

Technical and Entrepreneurship Education- A Synergy for Combating Unemployment in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examined technical and entrepreneurship education as a synergy for eradicating unemployment in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship education informs and equips individual with the required skills needed to become a competent entrepreneur who create enterprise and provide innovations through modern technologies and create employment as well as boosting economy. The paper revealed that technical and entrepreneurship education is geared towards skill acquisition, to harnessing factors of production, create employment and wealth. The study also revealed that technical and entrepreneurship education in Nigeria is crippled with lacked of trained teachers and equipped workshops and the provision of these will enhance the training which will bring about employability. It was concluded that all government sectors, individual philanthropists and stakeholders should go beyond the formulation of policies and massively allocate adequate funds to build and equip the workshop for the training of technical and vocational education and teaching of entrepreneurship education so as to eradicate unemployment.

Keywords: Technical Education, Entrepreneurship Education, Skills, Competency, Unemployment

Introduction

Education generally, is the key to the development of any society. Education plays significant role in the socio-economic, political and technological growth and life in any nation. It is the magnificent instrument through which the economy of any nation can grow. Education can be described as the process of developing the abilities of the mind. On the other hand, education can also be described as training. In other words, practical education is the process or practice of "learning how to do". Every nation formulates her own policy concerning education because of its importance, as it is been observed, no nation can attain an appreciable level of development beyond the level of her

education. The national policy on education (2004), states that Nigerian's philosophy of education is based on the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen. That is, the individual is expected to be educated and be trained to the extent that he will be useful to himself and the nation where he dwells.

Education is the main instrument with which positive change in behavior in an individual is achieved. It is the process of making the acquisition of either knowledge or skills of the individual to be easy. This is why Onwumere (2006) in Umunadi (2018) sees education as the springboard for creativity and innovation that enhances the production of skilled manpower for sustainable economy.

Adamu (2010) believes that development in any society is anchored primarily on education. Education is the tool and process through which the individual and any nation acquires knowledge, technology, skills and the competence that leads to creativity, skilled manpower, employment, wealth, development and subsequently attainment of fame.

In the light of the above, education is a process that can take place throughout a lifetime. At whatever time or age an individual develops, the ability of his/her mind or undertakes and undergoes a training to acquire knowledge or skills to be competent and relevant in the world of work, such a person is being educated and trained. Therefore education is an activity that goes on throughout one's life time. Perhaps this is why Ojo (2005) defines education as a process of initiating an individual into norms and values of Nigeria as a nation. Education, in whatever form thus equips the individual with one form of knowledge, skill or competence to be able to be initiated into norms and values of any society.

Technical education and entrepreneurship education are both different types of education they are geared towards achieving the acquisition of skills as well as harnessing and organizing basic factors of production, including technology to produce result oriented risks that will eventually generate profit and satisfaction to mankind. The competence of the technical and entrepreneurship education graduate will invariably bring to minimal or even eradicate unemployment and subsequently develop the economy of the individual and the nation as a whole.

Conceptual clarification

Technical education is a type of education that is to be obtained in the formal school setting. It has been described by many educators and technologists. The national policy on education defines technical education as that which is obtainable in the technical colleges. It is designed to prepare individuals to acquire practical skills, basic and scientific knowledge and attitudes required as craftsman and technicians at sub-professional levels (FRN, 2004). Technical education is that form of education, which prepares and trains the individual with the different knowledge, skills and competence for them to be relevant and productive to them and the society in which they live. Technical education is any form of education whose primary purpose is to improve persons for employment in recognized occupation (Okoro, 1993). In their own views, Iteku and Asarah (2016) describe technical education as the training programme that is geared towards preparing and providing young people and everybody with the well- with- all to drive any economy to blossom. Man GonPark (2005) sees technical education training as the systematic and orderly transmission of knowledge, skills and values to develop a work force that is able to enhance productivity and sustain competitiveness in the global economy. It therefore beholds on the government and every stake holder to join hands and provide as well as make available all the need and required equipment, tools and machines. This will not just bring to place the needed and required competence that is needed in the workplace, but will also enhance productivity and development generally.

