adopt a more concrete approach in line with the SDGs, whereby the curriculum is formulated to reflect the systematic steps for dealing with the personal development issues. Apart from giving it a focus, this will also enhance implementation process.

A similar trend is seen in the subject of Equality. Although both NPE and SDGs make bold claim to equality of all persons regarding education, social infrastructure etc., yet NPE seems silent on the question of gender equality. Thus there is a conspicuous absence of special attention given to women. The question of gender parity is gaining global audience as women and children are considered the most vulnerable in the society today. The SDGs are committed to achieving gender parity in all areas of human endeavour by 2030. The contribution of women to the human capital development cannot be over emphasised. Thus the apparent silence of NPE on the question that currently dominates global discourse opens a huge gap that needs to be filled. It is imperative for NPE to make special mention of its commitment to ensuring gender parity in the curriculum. This will leave room for women empowerment, by creating an environment that encourages women development.

By so doing, NPE can be strengthened through alignment to the standard already set by the SDGs in this regard.

Consequently, this researcher found no correlation between the SDGs and NPE, on the subject of Sustainability and international development. Sustainability articulates goals: 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 while International development articulates goals 16 and 17.

Regarding sustainability of earthly resources, there is no correlation between NPE and SDGs, as there is nothing in the philosophy of the former that suggests its readiness to participate in the global effort to conserve natural resources of the earth. As reflected in figure 2, there is nothing in the NPE philosophy that signifies its intention to bring its students as participants to the table where this discourse is discussed. This is more important at this point in time when the force of globalisation is erasing national boundaries and compelling nations to merge into a global village, as such that what happens in one corner of the world is felt at the end of the other. For this reason NPE should be improved by incorporating sustainability as part of its core philosophy and consequently spread within Nigeria's education system. This effort, it is believed will strengthen the bond of solidarity Nigeria enjoys with other countries in this area.

Accordingly, a similar result is noted by the researcher in the area of international development. There is need to improve NPE in this regard to make NPE more resilient in preparing functional social development agents. Thus, in addressing the problems confronting Nigeria as it is claimed in the policy, it is imperative that the policy highlight the role of Nigeria's education system in the global partnership for international development. Fundamentally, SDGs aspirations in this regard must be incorporated in the philosophy of the policy in order to signal NPE's readiness to dealing with challenges of its time, in collaboration with other countries of the world.

In answering the question set forth above, NPE does not completely correlate with SDGs in all dimensions. It does with SDGs For instance it partially correlates with the latter in the areas of: Personal development (Goals: 1, 2 & 6) and Equality (Goals: 5 & 10). To this extent NPE can be fortified by adopting a practical and concrete approach of the SDGs.

On the other hand, there is a complete correlation seen in the areas of Social development (Goal 8) and Education (Goal 4). However, there is absolutely no correlation between SDGs and NPE in the area of Sustainability (Goals: 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, &15) and International development (Goals: 16 & 17). Obviously NPE philosophy can be overhauled to accommodate the issues raised by the subject of sustainability and international development.

5.3 How does the Policy benchmark with the traditional ethical principles of the Social doctrine of the Catholic Church?

Just like in SDGs and NPE, there are points of correlation and non-correlation between CSD and NPE. However, unlike SDGs and NPE, the latter seems to have more in common with the CSD's traditional ethical principles. The researchers in chapter four adopted the six most encompassing CSD principles as the benchmarking variables against NPE. These principles are chosen because, directly or indirectly, they articulate other principles in CSD. Thus, an incorporation of other principles in the litany of benchmarking variables will amount to a repetition and a waste of time. The six variables are: The principles of: common good, dignity of life, participation, subsidiarity, stewardship and solidarity.

