

## Appraisal of the 1988 National Policy for Culture Within the Purview of Economic Diversification in Nigeria

Sunday Ogbu Igbaba<sup>[a],\*</sup>; Chuks Chizaramoku Akamadu<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>[a]</sup> PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Theatre and Cultural Studies. Faculty of Arts, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria.

<sup>[b]</sup> Scholar - Cultural Policy and Management, Department of Theatre and Cultural Studies, Faculty of Arts, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria.

\*Corresponding author.

Received 2 November 2024; accepted 28 November 2024  
Published online 26 December 2024

### Abstract

Culture is a peculiar pattern of a people's behaviour, which includes their socio-economic life. Thus, government takes it as a responsibility to formulate and implement a policy known as Cultural Policy to guide and provide directions in the sector in order to harness its inherent potentials. Like other nations of the world, Nigeria has a very rich cultural policy which its implementation has been faced with certain challenges and prospects over the years. Consequently, this study appraises the 1988 Policy for culture and economic diversification. In other words, the objectives of the study are to assess the extent of implementation of the 1988 National Policy for Culture, identify the potentials and the bottlenecks for its full economic optimization as well as advocate measures for strict compliance/implementation for maximum productivity. The study adopted descriptive and prescriptive research design with the use of questionnaire instrument for data collection, and statistic tables for data analysis. The modern portfolio theory propounded by Harry Markowitz in 1950 was employed, as well as relevant literatures: books, paper presentations, cultural policies (in force and draft), journals, internet sources were used to substantiate the study as secondary sources. The findings reveal that 1988 National Policy for culture is an invaluable document with respect to economic diversification in Nigeria; and that, cultural industries contribute significantly to Nigeria's economy; that the cultural sector has potential to become the mainstay of the nation's economy, if given adequate

attention. The study recommended that Cultural Policy for Nigeria 1988 should be reviewed to accommodate current trends in the global cultural industries. Indeed, cultural policy provides a platform for harnessing enormous potentials offered by culture for economic vibrancy. The study concluded that if Nigeria's economy must be viable enough to fund our national budget as opposed to the current habit of financing it through external borrowing, the cultural industries must be given adequate attention by the government in this trajectory.

**Key words:** Culture; Policy; Cultural policy; Economy; Economic diversification

Igbaba, S. U., & Akamadu, C. C. (2024). Appraisal of the 1988 National Policy for Culture Within the Purview of Economic Diversification in Nigeria. *Canadian Social Science*, 20(6), 17-22. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/css/article/view/13625>  
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/13625>

### BACKGROUND

Nigeria is a country blessed with rich and diverse cultures from the multi-ethnic nationalities. Indeed, the diversity of traditions and cultures are evidenced in the nation's more than four hundred and seventy tribes. It is in the bid to ensure that each cultural entity is preserved, projected and promoted, that Nigeria has a cultural policy. The National policy on culture is the result of inputs from culture sector as well as guidance from within and outside the country. The policy has been crafted over the years to uniquely address the needs of the people of Nigeria (Federal Ministry of Tourism, Culture and National Orientation, 4). The policy aims to provide guidelines and general directions through which the Federal Government of Nigeria seeks to meet the current and future needs of the country. The vision of National Policy on Culture is to strengthen understanding, create a national consciousness, advance the appreciation of arts and culture and enhance

the appreciation of arts and culture and enhance Nigeria's image and identity worldwide. The vision is all encompassing and if implemented strictly will not improve the culture outlook of Nigeria but grow the culture sector to be at par with other sector to generate the needed resources for national development.

However, the mainstreaming of the cultural sector into the nation's economy as part of economic diversification efforts of the Federal Government has been more like a mantra of successive administrations in Nigeria, especially in the light of dwindling oil-revenue in recent years. It is a well-known fact that Nigeria's continuous large earnings or revenue from this sector will be impossible. The situation has grown so bad, that Nigerian government resulted into continuous borrowing to pay salaries and also cater infrastructural development. As a matter of fact, there is an urgent need for the Nigerian government to begin looking into diversification of various sectors of the economy so as to attain solid economic growth. However, the 1988 Cultural Policy for Nigeria is a document that is designed to provide the roadmap for the economic optimization of the cultural industry. This document has as part of its guiding principles "integrating the arts and culture into tourism, educational and economic development and national language policies". (Akinola Makinde, 18). No doubt, the policy appears comprehensive enough to bring about the desired change and upliftment in the Nigerian economy through the cultural sector.

