



Woodwork Education as a Panacea for Insecurity and Unemployment in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The most contemporary security challenges bedevilling this country are: the kidnapping, armed bandits, farmers-herders clashes, especially in Kaduna, Kano Katsina, Sokoto, Taraba, Zamfara, and north central states of Benue and Plateau States respectively. Niger-Delta (the avengers) crises, a militant group which embarked on massive destruction of oil facilities as soon as the current government came in and gang warfare among youths which almost brought the economy of the country to its knees; Indigenous Peoples Of Biafra (IPOB) a separatist organisation which seeks to break away the entire south-eastern and south-southern states made up mainly of people from the Igbo ethnic group and form the independent nation of Biafra, the Boko-Haram bombings in the Northern part of the country; kidnappings taking place in all parts of the country. All these are linked to youth restiveness, youths are filled with energy and when this energy is positively channelled or guarded, they are highly productive, and hence they are likely to contribute to the overall development of the society. On the other hand, when the energy is negatively channelled, restiveness and its resultant effects are likely to be felt. The paper analyses documents, articles, findings, policy documents etc. The Paper concluded that woodwork education as a subject of Technical and Vocational Education is the solution to insecurity and unemployment challenges, this type of education has many trades that come under it, which are capable of empowering youths with skills so that at the end, they are self-employed and may be employers of labour. Lastly, it was recommended that the Federal Government in conjunction with the various State Governments and relevant stakeholders should provide infrastructural facilities, equipment and tools in the senior secondary schools across the country to ensure the implementation of the developed New Senior Secondary Trade/Entrepreneurship Curriculum.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent times Nigeria as a nation has come under serious security challenges threatening its very existence as a sovereign entity. The disturbing and alarming rate at which crime is increasing such as armed robbery, terrorism, kidnapping, human trafficking, baby

factory etc. is mind boggling. Nigeria's population is on the increase and thus have given rise to various social vices and crimes which in turn have increased the level of insecurity in the country (Bello, 2013). These crimes have become a threat to the continued existence of Nigeria as a nation. For instance, the Niger-delta crises



that led to creation of various and different militant groups such as the “avengers” which declared war on the Nigerian state and subsequently embarked on massive destruction of oil facilities soon after 2015 elections, gang warfare among some of these groups almost brought the economy of the country to its knees; the boko haram bombings in the Northern part of the country; kidnappings taking place in all parts of the country, farmers and herders clashes are equally serious security problems that affects the economy and the peaceful coexistence of the Nigerian populace . The security challenges have exacerbated problems of corruption, poverty and unemployment that are so high in the society today. Some unpatriotic elements among the security personnel use the situation to extort money from the citizens, and sometimes subjects people to torture and as a result of this, commercial vehicle owners have to give gratifications on the roads before they are allowed to carry out their business. The number of poor people is increasing, who can hardly feed themselves and unemployment is also increasing, because some businesses are collapsing, many are thrown out of their jobs. The National Bureau of Statistics recently declared that between January 2016 and September 30, 2017, 7.9 million people became unemployed. The paper analyses documents, articles, findings, policy documents etc., and brings out areas where technical and vocational education and specifically woodwork education will create employment opportunities so that security challenges shall be eliminated in the society.

CONTEMPORARY SECURITY CHALLENGES AND THEIR RESULTANT EFFECT IN NIGERIA

Schmid in Okoli and Iortyer (2014) described militancy and terrorism as an anxiety inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by semi clandestine individuals, groups or state actors for idiosyncratic, criminal or