Under the principle of common good, there is a strong correlation between CSD and NPE. These researchers noted a corroboration of the principle of common good by the NPE

philosophy's commitment to a functional and relevant education that has the primary goal of nurturing students into morally and upright individuals. This is considered against the background of Socratic wisdom that to know good, is to do good. Thus, an individual, who is morally upright, will tend to do good or the right thing. If many individuals within a society take this stand, then it is possible to have a nation that is morally upright, devoid of other vices, which undermine the attainment of common good. However, it is also noted that there is lack of specificity on the part of NPE on how it tends to nurture individuals to moral uprightness. An incorporation of this dimension to the education policy will strengthen its determination to contribute to the realisation of common good in Nigeria.

Consequently, after benchmarking NPE with CSD's principle of dignity of life, the researchers also discovered a correlation, in that both share the same objective in this area and therefore recognise the intrinsic value of the dignity of man. Every person argues CSD, is worthy of respect simply by virtue of being human being regardless of race, sex, age, nationality etc. In the same vein, NPE makes strong commitment to nurturing human potentials in such a way that underlines his dignity as a person. There is a principal agreement between the two to the effect that recognising and respecting man's dignity paves the way to understanding how to educate his creative potential and thus transform him into a useful agent for the attainment of common good.

Accordingly, the researcher further found a strong correlation between NPE philosophy's commitment to the goal of totally integrating the individual into the immediate community, the Nigerian society and the world and CSD's call for total participation of individuals in a society in which they are members. Following the CSD's principle of participation, NPE through its goal of total integration seem to underline its intention to ensure active collective participation of her citizens in the area of education and work. Thus both agree that without participation, the benefits available to an individual through any of the social

institutions cannot be realised. In this regard, NPE cannot be further improved based on this principle since it articulates the core aspirations of principle of participation.

Furthermore, an analysis of NPE philosophy of equality and CSD's principle of subsidiarity, a partial correlation was observed. The "partiality" is traceable to the NPE philosophy's inability to specifically outline the respective roles of all stakeholders in the enterprise of education management. However, there is a subtle allusion to the important role of NGOs, Private sector practitioners, Communities (Families) and Government in making the education system more robust, yet nothing was said in reference to the specific roles and place of these agents, apart from funding, within the subsidiarity scheme. This leaves huge room for an improvement of NPE in this regard.

Following the principle of the stewardship of the earth resources, the researcher noted a non-correlation between CSD and NPE. As observed earlier the Catholic Church through this principle insists respect should be shown for the creator through our stewardship of creation. In an era of rising consciousness about physical environment, our tradition, it is argued, calls us to a sense of moral responsibility for the protection of the universe: Air, Water, Land, Minerals etc. This sense of concern for the future based on the activities of the present is conspicuously missing in NPE philosophy document. A faint reference was made to an inculcation of national consciousness as part of the goals of education, yet this does not come close to placing Nigeria in the light of a progressive nation in search of ways to improve its environment and contribute to the global partnership for international development. Thus, it becomes somewhat ironical that an education policy that seeks total integration of the individual into the immediate community and the world, one hand, is on the other hand shying away from the major global conversation that is dominating its time and will continue to do so now, and beyond. Therefore, non-correlation in this all important

area calls for a total incorporation of this subject, first, within the philosophy and finally introduced in the class room through the curriculum.

Finally, there is a strong commitment to the idea of solidarity among men by CSD and NPE. Following this principle CSD proclaims a universal brotherhood that entrusts the challenge of being our Sisters'/brothers' keeper on each and every one of us. Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity, it maintains, means understanding that loving our neighbour has global dimensions in an interdependent world. Thus, solidarity it is believed, assumes that human beings have real and pressing obligations to come to the aid and support of others, even when others do not have formal and explicit rights to such aid. Along the same line, NPE calls for solidarity, not just within Nigeria, but across Africa. The reality of this worldview in the philosophy of NPE, gives credence to the tag of "giant of Africa", which Nigeria has long worn as a cloak. As aptly captured in the NPE philosophy and directly enshrined in the national goals, part of the goals of education is to promote inter-African solidarity and world peace. However, it remains unclear how the philosophy intends to achieve this, yet there is no doubt that it makes an attempt towards this ideal.