Although, there is no denying the fact that there have been attempts by past governments to harness the economic potentials of the industry in line with the aspiration of the 1988 National Policy on culture, but the fact on ground is that despite and in spite of those efforts, the Nigerian economy has not witnessed the desired growth and benefits offered by the cultural sectors as compared to other nations of the world like UAE, South Africa, Morocco, Japan China, etc. Instead, the economy has continued to dwindle, with the negative impact on her citizen undeniable - as report shows that Nigeria is ranked 158 on the poverty index of nations. (Transparency International). It is against this background that this research seeks to appraise the 1988 National Policy on culture for Economic Diversification. In this light, the study aims to appraise the 1988 National Policy on Culture for Economic diversification, and to answer the following questions: What is the extent of implementation of the 1998 National Policy on Culture? What are the bottlenecks to the full economic optimization of the cultural industry despite the 1988 National Policy on Culture? What are the potentials in the 1988 National Policy on Culture for economic diversification in Nigeria? What are the measures for strict compliance/implementation of 1988 National Policy on Culture for maximum productivity? The scopes of the study is on the appraisal of three broad sub-heads of the 1988 National Policy on Culture and implementation as enshrined in the

document: The first phase deals with the scope, objectives and methods of implementation of the policy. The second part highlights the focus of implementation while the last part deals with the administration and financing of culture. Therefore, the scope of the study is limited to 1988 National Policy on Culture.

---

## THE RESEARCH METHOD

---

In the course of this study, the researchers adopted both descriptive and prescriptive research design. According to Akintola, "descriptive survey has the advantage of eliciting responses about situation that are happening or events that occurred in the past" (12). In a survey research, one simply samples the opinion of people involved in the study over a particular issue through the use of extensive interview and questionnaires. The researcher used primary and secondary data collection and subject them to analysis, using simple percentage method.

Based on the above backdrop, the area of study was purposely selected because it serves the interest of this research work. It was based on the judgment that they will facilitate the investigation carried out in this study (Neuman, 2). The researcher engaged a total sample of one hundred and twenty (128) adults in cultural industry. They were the respondents readily accessible to and therefore convenient for the researcher to interview and administered the questionnaires. Sampling plan involves sample unit, sample size and sample method procedure/procedures. Due to the nature of the topic, the simple random sampling technique was adopted. This gave all members of the population equal chance of being selected; hence the outcome of the result will be a representative one. The Simple Random Technique (SRT) was used to select the sample size, which represents the number of people from the population that would be used.

Similarly, both primary and secondary data were used. Primary sources are the first-hand evidence left behind by participants or observers at the time of events. It is a way of collecting data, which involves extracting raw information directly from the public with the use of questionnaire, oral interviews and informal discussions. In-depth-interviews were conducted with the respondents to generate adequate and relevant data for the researcher in making informed decision. A set of twenty question were drawn and circulate to cultural officers and administrator of culture as well as other people from other sectors. Secondary method on the other hand deals with information that already exists and, has been collated for related research or other purposes. The information was collected through intensive review of related literature, journals, articles, magazines, and newspapers.

