VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION: A SOLUTION TO UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG GRADUATES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
This study is designed to examine vocational and technical education among youth unemployment, mostly graduates in Nigeria as well as the causes and implications. Youths are very important stakeholder in any society. They are not only the future hope of Nigeria, but also a major stakeholder and very useful resource in nation building. However, available information indicates that youth unemployment is very common in Nigeria with far reading implications for stability of the economy. Unemployment has a negative multiplier effect not only on the individual involved but on the nation as a whole. This study identified some causes of youth unemployment in Nigeria such as, negative impression on technical and vocational education, total neglect of the agricultural sector, poor educational planning and poor enabling environment. Youth unemployment has been identified as one of the core causes of the rising level of social disorder and insecurity permeating the entire country of Nigeria. This paper therefore concludes that addressing the problem of youth unemployment must involve all the stakeholders and that effective policy means uses such as re-priorization of the Agriculture sector, reformation of education system and provision of enabling Environment that will drastically reduce unemployment and poverty should be adopted to eradicate the menace of youth unemployment.

INTRODUCTION
Nigeria’s Gross Domestic product (GDP) growth rate according to the National planning commission (NPC 2009) is estimated at 6.5 percent. The country’s population growth rate is 2.5 percent, while high level of infrastructure deficits and limited employment growth are major constraints to socioeconomic development of Nigeria’s population for more than a decade due to these constraints. The Nigerian economy is growing without appreciable employment opportunities for its teeming population, which has serious socioeconomic consequence. The growth is crude oil revenue in Nigeria is accompanied by relatively limited employment growth,
and deteriorating education standard. Graduates are intelligent and creative people with the ability to think critically (Grareth, 2011) and who complete for job in the domestic and global labor-market places. Graduate unemployment imposes socioeconomic costs; it is a waste of man power resources, the investment in education and training is unused. This study defines graduate unemployment to include graduates of universities and polytechnics who are capable and willing to work but could not find a job or are discriminated for lack of experience.

Merricu web ster’s collegiate dictionary defines unemployment as the state of not being engaged in a gainful occupation. This can be measured by the proportion of labour force that were available for work but did not work.

Unemployment has become a major problem bedeviling the lives of Nigerian youth, causing increased militancy, violent crimes, kidnappings, restiveness and socially delinquent behavior. Youth unemployment is deviating to the individual and the society as a whole both psychologically and economically. Youth unemployment is really troublesome issue in many parts of the world Nigeria inclusive. In Nigeria, it has become one of the most serious socio-economic problems confronting the country. The magnitude of this can be appreciated if accurate statistic could be obtained from the Federal Bureau of statistic on the number of unemployed youths roaming the streets of Nigerian cities. Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) observed from the excerpts of statistics showed that Nigeria has a youth population of eighty (80) million representing 60 percent of the total population of the country. Sixty four (64) million of them are unemployed while one million six hundred thousand (1.6 million) are underemployed. Unemployment or the search for paid employment in Nigeria has become endemic. This is support by the claims that Nigerian education system is bookish and academic oriented and lacked vocational and entrepreneurial values. The prevalence of unemployment in Nigeria remains a great challenge confronting the government and the people today. This calls for scholars of various disciplines of learning to brainstorm on how best our educational system and methodology can begin to yield result in curbing this menace. Vocational and Business education has been carefully designed to meet basic skills, knowledge and capabilities to function either as a vocational or business teacher or executive. According to Ubulo and Ukwujic (2000) Business education is an aspect of education program which prepares students for careers in business. It is education needed to teach people business, education needed to handle personal affairs and education needed about business in order to be good citizens of a society. Indeed the gains and good score cards of Business and vocations education, Youths have continued to grapple with unemployment in Nigeria. Ekwuzie (2012) asserts that the harsh economic realities in the country today, not withstanding upcoming generations of graduates when given proper orientation and entrepreneurial education can become successful here in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship education is the programme designed to inculcate the knowledge, skills and mindset needed to conceived and start your own business.

THE MEANING OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION:-
Entrepreneurship education as defined by the consortium for entrepreneurship education is a form of education that seeks to prepare people especially youths to be responsible enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial thinkers and who contribute to economic development and sustainable communities. It is not based on textbook course, rather
students are immersed in real life learning experiences where one have an opportunity to take risk, manage the results and learn from the outcomes.

