
JOB INSECURITY AND THE NIGERIA'S CHILD: A CALL FOR CURRICULUM CHANGE FROM THEORY TO SKILL BASED EDUCATION.

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ABSTRACT

In recent years the Nigeria's graduates at all levels have been confronted with the problem of job insecurity. This is contrary to the situation, the nation experienced 30-40 years back where graduates, particularly, graduates at colleges of education, polytechnics, and universities were scouted for even before finishing their graduation examination. Indeed, even secondary school leavers were comfortably employed in the period under review. But today, the situation had reached an unfortunate level, where graduates at all levels stay for years without meaningful employment. We have seen a situation where these categories of people now engaged themselves, in jobs that do not befit their expertise i.e Achaba, Taxi drivers, street hawking etc. It for these reasons, this paper is advancing reasons to have a better and skilled based curriculum which will give our children a means of employment.

INTRODUCTION

Education is considered a means for change, this is so, because it is through education a society achieves, this objective it so desires, so that the society shall become, the desirable environment for the children. This is contrary in the Nigerian situation, where the school system does not give the children the required exposure for them to function effectively. The Federal Government of Nigeria, (2014) clearly stated the philosophy of education for the nation.

- (a) Education is an instrument for national development, to this end, the formulation of ideas, their integration for national development and the interaction of persons and ideas are all aspects of education.
- (b) Education fosters the worth and development of the individual for each individual sake and for the general development of the society.
- (c) Every Nigerian child shall have a right to real educational opportunities

irrespective of any real or imagined disabilities each according to his or her ability.

- (d) There is need for functional education for the promotion of progressive, united Nigeria to this end, school programmes need to be relevant practical and comprehensive, while interest and ability determined the individual's direction in education.

To achieve the above philosophy curriculum must be made to become pragmatic in nature. Education cannot be functional if the child the society has trained lacks the requisite skills to manipulate his environment in a positive direction. Hence, the need to make direction hence, the need to make our educational system skilled based. But the current practice in our schools today is to give the children a theoretical exposure. In a situation where, the curriculum is skilled based, the educational programme faces the problem of implementation Obasanya (2007) has this to say, it has been a common topic of discussion among

educationist, that the major setback for attaining goals of education in African is the implementation process. Therefore in order to achieve the goals of any educational programme, there is the need to implement the curriculum putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study, syllabuses and subjects.

Obasanya (2004) stated that the learner is the central figure of curriculum process. This is because, in curriculum process, the learner is the individual that the educational programme focuses its attention on in order to transform him into an individual that will be useful to the society.

The above expectation, has been the reason for initiating entrepreneurial education curriculum in our tertiary institutions. Entrepreneurship does not simply mean skill acquisition activity, it also includes acquisition of skills and ideas for the creation of employment for self and others. Entrepreneurship leads in the development of small medium and large scale business enterprises which has direct linkages with creativity and innovation. According to Utulu and Shuaibu, (2011) factors that hinder entrepreneurship skills acquisition in Nigeria include poor knowledge based economy and low spirit of competition poor enterprising skills, lack of entrepreneurship, teachers poor enterprising culture, non-inclusion of entrepreneurship in our curriculum, others are, non-availability of funds etc.

Odu, (2010) submitted that skill acquisition is an effective means of bringing about rapid economic development in developing countries. This is because, economic development requires not only an increase in per capital income, but the transformation of a traditional and static society into a dynamic, complex and highly organized one.

Hence, to transform our society to a job providing environment, we need to have a radical change in its curriculum to include skills that will make our graduates enterprising, this will go a long way in improving the employment opportunity of our nation.

SKILLED BASED EDUCATION AT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL

The basic technology curriculum at junior and secondary school levels, has the potentials to give the secondary school leavers exposure to the required skills, which will go a long way in improving the living standards of our secondary school leavers. Basic technology subjects like plumbing, electric/ electronic, building, carpentry, iron bending and mechanics are good subjects which our educational policy has provided. The programme had fashioned out these subjects with the required instructional materials. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2007) recommended teaching materials like grease, engine oil, machine part, fault detection tools, Doors, Windows, building plans, blocks, cement, sand, zing other are cables, harmer, pliers, nail lamp holder, switcher etc. these constructional material are hardly available or not available in our secondary schools. Hence, teaching of basic technology is in most cases in theory, the practical aspect cannot be conducted due to lack of the required instructional material. In order to achieve one of the outlined philosophy of Nigeria. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) there is the need for functional education for the promotion of a Progressive United Nigeria, to this end, school programme need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive, while interest and ability should determine the individual's direction in education. The above philosophy of education cannot be realized when a school system is run without qualified teachers, instructional materials and the infra structure that will house most of these equipment.