---

## DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

---

The various responses from the questionnaires are tabulated and worked out in simple percentage. Each

questionnaire with total 18 questions is placed to meet research objectives. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed through random sampling amongst respondents aged 18 years and above, who are abreast of the subject matter. Of the total 150, a 115 questionnaire were retrieved, fifteen (15) were invalid, leaving 100 valid ones. Thus, below the presentation and analysis of research data gathered through interviews, which clearly highlighted the appraisal of 1988 National Policy on Culture as a medium for Economic Diversification in Nigeria, as well as, opine the economic impacts and challenges of this cultural industry with their contributions to National Development were presented in the tables below;

**Table 1**  
**Distribution of respondents by gender**

| S/N | Gender  | Frequency | Percentages (%) |
|-----|---------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1.  | Males   | 60        | 60%             |
| 2.  | Females | 40        | 40%             |
| 3.  | Total   | 100       | 100%            |

Source: Field work, 2021

From the table 1 above, it is clear that sixty of the respondents, making 60% of the total respondents were males; while forty respondents, making 40% of the total respondents were females. This shows that a larger percentage of the respondents were males.

**Table 2**  
**Distribution of respondents by Age**

| S/N | Age          | Frequency | Percentages (%) |
|-----|--------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1   | 18 -25       | 16        | 16%             |
| 2,  | 26 – 35      | 29        | 29%             |
| 3.  | 35– 45       | 24        | 24%             |
| 4.  | 46 and above | 31        | 31%             |
| 5.  | Total        | 100       | 100%            |

Source: Field work, 2021

The Table 2 it shows that 16 (16%) of the respondents were between 18-25 years. The tables equally show that respondents between age of 26 – 35 are 29 (29%), while age 35– 45 are 24 (24%), then 46 and above are 31 (31%). From the data collected and analyzed, by the researcher, majority of the respondents were in the age category 46 and above which are 31 (31%). It equally shows that the people in this age bracket are adults who are involved in the implementation of the policy than other age group were sampled which give credence to the research work.

**Table 3**  
**Distribution of Education attainment of respondents**

| S/N | Gender              | Frequency | Percentages (%) |
|-----|---------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1   | No formal Education | 1         | 1%              |
| 2.  | FSLC                | 5         | 5%              |
| 3.  | WAEC/GCE/SSCE       | 14        | 14%             |
| 4.  | OND/NCE             | 30        | 30%             |
| 5.  | BSC/HND             | 44        | 44%             |
| 6.  | MSc/MA /PhD         | 6         | 6%              |
| 7.  | Total               | 100       | 100%            |

Source: Field work, 2021

From Table 3, one (1%) of the respondents has no formal education.5 respondents (5%) were of First School Leaving Certificate holders. 14 respondents (14%) has WAEC/GCE/SSCE, 30 respondents (30%) has OND/NCE, 44 respondents (44%) has BSC/HND, while 6 respondents (6%) has MSc/MA /PhD. This simply shows that the bulks of the respondents were first degree/HND holders, who fully understood the subject matter.

**Table 4**  
**Distribution of respondents' occupation.**

| S/N | Gender         | Frequency | Percentages (%) |
|-----|----------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1   | Traders        | 5         | 5%              |
| 2   | Civil Servants | 62        | 62%             |
| 3   | Artisans       | 8         | 8%              |
| 4   | Artists        | 25        | 25%             |
| 5   | Total          | 100       | 100%            |

Source: Field work, 2021

Table 4 showing the distribution of respondents' occupation, 5 respondents (5%) are traders, 62 respondents (62%) are Civil servants, 8 respondents (8%) are artisans, and 25 (25%) respondents are Artists. This implication of this is that the majority of the respondents are drawn from civil servants, particularly the once in the culture Ministry, Department and Agencies. They make and execute Government policies, hence, has adequate knowledge of the research topic.

**Table 5**  
**Distribution of respondents showing Knowledge of 1988 National Policy on culture**

| S/N | Questions  | Frequency Yes | Frequency No |
|-----|--|---------------|--------------|
| 1.  | Are you in a Culture related business?                     | 72            | 28           |
| 2   | Have you seen a copy of National policy on culture before? | 83            | 17           |

Source: Field work, 2024

From Table 5 majority of the respondents are in culture related businesses and have seen the copy of National policy before.