The word functional according to Umunadi (2018) comes from the Latin word *functionem* meaning “performance, execution”. Functional can also be described as to work properly and correctly. Functional can be described as the action performed by a device or a person that eventually produces result. For any form of education to be functional, it must be distinctive from the general education, which simply refers to the process by which knowledge and skills are acquired in the classroom. Functional educational, by extension, functional technical education is the form of education in which the equipment, tools, machines and other gadgets are designed, acquired and made available to be useful and operational in line with modern technology for teaching and learning in the workshop. Corroborating this, Prosper and Quigley (1949) in Umunadi (2018), averted that effective vocational training can only be given where the training jobs are carried on in the same way, with the operations, the same tools and the same machines as in the occupation itself. This means that if any government or organization wants to have a functional technical education, there must be strong synergy between the school and the industry at every given time. This is because all of the attributes just mentioned cannot be compared to the benefits of practical functional technical education. Perhaps that is why Olaitan (1982) in Iteku (2013) observes that “learning by doing or practical work is in conformity with the saying that if I hear it I forget it, if I see it I remember it. But if I do it I know it”. Functionality of technical education is practically the type of education that involves doing not reading. It is the output

of the effective input and utilization of equipment, tools and machines in the workshop. This practical “doing” with the use of the right equipment, tools and machines will bring about competence on the part of the learner, which will subsequently make him to be productive and employable by the society. A functional trainee or graduate will not be rejected in the industry as observed by Kayode (2001). Instead he will be accepted, encouraged and graciously contribute to the overall growth of the societal economy. He/she will either be employed or be able to employ others.

It is sad to note that what we find in some of our technical colleges and colleges of education (technical) workshops is a mockery of what is meant to be functional technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET). The goals of functional technical education are clearly spelt out in the National Policy on Education:

- a) Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business particularly at craft, advance craft and technical level.
- b) Provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development; and
- c) Give training and impart the necessary skills to the individual for self-reliance economically.

These well-articulated yet-to-be achieved goals of technical education may not be achieved simply because the government and all the stake holders have not decided to make technical and vocational education to be functional, practical and skillfully oriented. The required and needed tools, equipment and machines to make technical education to be functional are either not

available. Those available are bad and obsolete. Consequently, learners/ trainees learn by verbal or conventional general learning processes without workshop, tools, equipment and machines. This will not promote skill acquisition, competence, growth and economic development, subsequently employment. Therefore there is the urgent need to build and equip the needed and required workshops and make them available to the learners for them to be functional. This will be coupled with engagement of well trained and competent trainers/ teachers to impart the necessary skills.

Entrepreneurship Education

Historically, entrepreneurship education got a boost at independence in 1960. The Nigerian traders and business men/ women were encouraged by the regional governments in the North, East, West and later Midwest to roll out policies and development plans that boosted small scale businesses. The North boomed with groundnut, benniseed, tin, cotton and gum Arabica; the East flourished with palm oil and coal while the West blossomed with rubber, palm oil, timber and cocoa. Individual entrepreneurs actively partnered with the various governments in the exploration of natural resources and setting up of agricultural processing firms. After the civil war, the Federal Government promulgated the indigenization Decree and facilitated the transfer of the ownership of many foreign owned businesses to Nigerians. The then oil boom and special government financial assistance to Nigerians who wanted to buy out foreigners from their businesses, made that period the golden age of entrepreneurship in Nigeria (Nigeria Institute of Management (chartered)).

First of all, Entrepreneurship is a pack of the different processes an entrepreneur undertakes to develop, own, organize and manage a small or and medium scale business enterprise for the purpose of making profit. While an entrepreneur can be explained to mean any person (man or woman) who creates an idea, takes different risks develops and own a firm, organize and manage it to make profit.