political reasons. The Niger-delta crises that resulted in gang warfare among youths, which almost brought the economy of Nigeria to its knees, arose in the 1990's over tensions between the foreign oil corporations and a number of the Niger-delta's minority ethnic groups who felt they were being exploited. The militants who were mostly youths alleged that the oil-rich region had been neglected and dishonoured for decades, rendering youths unemployed and without any means of livelihood. Prior to the amnesty granted to the militants, there were not just pervasive conflicts, violence and insecurity, but a breakdown of social and political order and an increasing difficult governing of the region. The crisis cut crude oil output by about 40% between 2003 and 2004 and about 33% in early 2006. In April 2004, Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) cut production by about 370,000 bpd in the Western Delta region. Since 2006, SPDC has cut down production capacity to about 2mbpd (Esira and Micheal, 2013). The Boko haram is a jihadist movement that has the same ideology as all other Salafist Jihadist movements such as al-Qaeda, the Taliban, al-Shabab and ISIS. This movement want to establish an emirate, an Islamist radical state. The movement launched its offensive in 2009 after the killings of its leader, it has killed hundreds of lives in bombing and shootings mostly in Northern Nigeria (Mudock, 2012). Kidnapping is an act of taking away a person against the persons will, usually for ransom or in furtherance of another crime. It is employed by Niger-delta militants to kidnap foreign oil workers to press home their demand. This ugly trend has spread all over the country, victims are no longer only foreign oil workers but include parents, grandparents, toddlers, religion and traditional leaders and about anyone who has a relative that could be blackmailed in to coughing out ransom. Now, militants, terrorists, armed robbers and politicians are involved in it (Adibe, 2009).



Boko-haram insurgents kidnapped about two hundred and seventy-six students of Government Secondary School Chibok in April 2014, some of these girls escaped from their abductors, while majority were in captivity. Similarly, 105 students were reported missing after Boko Haram terrorist group attacked the Government Girls Secondary School in Dapchi, Bursary Local Government Area of Yobe State in February 2018 (Punch Newspaper, February, 24, 2018). Ethno-religious crisis for some time is threatening peace and tranquillity in the country and it is on the increase across the country. Some of these crises are the Maitatsine in Kano, Maiduguri and Yola in 1980, 1982 and 1984 respectively. Adebayo (2010) opined that most of the ethno-religious crisis paved way for merciless killings of human beings, just like the Jahilliyyah period. The intrareligious riot was said to have claimed more than 4,177 lives. In all parts of the country communal crisis have become rampant such as between Tivs and Jukuns, Hausa/Fulani's and Sayawas, Modakeke crisis, Jos crisis, Shagamu crisis to mention a few. One more security challenge in the country is that of armed robbers which hold up towns to ransom for hours as if in stubborn defiance. During the robbery attack on homes, markets and banks, many innocent people are killed while lots of money are carted away. In fact, the act of ritual killings is on the increase. The sad killings and ritual murders of innocent victims are widely seen and witnessed frequently, where human lives are constantly wasted in the quest for monetary gains and other perishable vanities. Youths are filled with energy and when this energy is positively channelled or guarded, they are highly productive, and hence they are likely to contribute to the overall development of the society. On the other hand, when the energy is negatively channelled, restiveness and its resultant effects are likely to be felt. Youth restiveness may be instigated by a number of factors. Unemployment in Nigeria

increased from 3.8% in 2006 to 4.2% in the first half of 2011. The structural unemployment resulted in talents not being used where they are available, hence idle mind is said to definitely be the devil's workshop. Similarly, psychological variables and deprivation are the basic products of conflict and restiveness of any kind. The more widespread and intense deprivation is among members of a population, the greater is the magnitude of violence in one form or the other. In the foregoing therefore, one can argue that the unequal socio-economic development of the various ethnic groups in Nigeria led to inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts (Chukwuemeka 2008 in Ihuoma & Ikpa, 2013).

CONCEPT CLARIFICATIONS:

Insecurity refers to the state of being insecure or unsafe; liability to give way, be lost, or become unsafe or fraught with danger. It can also be described as lack of assurance or confidence, especially in regard to one's safety. Or the security or stability of something; apprehensiveness of change, loss or damage; doubt; uncertainty.

Therefore, Security could be seen as a situation where a person or thing is not exposed to any form of danger or risk of physical or moral aggression, accident, theft or deterioration. Several security specialists are of the opinion that the concept of security has always been connected with the protection and continued existence of the state and its citizens from harm or destruction or from dangerous threats. Those ideas generally grasp that the state is the only institution with the primary responsibility and power for the safety of its territory and its people (Zabadi, 2005). National security is the requirement to maintain the survival of the state through the use of economic, diplomatic, power projection and political power. Consequently, in order to possess national security, a nation needs to possess economic security, energy security, environmental security, etc.