**Table 6**  
**Showing how many times the respondents have read the 1988 National policy on Culture**

| S/N | Times | Frequency | Percentages (%) |
|-----|-------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1   | None  | 20        | 20%             |
| 2   | 1-3   | 61        | 61%             |
| 3   | 3-5   | 15        | 15%             |
| 4   | 6-10  | 4         | 4%              |
| 5   | Total | 100       | 100%            |

Source: Field work, 2024

From Table 6, 20 respondents (20%) have not read the National Policy on Culture before. 61 respondents (61%) have read the policy one to three times, 15 respondents (15%) read the policy three to five times, while 4 respondents (4%) read the policy six to ten times. It can be

deduced that majority of the respondents read the policy between one to three times.

**Table 7**  
**Showing whether Nigeria Cultural policy is well implemented?**

| S/N | Question                                    | Yes | No | Total |
|-----|---|-----|----|-------|
| 1.  | Is Nigeria Cultural policy well implemented | 42  | 58 | 100   |

Source: Field work, 2024

From Table 7 respondents making 42% are of the opinion that the Nigerian policy is well implemented. 58 respondents (58%) said the policy was not well implemented. It can be deduced from above that the policy was badly implemented.

**Table 8**  
**Showing how effective is Cultural policy in promotion and preservation of cultural activities in Nigeria?**

| S/N | Question  | Good | Fair | Bad | Total |
|-----|---|------|------|-----|-------|
| 1   | how effective is Cultural policy in promotion and preservation of cultural activities in Nigeria? | 18   | 45   | 37  | 100   |
|     |   | 18%  | 45%  | 37% | 100%  |

Source: Field work, 2024

From Table 8 Showing how effective is Cultural policy in promotion and preservation of cultural activities in Nigeria, 18 respondents are in the affirmative that the policy is good in the promotion and preservation of cultural activities. 45 respondents (45%) said it's just fair while 37 respondents (37%) agreed that the effect is bad on the promotion and preservation of culture in Nigeria. One can conclude that the policy did not play serious role in the preservation and promotion of cultural activities in Nigeria.

**Table 9**  
**Showing factors responsible for poor implementation of National Policy on Culture?**

| S/N | Factors             | Responses | Percentage |
|-----|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1   | Government Agencies | 60        | 60%        |
| 2   | Fund                | 10        | 10%        |
| 3   | Ignorance           | 30        | 30%        |

Source: Field work, 2024

From Table 9, 60 respondents (60%) are of the opinion that Government agencies are responsible for poor implementation of National policy on culture. 10 respondents (10%) believed that it is fund while 30 respondents (30%) believed that the ignorance on the part of people implementing the policy. One can deduce that the Government agencies responding for the implementation of policy of National policy on culture.

From Table 10, 62 respondents (62%) are of the opinion that, if the policy is strictly implemented it could have had positive influence, while 38 respondents (38%) are on the contrary. The response therefore suggest that the policy was not strictly implement, hence, has little or no impact. On the same table, the responses revealed that

the policy did not play significant roles in sensitizing, educating the citizens. Also, the responses revealed that majority of the respondents are of the opinion that Cultural industry can adequately generate income to improve Nigerian economy, reposition creative industry in Nigeria and can bring about economic diversification.

The responses from the questionnaires equally suggest that more attention is needed to be placed on cultural industry in Nigeria and use National policy on Culture as guide. Also Nigerian government need to place more emphases on the policy document through her Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

**Table 10**  
**Testing the effect of strict compliance of National policy on culture, its significant roles, and whether policy can enhance economic development**

| S/N | Factors   | Yes | No | Total |
|-----|---|-----|----|-------|
| 1   | Does strict compliance of National policy has influence on Nigerian culture?                            | 62  | 38 | 100   |
| 2   | Does Cultural policy play significant role in sensitizing and creating awareness amongst the Nigerians? | 16  | 84 | 100   |
| 3   | Does Cultural policy play significant role in educating and reorientation of the Nigerian public?       | 35  | 65 | 100   |