Entrepreneurship involves series of training actions or sequence of operations to be undertaken to get perfection. Entrepreneurship education, therefore, can be said to be a teaching (training) of various actions or different operations (economical, technical and otherwise) of how to become an entrepreneur. Perhaps this is why Bechard and Toulouse (1998) defines entrepreneurship education “a collection of formalized teaching that informs trains and educate anyone interested in participating in socio-economic development through a project to promote entrepreneurship awareness, business creation, or small business development. Entrepreneurship education is that aspect of general education tailored towards producing a self-employment or self-reliant person (Abiogu, 2008). In his own view, Iteku (2014) says that entrepreneurship education is that aspect of education which involves technical and vocational education training (TVET) to acquire specific skills that will bring about creative and innovative ideas for the purpose of creating employment towards economic development of the individual and the society in general.

Entrepreneurship education is the type of education which informs trains and equips any individual with the required skills needed to become a competent

entrepreneur who will not just create enterprise but will provide innovations through modern technologies and risk bearing to create employment as well as boosting the economy.

The objectives of entrepreneurship education, according to Paul (2005) in Ojeifo (2012) include;

To:

1. Offer functional education for the youth that will enable them to be self-employed and self-reliant.
2. Promote the youth graduates with adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying business opportunities
3. Serve as catalyst for economic growth and development
4. Offer tertiary institutions graduates with adequate training in risk management to make certain bearing feasible
5. Reduce high rule of poverty
6. Create employment generation
7. Reduce in urban rural migration
8. Provide the young graduates with enough training and support that will enable them to establish career in small and medium size business
9. Inculcate the spirit of perseverance in the youth and adult which will enable them to persist in any business venture they embark on
10. Create smooth transition from traditional to a modern industrial economy

No doubt, entrepreneurship education is a lifelong training that is not just relevant and important to the individual, it is a key driver of the economy of the nation. It involves training and re-training, which must be taught to the interested learner to

make him/her self-reliant and self-employed.

Unemployment

It should be noted that unemployment is one of the developmental problems that face every developing economy in the 21st century (Patterson 2006). Fajana (2000) sees unemployment as a situation where people who are willing and capable of working are unable to find suitable paid employment. This has been and is still a problem staring at the faces of every good government both past and present. Unemployment is a major cause of youth unrest, armed robbery as well as so many social economic ills in Nigeria today.

Unemployment is simply the non-availability of paid jobs in the face of the trained and educated, well equipped, willing, capable and interested individuals. A record show that unemployment rate in Nigeria is really high over nine (9) million people unemployed (<https://naijaquest.com2018>). This huge unemployment figure may be connected with:

1. Rapid growth in the nation's population: Nigeria has been reported to be the most populous nation in Africa with the population of 140,431,790 million people with the projection that by the year 2020 the population could be over 180million people, given the annual growth rate of 2.2 per cent (National Population Commission, 2009). Therefore the rapid increase in the nation's population is a major factor of unemployment.
2. Growth in urban labor force: the rural area life is very unattractive due to the lack of many social