Ways taken to ensure national security include: using diplomacy to rally allies and isolate threats; marshalling economic power to facilitate or compel cooperation; maintaining effective armed forces; implementing civil defence and emergency preparedness measures (including anti-terrorism legislation); ensuring the resilience and redundancy of critical infrastructure; using intelligence services to detect and defeat or avoid threats and espionage, and to protect classified information; using counterintelligence services or secret police to protect the nation from internal threats (Anyadike, 2013).

Unemployment refers to a condition that occurs when a person who is actively searching for employment is unable to find one. It is a situation where those who are willing and able to work cannot get a work to do. Unemployment is one of the social problems plaguing the Nigerian nation. There is no gainsaying in the fact that the high rate unemployment and its attendant poverty have resulted in youths' negative behaviour in the society (Gbemisola & Adeola, 2015). They also claimed that this is because most anti-social acts including thuggery, restiveness, ethnic-political clashes, Boko haram insurgency, and other social vices in Nigeria could be traced to the high rate of unemployment.

Asuru, (2008) posits that unemployment leads to psychological imbalance and associated social problems such as prostitution, armed robbery, and other criminal activities as means of survival and gaining recognition in society. If the youths were adequately trained on the knowledge of Technical Education through the entrepreneurship education, most of the criminal acts like kidnapping, armed robbery, vandalization of oil pipelines, electrical and other allied would have been the thing of the past.

However, In Nigeria today, youth unemployment challenges are causing the government a great deal of concern. According to Idoko (2010), it is estimated

that about 4.5 million youths, mostly educated, are entering the labour market annually. He pointed out that in order to prevent the unusually high level of youth unemployment and underemployment rates from getting higher, the government should take urgent ameliorative action. Also, Obi (2010) asserted that mass unemployment which has been evident in the last two decades has reached alarming proportions and involved all categories of labour-skilled and unskilled persons, university graduates and specialist individuals. There is a popular saying which states that "an idle mind is a devil's workshop" and of course this statement holds true considering how people especially youths because of joblessness have been turned to tools for perpetrating violence, disruption of public peace and all forms of crimes one can think by some unscrupulous members of the society particularly politicians. There is therefore the need to massively equip the youth with useful trade and entrepreneurship skills necessary to elevate them from their present condition of poverty and joblessness, to a vibrant and entrepreneurial youth, ready to contribute to the development of the nation. Idoko (2010) stated that since up to 40 percent of the employment created in Nigeria is through self- or "own account" employment, it is vital that trainees who graduate from Technical and Vocational institutions are prepared to create their own employment. Therefore, the trainers in technical and vocational education trades must not only provide the trainees with the essential technical and vocational skills needed for employment but also with the entrepreneurial skill and ability to create their own businesses.

Vocational and Technical Education

Vocational and Technical education is a comprehensive term referring to the education process when it involves, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical



skills and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. The broad educational goals of vocational and technical education distinguish it from vocational training which is directed to developing the particular skills and related knowledge required by a specific occupation or group of occupations. Olaitan (1996) defined Technical Education as the brand of Education designed to develop practical skills, abilities, understanding, attitudes, work habits, appreciation encompassing knowledge and information needed by workers to enter and make progress in a vocation in a useful and productive basis. Technical Education is the training in technical subjects or areas of vocation to acquire both theoretical and practical knowledge as well as skills in preparation for gainful employment (Osuala, 1999). Technical Education may be defined in terms of the training given in order to advance an individual's general proficiency especially in relation occupations. It is also seen as systematic learning experiences, which are designed to prepare an individual for gainful employment (Okorie, 2001).

Technical Vocational Education and Training

Technical Vocational Education and Training is a form of practical skill acquisition type of education that aimed at preparing an individual(s) for employment in an occupation or trade (Kagara, Ibrahim, Nwankune and Usman, 2017). Likewise, United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2010) defined Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as education and training that provides the necessary knowledge and skills for employment. To National Policy of Education (FGN, 2013) defined Technical and Vocational Education and Training is used 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 occupations in various sectors of economics and social life.

