

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING AS A TOOL FOR SOLVING PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG NIGERIAN YOUTHS

¹Ajiboye Kehinde, ²Raji Mufutau Kayode, ³Oba, Abdulraheem Olayinka & ⁴Aremu Raufu
Adekunkle

¹Department of Automobile Technology Education, Kwara State College of Education
(Technical), Lafiagi

²Department of Electrical/Electronics, Kwara State College of Education (Technical),
Lafiagi

³Department of Curriculum and Instructions, Kwara State College of Education
(Technical), Lafiagi

⁴Department of Computer Science, Kwara State College of Education (Technical),
Lafiagi

Corresponding Author: ajiboyekehinde@gmail.com

Abstract

Unemployment has led to such serious problems as armed robbery, kidnapping, drug abuse, violence and crime which have psychological and economic consequences on the nation. Therefore, this paper attempts to discuss the concept of unemployment with a view to suggesting ways of solving or reducing it in the society. In view of this, this paper also discusses the concept of youth, causes and effects of unemployment as well as how vocational and technical education can be used as a tool to curb unemployment in the country. The paper recommends, among others, that students should be encouraged to take VTE so as to make them self-reliant. In addition, there should be provision of adequate resources by both state and federal governments so that vocational and technical institutions can achieve the purpose for which they are established.

Keywords: Unemployment, youth, vocational and technical education.

Introduction

Technical education is defined as the acquisition of practical skill, as well as scientific knowledge which will be of benefits to the society at large. Oginate (2010) defined technical education as the aspect of knowledge which involves special manipulative skills, creative minds and attitude required to practice a profession (occupation) for the benefit of the individual and the society. International Labour Organization (ILO) (2002) viewed technical education as a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related science and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupation in various sectors of the economy and social life. Today, the large numbers of out-of-school children and students and unemployed youths with limited or no skills is an indicator of underdeveloped TVET. This is worrisome because the ability of Nigeria to realize the vision of becoming one of the twenty largest economies in the world lies on the capacity to transform its youth into highly skilled and competent citizens capable of competing globally.

Therefore, Technical and Vocational Education needs to be given adequate attentions it deserves only then it will be able to serve as an avenue for addressing social/economics problems currently facing the Nigeria. In view of the above, this paper examined the concept of youth, unemployment, its cause and consequence, and the role of vocational and technical education as a way out of the problem of unemployment among the youth.

The Youth

According to Musari (2001), youths are the people aged between 18-35 and constitute about 40 percent of the more than 190 million people in Nigeria. They account for about 52.9 percent of the unemployed people. Osibanjo (2006) opined that people within the age bracket of 15-44 years account for 94 percent of the unemployed in Nigeria. This is disturbing considering that youths are the greatest assets of any nation and they occupy a prominent place in any society. They are leaders of tomorrow and their energies, inventiveness, character and orientation define the pattern of

development and security of nation. Hence, the giant strides of any nations are greatly dependent on their creative talents and labour power. Anise (2010) described them in another dimension as part of the rational population that is sensitive, energetic and most productive, volatile and vulnerable segment of the population in terms of social – economic, emotion and other aspects.

Concept of Unemployment

Unemployment is described as the state when a person who is knowledgeable and skilled in a particular field of interest continuously goes in searching for job and unable to find it (Namah, 2015). Unemployment is a nationwide epidemic in Nigeria as it appears not to have any cure. From statistics about 24 percent of the Nigeria population is unemployed. Presently, Nigeria has many public and private colleges of education, polytechnics and universities that graduate students every year thereby flooding of graduates into labour market. This has led into joblessness and low moral standard. This has been attributed to the fact that most Nigeria graduates are exposed to theory by concentrating on the reading of textbooks without caring to know the application of what they read. As a result, most of the jobs they apply for are not offered because they lack the required skills. This state of affairs leads young people into indulging in different forms of crimes in Nigeria, as there seems to nothing else to occupy their time, energy or provide a means of income.

It is worthy of note that the neglect of vocational and technical education is robbing the nation of the contribution her graduates would make to the economy. In any society, graduates of vocational and technical institutions are highly skilled entrepreneurs, but the society does not seem to encourage the youth to take this route. Nigeria has continued to experience high rate of population growth. This increase in population growth has led to an astronomic increase in the youth population thereby resulting in an increase in the size of the working age whereas job opportunities are so limited (UNReport,1999). The excessive migration of youth has depopulated the rural areas thus making the rate of urbanization of the youth to have increased in unemployment. McGrath (1999) in Daluba(2015) stated that most Nigerian youths seeking jobs do not possess skills that match the need and demand of employers. The

reason given is that Nigeria educational system is liberally biased thus flooding the labour market with graduates who do not possess the skills required by employer. In support of this, Oladele, Akeke and Oladujoye (2011) state that many graduates from institutions in Nigeria lack entrepreneurial skills to facilitate self-employment.

