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Editorial-Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2016-2030

The theme of this issue of our journal is Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2016-2030, Setting Achievable Agenda for Adult and Lifelong Learning in Nigeria. The conference was held at the Main Auditorium of the National Universities Commission Abuja, from Tuesday 11th October - 13th October, 2017.

The NNCAE President, Professor Fatima Mohd Umar delivered a welcome address to members and wish them a successful deliberation during their stay at Abuja.

There was a welcome address delivered by Professor Abba Abubakar Haladu and a lead paper by Professor (Mrs.) Stella Nwizu.

The 33 (Thirty three papers) published in this issue had gone through double peer review and were cleared for publication in June, 2018. The articles focused on sustainable development goals with a view to highlighting professional ethics and values in the field of Adult Education.

Sustainable development goals, 2016-2030 brings to the fore teaching and research propositions towards the achievement of adult and lifelong learning principles.

Adult and lifelong learning has become a worldwide phenomenon being discussed at both local, regional and International fora for meeting the SDG goals. It is further observed that lifelong learning is now recognized as the new imperative in today's complex world of advancing technologies for SDG goals.

Professor (Mrs.) Lucy Adesomon Okukpon PhD, MNAE
National Editor.



CHALLENGES IN SUSTAINING YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA: THE WAY FORWARD

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Abstract

Unemployment has become a major problem affecting the lives of Nigerian youths, causing increased militancy, violent crimes, kidnappings, restiveness and socially delinquent behaviour. Youth unemployment is devastating to both the individual and the society as a whole both psychologically and economically. The paper examine the issues of youth unemployment, consequences and possible solution such as potential intervention measures for effective career guidances, technical and vocational education. Recommendations were made which include that youths should be trained to possess skills which are congruent with real labour market demands, developing a special focus on career guidance, and robust platform for youths to develop their creative potentials. The paper concludes that the stakeholders should provide job opportunities to positively empower the youths to make them self-reliant through vocational and technical education (Agriculture, Fishery and Bee keeping) so as to reduce drastically unemployment that could mar their future by involving in undesirable behaviours.

Introduction

Youth unemployment is becoming a serious issue in many parts of the world. In Nigeria, it has become one of the most serious socio-economic problems confronting the nation. The effect of this can be appreciated if accurate statistics could be obtained from the Federal Bureau of Statistics on the number of unemployed youths roaming the streets of Nigerian cities. Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) as obtained in Ajufo, observed from the excerpts of statistics obtained from the National Manpower Board and Federal Bureau of Statistics that Nigeria has a youth population of eighty (80) million representing 60 percent of the total population of the country as at 2010. Sixty four (64) million of them

are unemployed while one million six hundred thousand (1.6 million) are underemployed.

Unemployment has become a major problem bedeviling the lives of Nigerian youths causing frustration, dejection and dependency on family members and friends, who also have their own problems to contend with. Consequently the high rate of unemployment among the youths in Nigeria has contributed to the high rate of poverty and insecurity in the country. Unemployment is a worldwide economic problem, causing poverty and lack. In recent times, there have been notable adverse social, economic and political developments in Nigeria, a consequence of youth unemployment and underemployment, particularly exemplified by increasing militancy, violent crimes, kidnapping, restiveness, Boko Haram and political instability. The Nigerian situation is further compounded by the recent global financial crisis that has crippled businesses and the prospect of securing jobs for young people (Fanimo and Olayinka, 2009). Adejumola and Tayo-Olajubulu (2009) contended that unemployment has been identified as one of the major causes of social vices, including armed robbery, destitution, prostitution, political thuggery, kidnapping and many more. Musari (2009) corroborated this statement by saying that about 4.5 million enter the labour market every year without any hope of getting employment for life sustenance.

However, Youth's unemployment in Nigeria is a product of several factors. The first major factor is the increase in the population growth. Nigeria has continued to experience high rate of population growth, this has produced an overwhelming increase in the youth population thereby resulting in an increase in the size of the working age population. Related to the rapid population growth is the massive rural-urban migration by the youth. According to the United Nations (UN) Report (1999), the high degree of geographical mobility of youth in Nigeria is in form of rural to urban which has been influencing youth unemployment. In Nigeria, youth migrate to the cities more than other migrants and in the cities, job opportunities are very limited. Thus, the rate of urbanization of the youth has continued to create unemployment problems.