The goals of Technical and Vocational Education and Training

The goals of technical and vocational education and training as specified in the National Policy on Education (2013) are to:

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

WOODWORK EDUCATION

Woodworking is the act, art or trade of working with wood. It is the process of building, making or carving something using wood. Woodwork is a profitable business among a few woodworkers in Nigeria, who are still in the trade despite societal poor image that is ascribed to the trade. This societal poor image on woodwork as a trade, no doubt, could be responsible for low self-esteem usually suffered by the practitioners of the trade, and which may have resulted in the societal view of the trade as unattractive. There are many reasons for which people discontinue with their chosen career or area of studies. Amongst these are: lack of financial means, parental unemployment; lack of communication at home; low self-esteem; and lack of future perspective. The best way to reverse this trend is to bring out the entrepreneurial side of the person. Woodwork is one of the major trade components of the curriculum of Technical and vocational Education. To a layman, Woodwork is derogatorily



referred to as cut-and-join-technology, but Woodwork is much more than that. Like every other practical oriented discipline, Woodwork require skills and business opportunities abound in the trades. It emphasizes learning by doing through cognitive and psychomotor skill. Skill is the ability to do something well, usually gained through training or experience. Okorie (2000) defined skill as ease, rapidity, precision usually of muscular action. He further referred to skill as expertness, practiced ability, dexterity, and tact. To possess a skill is to demonstrate the habit of acting, thinking and behaving in a specific activity in such a way that the process becomes natural to the individual through repetition or practice.

The major areas of Woodwork where entrepreneurial skill development is required include: furniture making; Carpentry and Joinery; upholstery; Machine Woodworking and Ornamental Woodwork (Woodcarving). Developing entrepreneurial skill in Woodwork is a sure way of curbing youth unemployment and reducing poverty. According to Obi (2010) the ugly picture painted by mass unemployment in Nigeria demands deliberate and goal-oriented approach to entrepreneurship education as different from the one presently established in tertiary institutions which is lopsided, lacks practical content, and therefore impotent. It is lopsided because according to him it is only taught in the classroom which is devoid of real world of work experiences. He therefore suggested a model of entrepreneurial skill development among Nigerian youths in tertiary institution whereby the various departments should run consultancy outfits or service-oriented workshops, where students in their departments will acquire, develop and build the desirable job skills before graduation. Ogalanya in Anyaeneh (2010) classified the entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment into three broad areas namely; sound professional intellectual skills, job specific/technical skills and

psycho-social skills each of which require training and can be broken down as follows: Sound Professional/ Intellectual Skills- the skill development in this instance will focus on: managerial/ administrative skills-managing people and materials; planning/ Conceptual skill-articulating ideas in a logical fashion; human relations skill, interpersonal relationship, management- labour relations; supervisory/ Coordination skills-persuasiveness and communication (language) skills-power of accurate information dissemination. Job Specific/ Technical Skills-Skill development in this case will focus on: competitive and enterprising skills; creativity/ innovative/ imaginative skills; investigative/ problem solving skills; skill in the operation of gadgets and personal use competence. Psycho-social skills-Serious attempt should be made to develop: high Motivation/ strong will power/ determination to succeed; honesty/ Hard work/ dedication to duty; self-discipline/ self-confidence/ acceptance of challenges; respect for the dignity of labour- study of the profits of successful entrepreneurs in the locality and reward system-short term or long term, which will require patience and perseverance.

Ways to Combat Security Challenges through Technical and Vocational Education (woodwork education)

Youths have been identified to be more likely to be enticed to acts that are of security challenges to the society if left with nothing to do in the society. Therefore, the current trend in vocational and technical education in Nigeria is that, this type of education will equip its graduates with skills in areas of their trade and that is known as entrepreneurship education. Balogun (2013) attested that young people particularly the secondary school leavers in industrialized nations go through vocational and technical education that prepares them work and thus they form one of the greatest



investments for sustainable societal development.