Source: Field work, 2024

**Table 11**  
**Data presentation of Internet and Library Materials**

| Year | Textile, Apparel & Footwear GDP (%) | Arts, Entertainment & Recreation GDP (%) | Motion Pictures and Sound Recording GDP (%) | Publishing GDP (%) |
|------|-------------------------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| 2011 | 2.03                                | 0.13                                     | 0.99  | 0.0197             |
| 2012 | 1.99                                | 0.16                                     | 0.84  | 0.018              |
| 2013 | 2.28                                | 7.85                                     | 1.85  | 7.85               |
| 2014 | 3.01                                | 10.21                                    | 10.05                                       | 10.28              |
| 2015 | 2.78                                | 6.54                                     | -0.9  | 8.56               |
| 2016 | 1.08                                | 2.05                                     | -1.08                                       | 0.46               |
| 2017 | 0.82                                | 4.13                                     | 0.57  | 2.29               |
| 2018 | 1.69                                | 2.53                                     | -0.44                                       | 6.03               |
| 2019 | -0.09                               | 4.12                                     | 0.2   | 2.6                |
| 2020 | -7.06                               | 0.2                                      | 0.03  | 6.79               |

(National Bureau of Statistics, 2011-2020)

The Table 11 shows the contribution of the cultural industries to the nation's GDP for a period of 10 years. For the year 2011, the art and craft tops the list with a significant 2.03% contribution to the economy and had its highest contribution (3.01%) to GDP in 2014. However, this subsector has since suffered a setback between 2016 to 2020 - the worst taking place in the year 2020 and account for a deficit. This setback can be attributed to



the outbreak of Covid-19 and its ravaging effect on the cultural sector.

For the Art and entertainment, a progressive contribution to the nation's GDP has been observed from 2011, reaching its peak in 2014 with a 10.21% contribution to the nation's economy. However, a decline was noticed from 2015, with the year 2020 only producing a contribution of 0.2% to the nation GDP. Again, the poor showing in 2020 can reasonably be attributed to the adverse consequences of the global pandemic. Likewise, the movie and sound recording industry also had its share of contribution to the nation's GDP. While this sub-sector of the cultural industry had its highest contribution (10.05%) in the year 2014 to the GDP, a decline was also witnessed, with the worst occurring in 2016 to a deficit of -1.08%.

The publishing industry show a gradual progress in its contribution to the nation's GDP from the year 2011 and attained its all-time high in the year 2014 with a contribution of 10.28%. This sub-sector remains the only sector that posed a massive contribution of 6.79% to the nation's GDP during the covid outbreak. The above data suggest that the cultural industry had a noticeable impact on the nation's economy in the year 2014. Hence, the industry must take a closer look at what was done right in the year 2014, that resulted in the massive salutary impact on the nation's economy.

Further to Table 11, the above line graph further helps to buttress the impact and contribution of the cultural and creative industries to nation economy. The graph depicts the cultural and creative sector as having contributed significantly to Nigeria's economy, it also explains their performances from 2011 to 2020. Of particular interest is that Publishing contributed the highest to the GDP in the Cultural and Creative sector. And whilst other sectors nosedived in the 2020 pandemic year, publishing was unaffected, instead its GDP Contribution was on the rise – which is indicative of resilienc.

**Table 12**  
**Summary of tourism contribution and estimate to GDP**

| Nigeria                           | 2016 US bn | 2016 % of Total | 2017Growth Estimates |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Direct contribution to GDP        | 7.4        | 1.7             | 1.1                  |
| Total contribution to GDP         | 20.3       | 4.7             | -1.3                 |
| Direct contribution to employment | 649        | 1.6             | 3.4                  |
| Total contribution to employment  | 1.793      | 4.5             | 1.4                  |
| Visitor exports                   | 0.8        | 2.1             | -2.8                 |
| Domestic spending                 | 11.4       | 2.7             | 1.4                  |
| Leisure spending                  | 6.6        | 0.9             | 0.4                  |
| Business spending                 | 5.6        | 0.8             | 1.9                  |
| Capital investment                | 4.5        | 7.2             | -5.0                 |

Source: Adapted from World Bank Report 2020; WTTC Nigeria Outlook (2017)

However, a look at the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC 2017) shows that the total contribution of Travel & Tourism to employment was 1,793,000 jobs in 2016 (4.5% of total employment). And The total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP was NGN5,124.3bn in 2016 (4.7% of GDP).