Finally, unemployment poses a lot of risks on the Nigerian society and these needs to be tackled without delay. Some of the notable effects of unemployment are increased violence, crime, drug abuse, poverty, psychological problems, frustration, depression, hostility, abduction, murder, armed robbery and all manners of criminal behaviours(Onkonkwo, 2005). Crime arises from unemployment and this has negative effects on the economy.

Role Vocational and Technical Education

Vocation and Technical Education is an aspect of education that is concerned with the acquisition of skills and knowledge for employable jobs (Ojidu, 2014). Technical education deals with skill and scientific knowledge acquisition while vocational education is training provided to individual for a specific vocation in industry or skill oriented establishment or trade or job (Hornby, 2005). In another dimension, vocational and technical education is an integral component of lifelong learning and an important determination of income and wealth creation and distribution. Olaitan (1996) stated that lack of vocation and technical skill leads to unemployment problem in most countries of the world including Nigeria. Therefore, Vocational and Technical Teacher Education is aimed at:

- i. Promoting the production of skilled technical and professional manpower to revitalize and sustain the economy of a given nation and thus reduce poverty and unemployment cases.
- ii. Preparing individuals for gainful employment
- iii. Preparing individuals for occupational fields and for effective participation in the world of work.

iv. Promoting environmentally sound, sustainable development and method of alleviating poverty

According to Osuata (2004), vocational and technical education gives training and imparts necessary skills leading to the production of individuals who will be self-employed. In line with this, NPE (2004) highlighted the role of vocational and technical education as follows:

1. Provision of employment
2. Alleviating of poverty as the vocational and technical education develops individual's skill with increased productivity
3. Production of competent manpower who are capable of developing and utilizing technology for the industrial and economic development of the country.
4. Reducing wastage of human labour as people will be trained only for available jobs.

In sum, TVET provides wide area of specialized work skills for our youth to engage in and function optimally in economic development of the nation. TVET offers five key programmed areas for man power training and development to her recipients: Agricultural Education, Business Education, Computer Education, Applied Art Education and Home Economics Education. Hence, if our youths are well trained in all the trade areas mentioned above, they will become employers of labour rather than job seekers.

Conclusion

Unemployment among the youths constitutes a lot of problems in Nigeria today and poses a lot of threats. This paper has therefore highlighted the role of vocational and technical education in helping the development of individuals, thus improving their employability. In relation to that, adequate guidance and counselling should be given to the youth on the importance of vocational and technical education as this will help reduce unemployment and poverty in the country.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are proffered:

1. Federal government needs to prioritize vocational training and skills acquisition in order to reduce unemployment and youth restiveness in the country. This should not be a lip service.
2. Funding of vocational and technical education by both state and federal governments should be separated from that of general education.
3. Budgetary allocation to vocational and technical institutions, institutes and centers should be improved upon by state and federal governments.
4. Vocational and technical education personnel should be sponsored for seminars, workshops and conferences as this will help them to update their knowledge and skills in the programme.
5. The Nation Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and vocational and technical education teachers should take up campaign for more funds and should project the image of vocational and technical education in the society.
6. As a policy, high schools in every local government areas should be made to set up vocational and technical centers where the youths could learn some trades.
7. Government should improve funding through budgetary allocation in this critical sector and increase access to technical and vocational education for the ever-growing youths. This will provide the youth with necessary skills for jobs and self-employment.
8. High school students in Nigeria should be made to gain knowledge of workplace culture and value along with general education competency. This would provide them a variety of skills to manage small scale businesses and to gain employment after graduation.

References

- Anasi, S.N. (2010). Curbing youth restiveness in Nigeria; the role information and libraries. Library philosophy of practice. Retrieved 20/1/12.
- Economic commission for Africa (ECA, 2002). Youth and employment summit, in Africa, paper presented the youth Employment.
- Ekuje, F.T. (2018). Grasuates and Employment in Nigeria. Journal of Vocational Educators-2 (1)17-23.
- Hornby, A.S. (2005). Oxford advanced learners Dictionary of current English. London: oxford university press.
- McGrath, S. (1999). Education and training for the sector. Reflections on an international research project. In transformation No.39.
- Musari, A. (2001). Youth and the national youth employment Action Plan, Abuja. Guardian Newspapers march 19.
- Namah, N.K. (2015). The Unemployment challenge in Nigeria. Daily independent of 29th July 2015.
- National Bureau of statistics (NBS, 2009). Social statistics in Nigeria, Abuja: the NBS Publication.

Ojidu, S (2014). The Relevance of vocational and technical education To national Development.

Teacher Education Journal/12 (2) 63-68.

Osuala (2010).Introduction of vocational Education ChestonPublisher Enugu.