While it is clear that both promote solidarity, yet it seems they do it at different levels. NPE fosters this ideal only as part of the overall general philosophy of Nigeria as a sovereign nation. It nevertheless remains silent on how the education system participates in making this aspiration a reality. To this extent, NPE can learn something from CSD in directly and concretely incorporating this ideal into its philosophy.

Finally it has been established that NPE benchmarks with the CSD in different ways: 1) by way of strong correlation b) by way of partial correlation and c) by total non-correlation.

The last two fundamentally reveal the urgent need for an improvement of NPE in line with the CSD principles that shed light on the NPE philosophy's inadequacies.

Furthermore, attention shall be turned to the concrete areas where the NPE can be improved following the ideals of CSD and SDGs. In doing so, it is the conviction of these researchers that the third and final question will be sufficiently answered.

5.4 What Improvements can be made in the policy following the UN Sustainable Development Goals on education and the traditional ethical principles of the social doctrine of the Church?

Following the benchmarking analysis, it is evident that there is room for NPE improvement, with respect to CSD and SDGs. In answering the research questions, the researcher will first point out the specific point of improvement as it relates to SDG and then proceed to highlight the areas that can be improved on, with respect to CSD. However, areas that both CSD and SDGs have in common, such as sustainability/stewardship of the earthly resources, will be presented in reference to CSD and SDGs.

With reference to SDGs, NPE Philosophy's aspiration for personal development and equality of persons can be improved upon. Even though NPE commits to Personal development and Equality, yet there is need to adopt a more concrete approach in line with the SDGs 1, 2 & 6, and 5 & 10. To this extent the curriculum should be formulated to reflect the systematic steps for dealing with the personal development and equality issues. Apart from giving it a focus, this approach will also enhance implementation process.

Furthermore, NPE can be improved based on the SDGs aspiration for international development. Nigeria's role and contribution to the partnership for international

development should reflect in her education philosophy and transmitted through her curriculum.

Moreover, there is need for improvement in the area of sustainability. There is a conspicuous absence of concern for the environment in NPE's philosophy, despite the trending nature of the subject globally. This absence can be resolved by incorporating the subject into the Nigeria's education Philosophy and actively transmitted through her curriculum.

Results from the CSD also confirm the urgent need for the incorporation of principle of stewardship of earthly. This principle fosters the same aspiration for the safeguarding of natural resources, with SDG's sustainability. To this extent, NPE can be improved based on this very principle.

However, it is also noted that there is lack of specificity on the part of NPE on how it tends to nurture individuals to moral uprightness. An incorporation of this dimension to the education policy will strengthen its determination to contribute to the realisation of common good in Nigeria.

NPE can be improved following CSD's subsidiarity principle. This can be done by specifically stating the respective roles of all stakeholders in the area of education management and delivery within Nigerian education system.

After benchmarking process, it is showed that NPE links with SDG & CSD totally, partially and in some cases, zero relationship. This reveals the need to improve NPE in those areas where zero and Partial relation is established.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

Thus far this dissertation has endeavoured to answer the three fundamental research questions set out at the beginning. In the wake of it, it was revealed that, although Nigeria's policy of education philosophy sufficiently benchmarked with the SDGs and CSD principles in some respect, yet there are areas where the NPE philosophy needs partial improvement and total improvement at the same time.

It is evident from the analysis that NPE is totally missing out on the current global discussion on the sustainability. This apparent gap leaves Nigerian education system obsolete in the advancement of knowledge. A similar trend is noticed in CSD's principle of stewardship of earth resources. Accordingly, Nigeria's education philosophy shows signs of inadequacy in its commitment to the partnership for international development as against SDGs call for development among nations. A similar trend is also noticed in CSD's solidarity principle.

Consequently, there is a partial correlation with SDGs and CSD in the areas of Personal development, Equality, Common good, subsidiarity and solidarity.