Consequences of youth unemployment

Youth unemployment poses a risk to the survival of Nigerian as a nation. The effect of this problem, if no major corrective measures are taken, could be dangerous to the development of the nation. Youth unemployment can lead to desperation which can drive many youths to abuse the laws of the land living outside the law in order to make ends meet and as a means of expressing dissatisfaction at the apparent neglect of their very existence. Similarly, the negative consequences include poverty, psychological problems of frustration, depression, hostility, abduction, murder, armed robbery, and all manner of

criminal behaviours causing general insecurity of life and property of the people (Adebayo, 1999; Egbuna, 2001; Alanana, 2003; Okonkwo, 2005). To check mate the above vices, Career Guidance in Vocational/ Technical Education should be introduced in schools curriculum.

The Concept of Youth Empowerment and Sustainable Development

Though VTE can be a decisive tool for youths to participate in the work force and to improve their living conditions and social status, yet the current preoccupation with the university education in Nigeria reduces economic opportunities of those who are more oriented towards work than academic, not everyone needs a university education, but who would employ them if everyone becomes a university graduate? Graduates of vocational and technical institutions are the empowered youths, they are highly skilled entrepreneurs, and many of them were called "expatriate engineers" who are being paid huge sums of money in dollars to build roads and bridges in Nigeria. Graduates of vocational colleges are rated higher in many part of the world yet Nigeria is not taking this sector seriously. Youth empowerment by VT education is therefore a means to aid sustainable development if adequate consideration is given to sector. Integrating Skill Development in Education for All (EFA) Ensuring that all learning needs of young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes is one of the six education for all (EFA) goals established at the world education forum in Dakar 2000.

The provision of vocational skills training youth empowerment should therefore constitute an important component in national strategies if the (EFA) goal is to be achieved. But developing countries including Nigeria tend to concentrate on universal primary education and literacy, but do not pay sufficient attention to skill training for youths, even though there are numerous initiatives focusing on providing education and training people. This in most case are often small in scale and are not always recognized as part of a comprehensive national education strategy. There is the need for government to urgently consider redesigning the curricula with emphasis on skill acquisition, especially on youth empowerment, if the government target of reducing poverty by the year 2020 is to be achieved. In 2013, existing skills training programmes for the disadvantaged groups were reviewed, policies and institutional environments were analyzed in four countries in Africa and Asia (Mali, Senegal, Laos and Nepal). The experience of these selected countries was shared with other developing countries at an inter-regional seminar held at International institute for education planning (Paris, 22-23 January 2004).

Concept of Vocational and Technical Education

According to Dawodu (2006), technical and vocational educations are the reliable vehicles for self- sustenance, economic prosperity and political supremacy of a nation over years. (UNESCO, 2010) sees Vocational education as the education designed to prepare skilled personnel at lower levels qualification for one or group of occupations, trades or jobs. Okoh (2000) also describes Vocational Education as part of the total experience of the individual whereby he/she learns successfully how to carry on a gainful occupation which involves the development of skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for success in the occupation. According to the Federal Government of Nigeria FGN (2004), vocational and technical education is a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understandings, and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic life.

Vocational and Technical Education for Sustainable Development in Nigeria

Education in whatever form, is aimed at modeling a child or the individual into a better person relevant to his immediate environment. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without education. Development is a process where an economy undergoes social and economic transformation leading to a rise in the standard of living, access to basic amenities for all through knowledge. Sachs (2004). It is in recognition of the above concept of development that Vocational and Technical Education in empowering youth for poverty alleviation should be given utmost priority by government at all levels, having in mind the future consequence and task ahead for sustainable development. The future prospect and success of VTE would depend on the continuation and expansion of the existing training programmes, and strengthening the existing cooperation both national and international, as well as by starting non-formal training programmes for the unemployed youths and the community at large as part of government poverty alleviation efforts toward sustained welfare of the youth and development.