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

There is no doubt from from the data analysed in the course of the study that all the subsector under review shows a positive trend in the year 2014 by making the highest contribution to Nigeria Economy. This suggests that if the sector is prioritized and best practices upheld, the cultural and creative industry is more than capable to drive the nation's economic diversification agenda as we have seen with China, India and other Asian countries.

In line with available data, it is not all sub-sectors of the cultural industry that are given serious attention, meaning that the Cultural Policy for Nigeria 1988 is operating at half its capacity or even less. In the same vein, our histories and culture have yet to be comprehensively documented for economic purposes, let alone packaged for tourists' consumption. Likewise, a number of cultural tourist facilities are at present laying waste on account of poor maintenance culture, management failure and misuse.

The findings of this study have shown that Nigeria's economy has evolved over the last thirty- three years of the existence of the Cultural Policy for Nigeria 1988. In addition, available data shows that the diverse sub-sectors of the cultural industry are contributing to the Nigerian Gross Domestic Product. However, this progress can, at best, be described as a drop of water in the ocean. Thus, lack of proper coordination of the sectors, lack of relevant cultural statistics, lack of political will on the part of government and inadequate competent cultural researchers as well as poor monitoring and evaluation system to ascertain the true contribution and challenges of the sector, have combined to frustrate the full realization of the objectives of the Policy.

## CONCLUSION

The work to some extent has appraised the 1988 National Policy on Culture as a medium for Economic diversification using survey research approach of quantitative methodology. Through the aforementioned approach, a number of findings were realized allowing the work to conclude that, Nigeria's economy can and needs to derive full benefits from the abundant cultural potentials, assets and endowments of the country as envisaged by the Policy, through a wide range of measures including: mainstreaming the cultural sector into the economy of the country; setting realistic economic

targets for the sector; the right application of knowledge and conversion of such knowledge into viable ideas and implementable economic models ``for both local and international value chain use.

---

## RECOMMENDATIONS

---

After critically appraising the 1988 National Policy on Culture as a medium for Economic diversification. using interview and questionnaire to obtain information from the respondents, and also analyzing the information obtained, the study recommends that,

i. Attention should be given to developing the capacities of Cultural professionals in Cultural statistics. This is important to provide necessary data for monitoring and evaluation in a bid to optimally exploit the economic potentials of the cultural sector.

ii. There is urgent need to review the Policy, as well as pay close attention to the additional propositions contained in both the Draft National Policy on Culture 2008 and Draft National Policy on Culture 2013. The implement should be without further delay.

iii. Conscious efforts should be made to seek synergy and collaborative engagements amongst the three (3) tiers of government (federal, state and local) in the economic diversification aspiration of the country from the cultural sector flank.

v. Nigerian Government should provide more funding

for the creative sector in order to create employments for the teeming youths as well as reposition its economy in line with its economic diversification agenda.

---

## REFERENCES

---

- Akinola, M. (Ed.). (2013). *Nigeria's Cultural Tapestry*. Ibadan: The Nigerian Academy of Letters.
- Asesoye Adeyemi Olugbenga. (2024, October 13). Oral interview. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Information and Culture.
- Anyanwu, C. (2019). Nigeria's Cultural Policy and the Needs of the Performing Arts. *International Review of Humanities Studies*, 4(2), 10.7454/irhs.v4i2.177.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria. (1988). *Cultural Policy for Nigeria*. Lagos: Federal Government Printers.
- Matthew, N. C. (2024, October 13). *Oral interview*. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Information and Culture.
- Ihuaku, O. (2024, October 15). *Oral interview*. Abuja: National Institute for Hospitality and Tourism (NIHOTOUR).
- Chinecherem, U. M. (2015). Economic Diversification in Nigeria in the Face of Dwindling Oil Revenue. *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, 6(4). Retrieved from [www.iiste.org](http://www.iiste.org)
- Yusuff, M., & Mukail, A. (2015). Tourism development and economic growth nexus: Nigeria's Experience. *European Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 3(4), 1-10.