- amenities and employable industries. This has always caused rural urban migration. This migration has in turn has over populated and over stressed the maximum limit of the social amenities and industries in urban areas beyond the limit that again causes unemployment
3. Outdated school curricular: the average Nigerian graduate is a theoretical graduate who is not technically or entrepreneurially trained and skilled. Therefore not competent. Thus lack the competence of being employed or to employ anyone. This is as a result of the Nation's educational system that is library bias in nature.
 4. Large increase of production of graduates yearly: according to Manning and Junanker (2010), the Nigerian tertiary institution turned out 131, 016 graduates in 1996/1997 academic session. The challenge here is where are the readily available factories or jobs to absorb these graduates who may not have possessed the needed technical and vocational/entrepreneurial competence to either set up their own business or is employed.
 5. Lack of employable skills: because the youth graduate is not skilled, therefore he/she is not competent to be employed; he or she is not self-employable. This is as a result of the liberal nature of our educational system. Perhaps this is why kayode (2001) observed bitterly that technical college graduates are rejected in the industries.
 6. Non provision of enabling environment by the government for industries to thrive: the present style of the government of the day has eventually destroyed or has made it almost impossible for small or medium scale businesses to develop. Lack of electricity and lack of loan facilities has made unemployment to be on the increase. Every graduate is now looking for the paid job which is not available. For a country to develop or blossom economically, by extension move towards the eradication of unemployment, she should create and provide the enabling environment which is required to assist or prepare the young people who are driving force of any economy and every body of that nation for the jobs of the future (Nuhu, 2007) in Iteku(2016)
 7. Non implementation of the TVET and entrepreneurship education goals/objectives: both the goals/objectives of technical and vocational education training and entrepreneurship education are deliberately not implemented. Most of the institutions are mounting (offering) and teaching these courses as conventional liberal courses. There are hardly tools, equipment and machines to teach technical and vocational education training and entrepreneurship education effectively to make them functional. Thus the learners will graduate unskilled and incompetent. This will make them to be unemployable.

No nation's economy can develop maximally in the absence of functional Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) and entrepreneurship education. Perhaps that is why Iteku and Asarah(2016) posit that technical education training is that training which provides and creates employment and employs individuals who are trained skillfully and competent for the world of work. Therefore, the Federal government, state government, local government and all stake holders should not just make readily available the needed required tools, equipment, machines as well as the managerial/ financial techniques should be provided.

Technical and Entrepreneurship Education as Synergy for Combating Unemployment in Nigeria

Technical education, no doubt, is that type of education that provide trained manpower both in sciences, technology and commercial enterprises as well as providing the technical know-how and vocational capabilities that are needed and required for agricultural, commercial and economic development leading to the impartation of needed and required skills to persons that may be self-reliant prudently. Perhaps this is why Okoro (2005) averred that "the role of vocational and technical education in developing countries is to bring about economic and technological development through more effective training of workers". Technical education therefore springboards and fast track the development the individual skillfully and competently to be employable and at the same time be able to employ others

Entrepreneurship education on the other hand, is the type of education that trains an

individual to become a manager and or an organizer of business enterprises skillfully and competently to be able to be self-reliant to maximize profit. It is the aspect of general education tailored towards producing self-employed or self-reliant person (Abiogu, 2008). Entrepreneurship education in effect, trains to equip the individual with the needed and required skills to start and run an enterprise managerially and technically to successes leading to the employment of others.

It is therefore very pertinent to develop both Technical and Entrepreneurship education if we must overcome unemployment in Nigeria. The development of both types of education will go a long way to ameliorate unemployment in Nigeria.

Conclusion

When an individual is trained to be skillful and competent to perform some given tasks successfully either in a paid job or as self-employed, producing and rendering some services, earning or making some profit and also have the capabilities of employing others, such a person is a technically and entrepreneurially established person. In effect, there is the urgent need to develop and sustain these two types of education if we must combat unemployment successfully in Nigeria. On the other hand, it is the well trained individuals who is informed, trained and equipped with the require skills needed to become a competent entrepreneur that will not just create enterprise but will provide innovations through modern technologies and risk bearing to create employment as well as boosting the economy. This way, we would develop and produce skillful and competent technical educators and experts

who must have been given adequate training that will enable them to be creative and innovative in identifying business opportunities. This will act as catalyst for employability and economic growth and development.

Recommendations

1. Government sectors, individual philanthropists and all stakeholders should go beyond the formulations of policies and massively allocate as well provides commemorate fund to build and equip the workshops/ laboratories for the training of technical and vocational education and entrepreneurship education.
2. The government should ensure steady and affordable electricity supply to run the machines and tools
3. The heads of the institutions where the workshops, tools, machines and equipment will be domiciled should endeavor to make them available to the learners for them to be functional.
4. Properly trained and competent teachers/trainers/ instructors who are to impart the necessary skills should be engaged and be properly remunerated.

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