Adiele (2010) defined entrepreneurship education as that form of education which inculcates into the individual learner concepts, skills and knowledge on how to start a new business, create jobs, create business ideas, develop the business. Entrepreneurial studies are inter-disciplinary training that focuses on the tools needed to start a new business or vocation. Because Nigeria is fast becoming a predominantly youthful society with high rate of unemployment requires training the youth in entrepreneurial skills in Technical vocational Education and Training to tackle the unemployment which has reached alarming proportions. This is because the youth represents a tremendous potentials development of human capital which the society cannot afford to neglect. Many youth face high unemployment, joblessness and difficulties in getting a firm foothold into the labour market. These have led to problem of unemployment especially among youth leaving various educational institutions. The youth graduate from school without the needed skills or competencies that would enables them function in today’s emerging society. Manage it and make profit.

Technical and vocational Education: Technical and vocation education (TUE) has been an integral part of national development strategies in many societies because of its impact on productivity and economic development.

Despite its contributions the leaders of Nigeria have not given this aspect of education the attention it deserves. And that is one of the reasons for the nation’s underdevelopment. Vocational education and training, prepares learners for careers that are based in manual or practical activities, traditionally non-academic and totally related to a specific trade, occupation or vocation. In other words, it is an education designed to develop occupational skills, vocational and technical education gives individuals the skills to live, learn and work as a productive citizen in a global society. The United States is not the only society that appreciates skills acquired through vocational and technical education. The Dutch school system is said to pay attention to high standards in mathematics and the provision of vocation education at aged 14-16 for a third of all pupils, and widespread vocational education at 16 +. And secondary (high) schools in much other development – conscious nations have vocational centers that offer vocational training for lifelong trade together with general academic studies. For instance, India and the Asian Tigers’ could not have become what they are without massive investment in technical education.

However, because of recent changes in world economy many vocational and technical schools have shifted emphasis to training in the computers and information technology.

Olaitan (1998) defined TVET as a form of education that primarily concern the development of occupational skills needed in an individual as a preparation for work. It is a form of education which promotes the dignity of labour by entraining work as the goal of education.

Causes of Graduate unemployment:-

Economic recession and government policy can cause unemployment.

According to Keynes, (1936), the level of employment in a modern economy was determined by three factors; the marginal propensity to consume (income that people chose to spend on goods and services the marginal efficiency of capital (the rate used to see whether investment are worthy), and the rate of interest. The distortions in the economy, instability of prices, inflation
deflation, unemployment and the fluctuations in economy activity giving rise to it, could be restored by government involvement and spending.

The World Bank (2012) links high youth unemployment in sub-sahara Africa particularly to poorly conceptualized, inadequate, and ill-delivered technical and vocational education and training.

Some countries implement measures to promote and support self employment in their technical and vocation education training. Canada, U.S.A, Portugal, South Korea, Finland and Spain are good examples.

CONCLUSION

The paper conclude that vocational and technical education a solution among graduate in Nigeria education agenda and how the integration of both area of study can create a synergy for dealing with the issue of unemployment. Unemployment among young graduates in Nigeria has become endemic and therefore requires a combination therapy. Youth unemployment can be tackled. Every young person could be given the chance that previous generations took for granted. Together we can help the young people get the jobs on which their and future and those yet unborn depends. This can be achieved through entrepreneurship training in Technical vocational Education and Training.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
The following recommendations are made

(1) Addressing the youth unemployment in Nigeria requires an integrated holistic approach. Shortcuts will not work. The World Bank 2003 report advocates for a comprehensive model that carter for rural development, rural-urban migration, preparation of young people for the labour market and investments in agriculture.

(2) The aim of every government should be to create enabling environment to promote investments. This includes provision of power, maintaining law and order, and adequate security. The justice system must also be strong to facilitate strong contracts and protect mutual trust.

(3) Education Curriculum must be immediately revised to incorporate skills and enterprise development. A special program should be designed for low-skilled youth in vocational centers. Incentives should be provided to SMEs that promote student internship.

(4) Agriculture is a viable source of investment for youths if it is made attractive. There should be a swift transition from subsistence to commercialize family.

References


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