However, in the affirmative the NPE philosophy is in tandem with SDGs and CSD in the areas of Social development, Education, Dignity of life, and Participation.

6.2 Recommendations

This intellectual exercise will not be complete without solutions/recommendations offered to the problems unravelled. It is important to note at this point that this exercise has not come without limitations. One of the limitations is scarcity of secondary sources on the

NPE Philosophy. The researchers encountered difficulty in locating adequate secondary sources in the area that this thesis is focused on. Despite its limitations, it did not stop this work from fulfilling its aim and objectives. Below are therefore the recommendations that emerge from the research.

1. There is need for Nigeria's education system to incorporate sustainability/ sense of stewardship of the resources of the earth into the philosophy of her education policy, in line with SDGs and CSD principle. It should further make effort to design her curriculum, with this principle prominently featuring in it. As such, not only will she create leaders for the future, but also her goal of innovation and preparing workers for the 21st century will easily be realised. At long last, she will contribute her own quota to the global common good.
2. It is important for Nigeria's education policy through her curriculum to detail the need for Nigeria's role in the global partnership for international development. Although on a political level, Nigeria seems to be making headline with her contribution to the development of some African countries, yet the education policy leaves a huge gap in this area. An inclusion of such vital information in the curriculum will bequeath Nigerian citizens, from the cradle, a sense of international responsibility and brotherhood of nations across the world.
3. A look at the areas where NPE partially correlates with SDGs and CSD reveals a lack of concrete itemisation of goals and lack of specificity, in the NPE philosophy. For instance, even though NPE makes claim to CSD's principle of subsidiarity, there is lack of clarity on which institution performs what role in the management and delivery of education. A similar trend is noticed in the principle of solidarity and commitment to common good of the society. Against SDGs, there is apparent lack of practical dimension in areas where there is partial correlation such as Equality

(gender equality) and personal development (lack of specificity). Thus, in all these highlighted areas, there is need for the NPE philosophy, following the SDGs and CSD principles, to be more concrete and practical in its educational aspirations.

Therefore, it is the strong conviction of the researcher that when all these recommendations are effected, Nigeria's policy of education philosophy will be more effective and reliable in actualising the set national education goals.

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ANNEX

NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION

6th Edition (2013)

FOREWORD

The National Policy on Education (NPE) is the national guideline for the effective administration, management and implementation of education at all tiers of government.

The National Policy on Education therefore, is a statement of intentions, expectations, goals, prescriptions, standards and requirements for quality education delivery in Nigeria. Nigeria like most other countries of the world is undergoing rapid social, economic and political reforms. Fundamental changes in socio-economic and political structures wholly dictate the need for a change in policy thrust of the education system and vice-versa. Thus, given the tempo of development activities on-going in both the global and local contexts, a review of the National Policy on Education becomes imperative. This will help the nation align its education system with her current developmental goals and that of the emergent global village.

The impetus for these changes derive from the nation's commitment to the implementation of such international protocols as the Education for All (EFA), the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as her own home-grown medium-term development plan, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), which commenced in 2004. Thus, the 2004 edition of the NPE was revised in 2007 to accommodate these changes. In 2011, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria initiated a Transformation Agenda to drive the NEEDS as well as consolidate its gains. One of the strategic goals of the Transformation Agenda is Human Capital Development. In order to meet the ideals of Human Capital Development, the Federal Ministry of Education had earlier prepared a Roadmap for the Development of the Nigerian Education Sector in 2009. This was followed by the 1 (One) Year Strategy Plan for the Development of the Education Sector (May 2010 — April 2011), and the 4 (Four) Year Strategy Plan for the Development of the Education Sector (2011 - 2015). This 2013 NPE edition was prepared to update the 2007 edition and in the process, accommodate the above recent developments in the context of the Transformation Agenda and the ensuing Strategy Plans in education.