Vocational and Technical Education and Poverty Eradication

The way the production forces in the economy are organized, determines the development process of any country, for most countries, the development of industry depend greatly on the private sector, with entrepreneurship playing a major role. Entrepreneurship is the capacity and attitude of a person to undertake venture, with a risk or failure. It demands that the individual be prepared to assume a reasonable degree of risk and a good leader in addition to being highly innovative. Since entrepreneurship involves leadership, leadership abilities

determine a person's or organization's effectiveness. Hence the entrepreneurship could become a major avenue to accelerate economic growth create job opportunities, many youths aspire to become a successful entrepreneurs, but their ability to make use of their skills remain constrained if they are not empowered.

At the policy level, VTE plays a critical access and equity role in achieving employment for youth, managing work / life balance, and providing citizenship and parental skills for youth. Therefore, expanding VTE is integral for youth in crisis or post conflict situations, tackling poverty, and promulgating cultural inclusion for tolerant peaceful society. The youths through vocational and technical education are encouraged to assume entrepreneurial position, as there is nothing that can surpass the effectiveness of hands on training. (Alwasi, 2002). Through VTE the youths who are full of fresh ideas ingenuity can build up confidence resourcefulness and experience early in life, so that these youths can begin to change the society into a bloomy economy thereby eradicating poverty.

Problems of Sustaining the Programme

1. Climate change threatens to increase in the absence of adequate protection and there is a need to promote the integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems and take mitigation and adaptation action in keeping with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities;
2. Hunger and malnourishment, while decreasing in many developing countries, remain constant in other nations, and security food and nutrition remain to be an unachievable goal for too many;
3. Inequality in income within and among many nations has been rising and has reached an extremely high level, invoking the spectra of heightened tension and social conflict;
4. Rapid urbanization, especially in developing countries, calls for major changes in the way in which urban development is designed and managed, as well as substantial increases of public and private investments in urban infrastructure and services;
5. Energy needs are likely to remain unmet for hundreds of millions of households, unless significant progress in ensuring access to modern energy services is achieved;
6. Recurrence of financial crises needs to be prevented and the financial system has to be redirected towards promoting access to long-term financing for investments required to achieve sustainable development programmes. Over the past years, the global challenges to sustainable development programmes have been driven by a broad set of "megatrends", such as changing demographic profiles, changing economic

and social dynamics, advancements in technology and trends towards environmental deterioration. A better understanding of the linkages among these trends and the associated changes in economic, social and environmental conditions is needed. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, highlighted a range of interlinked challenges which call for priority attention, including decent jobs, energy, sustainable cities, food security and sustainable agriculture, water, oceans and disaster readiness.² The present *Survey* focuses on three of these cross-sectoral issues with immediate implications for realizing sustainable development, namely: (a) sustainable cities, (b) food and nutrition security and (c) energy transformation..

Conclusion

The paper conclude that introducing vocational education at all levels of education throughout the nation will, no doubt, play a significant role in the quest for economic and social transformation of the nation. Vocation and technical education is the hope for our country to reduce hunger, poverty and unemployment of our teeming youths. In the light of this, vocational education is an important tool for sustainable youth empowerment. Vocational education must be taken seriously by the education industry of a nation like Nigeria where there little or no funds is devoted to vocational studies.

Recommendations

The role of vocational and technical education in empowering youths cannot be underestimated as it will go a long way to produce quality entrepreneurs in our society, which can reduce the rate of unemployment, hunger, and poverty in the society. Therefore, the following are recommended.

1. The Federal Ministry of Education should ensure that the curriculum to be used in both secondary and tertiary institutions should be practical oriented
2. Government should endeavour to develop a culture of entrepreneurial thinking by integrating entrepreneurship into nation's the education system to give room for youth's empowerment.
4. Government at all levels should ensure that vocational and technical schools and agencies are adequately funded
5. Workshops, seminars, and conferences should be organize for training and retraining of vocational and technical resource personnel and the youths so that they can be adaptive to innovation and changes through technical invitations

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