Therefore, woodwork being one of the trade among the (34) trade/entrepreneurship subjects in the new senior secondary education as identified by Federal Ministry of Education (2011) is also offered at higher levels of education as a course of study in various technical colleges and universities, colleges of education, polytechnics etc. can serve as a very important instrument that can be used to combat unemployment which breeds insecurity in the society. There are various field in woodwork that youths can be trained and made to acquire immense skills. These fields are;

1. Machine woodworking
2. Carpentry and Joinery
3. Furniture making and
4. Upholstery

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN WOODWORK EDUCATION

The above listed identified trades in field of woodwork Education are areas in which youths can be trained, thereby empowering them with skills to become self-employed, such as:

Machine woodworking -This is an aspect or field in woodwork education that involves the operation and maintenance of various machines used in woodworking. Trainings on how to operate machines such as wood turning lathe, band saw, circular saw, thicknesser (Buzzer) and other portable power machines/tools such as the router, spraying gun, etc. are given in woodwork education. This invaluable skill when acquired, can provide youths with jobs at saw mills and workshops respectively. The repair and maintenance of these tools and machine can equally help them to secure jobs that can invariably provide them with means of livelihood. This will in turn make them useful and responsible members in the society.

Carpentry and Joinery - This is also one area in woodwork education that involves

training of youths to acquire skills in construction of various types of joints used in woodwork. Skills such as roofing and formwork construction used in building construction are equally acquired. They are both construction trades. In its simplest and traditional sense, joiners specialised in joining wood in a workshop, whereas carpenters construct the building elements on-site. Common jobs for joiners include;

- a. Making doors/window frames
- b. Creating fitted furniture
- c. Building stairs etc.

And for carpenters includes;

- a. Fitting floors
- b. Fitting staircases
- c. Fixing window frames
- d. Installing cupboards and shelving
- c. Roofing and ceiling construction on-sites.

Other skills that can be received includes;

- a. Bench work-such as marking, setting out and producing joinery products
- b. Site work-installing first/second fixings and structural components
- c. Shoplifting-manufacturing and installing internal and external frames, shop fronts, fixtures and finishing.
- d. Timber frame erection-putting up timber frame walls, laying floors and fixing roof structures
- e. Wheel righting-marking out, making and assembling joinery items for carriages
- f. Computer-Aided Design (CAD)

Therefore, each of the above areas of trade specialisation presents jobs opportunity to our teeming unemployed youths which can be provided by woodwork education.

Furniture making: - This is the art and craft of furniture construction that can be received in woodwork education. Furniture refers to moveable objects intended to support various human activities such as seating (e.g. chairs,



stools, and sofas), eating (tables), and sleeping (e.g. beds) etc.

Upholstery; -This is the work of providing furniture, especially seats, with padding, springs, webbing, and fabric or leather covers. It equally involves a lot of skills such as design, framework construction, joinery, paddings, sewing of the coverings, finishing/paintings etc. The equipment and tools could be purchased with little capitals which could be a loan from bank or may be grant by Government agency or a Non-governmental organization after graduation.

Furthermore, there are numerous areas of specialisation in woodwork that can serve as job opportunities to unemployed youths, which helps in reducing unemployment that create idleness, restiveness among youths which invariably led to crimes that breeds insecurity.

CONCLUSION

The security challenges in Nigeria are attributed to youth restiveness, resulting from increasing unemployment, thus terrorists recruit the youth to carry out their destructive activities. Technical and Vocational Education and training is the solution to unemployment, this type of education has many trades that come under it as identified by the Federal Ministry of Education. The thirty-four (34) trades are capable of empowering the youths with skills and at the end, they will be self-employed and may become employers of labour. Technical and Vocational Education and Training is mostly concerned with production of goods and services that are essential to life. Apart from those trade listed, there are many more trades in this type of education that could be sources of employment for youths in Nigeria. Indeed, job creation for the youths will guarantee security for everyone, terrorists' group and some misguided members of the society finds it difficult, who to enlist to carry out their nefarious activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the identified challenges of insecurity and unemployment, the paper recommends as follows;

1. The federal government of Nigeria should establish skill development centres for all vocational and technical institution from technical colleges to university level, based on core trade areas. This will instil in the recipients the entrepreneurial skills and competences needed to establish their own business on graduation.
2. There should be capacity building workshop for technical and vocational teachers at all levels of education so as to embrace and update their skill in the teaching and learning issues involved in entrepreneurship skill development for their students.
3. Students should be allowed to scout for jobs and also allowed to partake in the financial benefits derivable from the departmental consultancy services; this will go a long way in enhancing their future desire to own their own business.
4. Institutions/departments should reach-out for private bodies and NGOs for partnership to run consultancy outfits for students' entrepreneurial skill development.

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