These strategy plans in education have engendered an expanded role for education as an investment for economic, social and political development; an aggregate tool of empowerment for the poor, and the socially marginalised groups; an effective means of developing the full capacities and potentials of human resource, as well as the development of competent work force through the acquisition of practical life skills relevant to the world of work as a veritable means of developing sound intelligent learning societies, fit and relevant to the 21st century. All these can be achieved through strategic and collaborative partnerships with key stakeholders.

Our covenant with every Nigerian child therefore, is access to quality education relevant to the need of the Nigerian Economy. We will NUTURE the MIND to Create a Good Society that can compete globally.

YES, WE CAN.

CHIEF (BARR) EZENWO NYESOM WIKE

Hon. Minister of Education

National Policy on Education, 2013'

PREFACE

Nigeria is a country of rich ethno-cultural diversity of over 350 distinct ethnic groups and over 500 indigenous languages with an estimated population of 170 million. The country occupies a landmass of 924,000 square kilometres in sub-Saharan Africa that ranges from the mangrove swampland of the Niger-Delta along the Atlantic coast in the south to the rainforest, the Sahel and Sudan savannah further inland and to the encroaching Sahara Desert at the extreme fringes of the north. The generally favourable climatic conditions and predominantly arable land, endow the nation with a rich bio-diversity of bountiful flora and fauna as well as mineral resources. Evolving as a nation-state from the amalgamation of the British Protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria in 1914 and colonial rule up to 15 October 1960 when it gained independence, the nation is now a democratic federation of 36 States and a Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

The Nigerian education sector has the advantage of ample constitutional provisions and legislative support for the three tiers of government (Federal, State and Local) and all other stakeholders to participate in the delivery of education at all levels. As a result, the private sector, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), International Development Partners (IDPs), communities

and private individuals are very active in the sector. The key challenges are to effectively coordinate activities and interventions, as well as to strengthen and deepen collaboration through appropriate policy guidelines, monitoring and quality control.

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria stipulates the direction of national policy towards ensuring equal and adequate educational opportunities at all levels of education and the provision of compulsory, free and universal primary education; free university education; and free adult literacy programme as soon as practicable. It provides the basic legal framework for all the three tiers of government — Federal, State and Local — to participate in the management and provision of education. The Second Schedule, Part II, paragraphs 27 to 30 of the Constitution includes education in the Concurrent List in which both the Federal and State governments can engage. The provision and maintenance of primary, adult and vocational education is listed in paragraph 2(a) of the Fourth Schedule as one of the functions that Local governments can perform.

The educational responsibilities of the Federal Government are carried out through the Federal Ministry of Education (FME), the 36 State Ministries of Education (SMOEs) and the FCT Education Secretariat as well as the 774 Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs).

The National Council on Education (NCE) comprises of the Minister of Education as Chair, State Commissioners of Education and the FCT Education Secretary as members; and is the highest body for formulating education policies. The NCE provides a forum for consensus building on education policy directions to be implemented at different levels of education, with varying degrees of adaptations to suit specific State and local peculiarities.

The Joint Consultative Committee on Education (JCCE) comprises of professional officers of the Federal and State Ministries of Education and FCT Education Secretariat and their/Various/ Faculty on Education, 2013' parastatals, as well as other relevant stakeholders. The JCCE provides the necessary framework and recommendations for consideration by the NCE. The FME has overall responsibility of formulating national education policies, coordinating implementation of policy provisions and quality control in service delivery, in accordance with NCE resolutions and directives.

The Nigerian education system is structured into:

- Early Child Care and Development aged 0 -4 years;
- Basic Education aged 5 -15 years. It encompasses Pre-Primary 1 year, 6 years of Primary Education and 3 years of Junior Secondary Education;
- Post-Basic Education of 3 years in Senior Secondary Schools and Technical Colleges; and
- Tertiary Education provided in Colleges of Education, Monotechnics, Polytechnics, and the Universities.

