

**POLYTECHNIC EDUCATION, ENTERPRISE,
EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRY LINKAGE
IN NIGERIA**

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AT

**ACADEMIC STAFF UNION OF POLYTECHNICS
ROUND TABLE**

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INTRODUCTION:

This sub-theme of this unique and timely round table would be seen as the need to:

- ❖ Remind ourselves of where we are coming from?
- ❖ Where are we?
- ❖ Where we must be?
- ❖ How to be there?

The laborious and voluminous coverage would be structured into a précis as the time is not there to do adequacy.

The ultimate is to provoke every participant's idea and effort as contributions towards repositioning our Polytechnic which is now an endangered specie.

ORIGINALITY OF POLYTECHNIC EDUCATION

The uniqueness of Polytechnic education as designed was to drive **development** and **sustainability** in both private and public sectors of the economy. Our aged sectoral infrastructure begging for replacement today were products of Polytechnic majorly.

The private sector of Nigeria in the 60s to 80s was driven essentially with pareto of 80 Polytechnic graduates and 20 University graduates. The core manufacturing outfits whether multinationals or locals would always trace their success and expansion to OND and HND certificated middle level functionaries.

The Polytechnic used to marry and display expertise with exposure. Artisanship through apprenticeship scheme of our pupil engineers and article clerks (junior accountants) produced tested and trusted professionals across board.

Up till year 2000, the insurance sub-sector of our financial sector was being driven by the ratio of human capital of 80 – Poly/20 Uni.

The insurance industry thrived because of the consolidated marriage of expertise/exposure model.

Polytechnic education proved its superiority in professional examinations for over 2 decades when HND holders would clear professional examinations in accounting, purchasing, marketing, etc with distinction in more than one subject while their colleagues from various universities would fail woefully.

This is where we are coming from but this fete started facing short-changing laws, policies, politicking and discrimination of all sorts which this round table must address as priorities.

ENTERPRISE

I simply see enterprise as an undertaking emerging from innovation and creativity to fulfill aching needs while the proprietor gets compensation to drive continuity and improvement.

If you relate this with what I described as with Polytechnic education-marriage of expertise with exposure that would, drive development and sustainability, you would see some relevance's.

The mandate, aim and efforts of the Polytechnic remain focused at this direction but in some cases, it is done with agony, without support, with myopia if not ignorance and information lacuna, with due respect. At times, it not done at all due to intentional damage or teleguided damage.

The curriculum of Polytechnic equally aims at producing more entrepreneurs at higher percentage than producing employees, all things being equal.

But due to linkage lacuna, proliferation, mandate hijack, illegal extension of mandate, etc. The products of the Polytechnic education are victims of circumstance today.

SAMPLE OF PROFESSIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROFILE

1. Mass Com IMT Enugu, Ogun Poly (MAPOLY), Ibadan Poly
2. Purchasing Kaduna Poly, Lagos Poly, Ibadan Poly, Kwara Poly.
3. Printing Kaduna Poly, Yaba Tech, (equals: London College of Printing S.A.I.T Canada).
4. Insurance Lagos Poly
5. Marketing Bida-Fed Ploy, Kwara Ply, Yaba Tech
6. Accounting Fed Poly Ado, Lagos Poly
7. Secretarial Auchi Poly, Lagos Poly,
8. Arts Yaba Tech, Kaduna Poly, Auchi Poly, Fed Poly, Okoh

LACUNA PROFILE

- Bamboo Technology
- Coconut Technology
- Cane Technology
- Horology (Certificate Course at Yaba Tech over 20 years but no ND/HND)
- Herbal Processing Technology (53 supplement brands taking away \$7,000,000.00 Seven Million US Dollars away every month).
- Wood/Paper/Ink Technology
- Software Technology - we are fair DR RICHARD - DR SAVELIFE
- Hardware?

EMPLOYMENT

Employment as engagement based on salary/wages should attract remnants of the Poly trained if the policies, laws, infrastructure, regulatory and environmental atmosphere are right, available and accessible. The majority should rather be employers if a few of the lacuna profiles are explored, Nigeria will be different. Take for example our divinely given soil, vegetation, topography, weather, marine features, solid minerals etc I feel like turning every village into a Polytechnic with education to reflect the catchment endowment.

INDUSTRY LINKAGE

This is the greatest challenge of our Polytechnic education. The institutions that should be partnering are in perpetual divorce. Incubators and Polytechnics are not in mutuality and partnership as aimed, industries are not ready to accommodate students for exposure and industrial attachment reports are being faked.

MOVING FORWARD

We cannot continue to lament. I will like to make a few suggestions as follows:

1. Polytechnics should NEVER be seen again as inferior schools to Universities. It is like a gender issue and a continuous battle.
2. Student recruitment of the Polytechnic should be Fed more by Technical College/NABTEB Certificates than other qualifications.
3. Private sector sponsorship and collaborations should no longer elude Polytechnics e.g chair and research endowments. Executive continuous retraining programmes should be formalized and established in various Polytechnic based on SWOT.
4. Salary differential should be a thing of the past between Polytechnic and University graduate.

5. The stakeholders of the Polytechnic must review all instruments relating to the Polytechnic education in relation to the following:
 - i. Technology changes
 - ii. Global perspectives and competitiveness
 - iii. Resources of Nigeria at zonal level.
 - iv. Population of youths
6. Commensurate and appropriate interventions needed.
7. Polytechnic education should be free. This is how we can drive development and sustainability. At the worst, let's start now with this scenario:
 - ✚ Federal Polytechnics to charge 50% of what they charge now.
 - ✚ State Polytechnic to charge 60% of the same fee of the Federal.
 - ✚ Private Polytechnic to charge 70% of the same fee

However for the best, Polytechnic education should be pro bono and I mean pro bono but to pursue rational and relevant programmes with highest relevance and need.

As at today, I see Nigeria as a school producing 99 consumers and only one producer due to the way we run our Polytechnic education. Our institutions should blow up support empowerment and accessibility to resources and structure that will be functional to breed well brought up start-up entrepreneurs while re-inforcing the tired and weak existing entrepreneurs.

I commend your association for being futuristic, pragmatic and passionate about your brand – the Polytechnic/motechnic as well as Nigeria.

Thank you for the opportunity.

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