Pursuant to the commitment to the global Education for All (EFA) initiative, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as national development goals encapsulated in the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) document, Basic Education is, by law, compulsory for all children of school age in Nigeria. In public schools, it is provided free through the Universal Basic Education (UBE) which is backed by legislation (The Compulsory, Free, Universal Basic Education Act, 2004). A Home-Grown School Feeding and Health Programme (HGSFHP) that provides basic health services and a free balanced meal per day for every child that attends public primary or junior secondary school is being implemented to facilitate the success of the UBE.

The need for the articulation of policy guidelines on standards, procedures, strategies and for the coordination of roles to ensure and sustain the delivery of qualitative education in Nigeria was given impetus by the outcomes of the 1969 National Curriculum Conference. Follow-up activities included wide national consultations, a seminar of expert from government educational ministries and establishments, voluntary agencies and international organisations in 1973, developed a draft document that culminated in the emergence and publication of the first National Policy on Education in 1977. The first edition of the NPE in 1977 has been successively followed by revised 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th editions published in 1981, 1988, 2004 and 2007 respectively. Revisions of the National Policy on Education have been necessitated by the need to address noticeable gaps in content and provisions that emerged in the course of implementation, maintain currency, relevance and to give adequate attention to new opportunities, issues and challenges.

The revision and updating of the (2007) 5th edition of the National Policy on Education was informed by the need to:

- (a) Situate the education sector within the overall context of governments' reform agenda enunciated in the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS);
- (b) reposition the Nigerian education sector to effectively meet the challenges of the EFA initiative, MDGs and NEEDS; National Policy on Education, 2013'
- (c) improve and refocus education quality and service delivery for the accelerated attainment of NEEDS goals of social and economic transformation, wealth creation, poverty reduction, employment generation and value reorientation, as well as meet the ideals of the Transformation Agenda of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
- (d) reflect, accommodate and respond to UBE, the provisions of the UBE Act and the implications for the education sector;
- (e) incorporate all new sub-sector policies to reflect global development;
- (f) achieve public ownership of the National Policy on Education and improve compliance with its provisions through consensus building in its development and strengthened implementation monitoring; and
- (g) reflect the National Vision of attaining global economic relevance by 2020, Roadmap for the Development of the Nigerian Education Sector, the (4) Four Year Strategy Plan for the Development of the Education Sector (2011 - 2015) and the government's white paper on the report of the Presidential Task Team on Education.

This 6th Edition of the National Policy on Education restates Nigeria's national goals and the philosophy of education, specifies the goals and objectives education should accomplish, defines the structure and strategies for its provision, sets guidelines and required standards for its delivery, management and for quality assurance. It further clarifies the responsibilities of the three tiers of government, their agencies and all other education stakeholders. This edition highlights and emphasizes:

- (a) The consolidation of Pre-Primary, Primary and Junior Secondary Education to a 10-Year Basic Education in line with UBE and its establishment Act;
- (b) improved quality assurance, restructuring and enhancing the capacities of Federal and States, Inspectorate Services through effective performance evaluation;
- (c) the development and maintenance of a credible and up-to-date National Education Management and Information System (NEMIS) and corresponding State Education Management and Information Systems (SEMIS);

- (d) the effective use of strategic planning to improve the quality of education provision and service delivery;
- (e) improving teacher quality through professionalizing the teaching profession in Nigeria and the provision of more in-service training opportunities and other incentives for teachers; and
- (f) better coordination, collaboration and networking of activities, programmes and interventions of all tiers of government, development partners and all other stakeholders in the Nigerian education sector to eliminate overlaps, achieve and sustain synergy.

To effectively address the persistent gaps in education policy provisions and implementation in Nigeria, the process of the development and articulation of this 6th edition of the National Policy on Education, 2013

Policy on Education involved collective and wide consultations coordinated by the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) through the High-Level Policy Committee comprising State Commissioners of Education/FCT Education Secretary, Directors in the Federal Ministry of Education and their Parastatals, International Development Partners, Professional and other relevant bodies.

This is to ensure that the perspectives and inputs of the three tiers of government, development partners and all other stakeholders are, as much as possible, accommodated and infused. It is therefore expected that the National Policy on Education will be publicly owned, internalized and complied with by all. To leverage this expectation, Federal, State/FCT and Local governments shall establish and adequately empower Special Policy Implementation Monitoring Units within the appropriate existing structures in their Ministries of Education and Local Government Education Authorities and diligently monitor and provide necessary feedback on compliance.

Prof. Godswill Obioma FNAE, FMAN, FCON, FSTAN, fiPMA, FNATT Executive Secretary, Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) and Chairman, High Level Policy Committee on the Review of the National Policy on Education (NPE)

SECTION 1

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS OF EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

1. The National Policy on Education enunciates the guidelines, objectives, standards, structures, strategies, and management for achieving the national education goals in Nigeria. The policy must be operated within the framework of the overall philosophy of the nation.
2. The overall philosophy of the nation includes, but not limited to:
 - a. Live in unity and harmony as one indivisible, indissoluble, democratic and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom, equality and justice; and
 - b. promote inter-African solidarity and world peace through understanding.
3. Nigeria's philosophy of education is based on the following set of beliefs:
 - a. Education is an instrument for national development and social change;
 - b. education is vital for the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria;
 - c. education maximizes the creative potentials and skills of the individual for self-fulfilment and general development of the society;
 - d. education is compulsory and a right of every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, colour, ethnic background and any peculiar individual challenges; and
 - e. education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society;
4. This philosophy of Nigeria education is based on the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and the provision of equal opportunities for all citizens of the nation at the basic, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system.
5. The five main national goals of Nigeria as stated in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria are the building of:
 - a. A free and democratic society;
 - b. just and egalitarian society;
 - c. united, strong and self-reliant nation;
 - d. a great and dynamic economy; and
 - e. a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens.
6. The goals of education in Nigeria are the:
 - a. Development of the individual into a morally sound, patriotic and effective citizen;

- b. total integration of the individual into the immediate community, the Nigerian society and the world;
- c. provision of equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education, within and outside the formal school system;
- d. inculcation of national consciousness, values and national unity; and
- e. development of appropriate skills, mental, physical and social abilities and competencies to empower the individual to live in and contribute positively to the society.

7. The specific goals of education in Nigeria are to:

- a. Ensure and sustain unfettered access and equity to education for the total development of the individual;
- b. ensure the quality of education delivery at all levels;
- c. promote functional education for skill acquisition, job creation and poverty reduction;
- d. ensure periodic review, effectiveness and relevance of the curriculum at all levels to meet the needs of society and the world of work;
- e. collaborate with development partners, the private sector, Non-Governmental Organizations and local communities to support and fund education; and
- f. promote information technology capability at all levels.

8. In order to fully realize the goals of education in Nigeria and gain from its contribution to 'the national economy, Government shall take necessary measures to ensure that:

- a. Educational activities shall be learner centred for maximum self-development and self-fulfilment;
- b. teaching shall be practical, activity-based, experiential and IT supported;
- c. education shall be related to overall community needs;
- d. all tiers of government shall promote the establishment and support of Reading Clubs in schools, Community Libraries and other such resources that will enhance effective learning;
- e. special provisions and incentives shall be made for the study of the sciences at each level of the education system;
- f. continuing education shall be part and parcel of the education system; and

- g. every child shall be taught in the mother tongue or language of the immediate community for the first four years of basic education. In addition, it is expected that every child shall learn one Nigerian language.
9. The quality of instruction at all levels of education shall be oriented towards inculcating the following values:
- a. Respect for the worth and dignity of the individual;
 - b. faith in man's ability to make rational decisions;
 - c. moral and spiritual principles in inter-personal and human relations;
 - d. shared responsibility for the common good of society;
 - e. promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological development of all children; and
 - f. acquisition of functional skills and competencies necessary for self-reliance.