SKILLED BASED EDUCATION AT UNIVERSITIES, POLYTECHNICS AND COLLEGES OF EDUCATION LEVELS.

The growing need for self-reliance and the need to have better prepared human resource relevant to the national need and interest. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) in one of the objectives states that, acquisition of appropriate skill and the development of mental, physical and social ability and independence is

an equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society. Ojo and Gbinegie (2006) this objective advocates the need for the type of education that will enable the individual to acquire general education, on one hand on the others, the individual be technically and economically productive.

It is important to note that, the process of education involves development in children or adults, the skill, attitude and values that will lead to behavioural change. The curriculum at Nigeria tertiary education has failed to empower its products with the skills to face life after schooling. This is because the needed adjustment in the curriculum to produce more dynamic individuals that have been empowered to stand on their own has been greatly undermined.

Esu, (2000) noted that, the Nigeria's curriculum has failed to empower its product with the skills to face life after schooling. Students are not taught appropriate skills, knowledge and values which will help them to be productive and self-dependent in the society. Esu had the feelings that, the Nigeria's curriculum at tertiary level, has a lot of inadequacies in preparing our schools product with life sustenance skills. It is clearly tenable by the nature of the tertiary education graduates roaming about from one government office to the other in search of employment.

The need for a functional curriculum that will prepare Nigeria's Youth to be self-dependent is an urgent one. This was brought to light by National University Commission, (2004) had come up with a draft curriculum on entrepreneurship studies for the Nigeria's University system. This was initiated at the University curriculum review workshop held in July, 2004. The curriculum was fashioned to empower University graduates irrespective of their areas of specialization with the necessary skills in entrepreneurship.

The draft curriculum includes, among others, introduces new ventures in entrepreneurship creation, theory, practice and opportunities, entrepreneurial training, finance and capital raising, growth and harvest

procedures. According to the document, the various segment of the programme are to spread out in all the levels of study. Bassey and Archibong, (2005) suggested strategies for its development to include learning process in entrepreneurship education. Identification of entrepreneurship- oriented studies is the establishment of entrepreneurship centre, evolving methods of its development and venture creation. The inclusion of entrepreneurship education is a worthwhile venture, as it will help students of all categories to have understanding world of works and to manage new business environments.

ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES IN NIGERIA'S TERTIARY INSTITUTION

Nnenna, (2011) in her studies of entrepreneurial skills acquisition among student-teachers in Nigeria's University revealed that majority of the students are handicapped in many entrepreneurial skills and that their courses of study have not been geared towards the acquisition of skills of enterprises. This conforms the observation of Idih, (1997) that, there is no serious entrepreneurship education in higher institution in Nigeria. However, the students in business education, home economics and technical and vocational education showed high inclination to skills related to their courses of study. This finding was in line with Eya, (2006) that the nation needs functional education for the promotion of a progressive and united nation. This suggestion by Eya was in agreement with the stipulation of the National policy on education that schools programme should be relevant practical and comprehensive for it to be relevant. Therefore, for learners to achieve self-actualization, their areas of interest, capital and potential should be identified and encouraged (offorma, 2008)

Joseph and Nuhu, (2011) in their investigation among tertiary education students in Taraba State, discovered that, there are ample opportunities in Business Management that can foster the development of entrepreneurial skills. However, if the business

management skills have to be taught to their students effectively in order to achieve the objectives the skills of effective communication technological skills and self-employment are related closely in acquiring entrepreneurial skills. Ekwe and Udoje, (2008), had similar discovery, in their study conducted on the needed skills for management of small business entrepreneurs.

Eziefula, (2011), suggested snail farming to be included in the entrepreneurial skills curriculum at University level. Snails are found in most parts of the south –east and south- west zones of Nigeria. It's referred to as a Congo meat and it is one of the delicacies in Nigeria. The common snails that are used for economic benefit are the West African giant snail (*Achatina*) snail have high concentration of protein, iron and are very low in fat and contains greater quantity of amino acids required for human nutrition.

Despite these value, the consumption of snail over stretched the supply. This is due to the fact that, the source of supply which is the rain forest zones, is suffering from natural and man-made causes of total extinction. Decline of rain fall, deforestation, pesticides use and bush fires are causing acute shortage of supply of snails. Hence, the inclusion of snail farming in the entrepreneurial skills acquisition at university, polytechnics and colleges of education curriculum, shall be a great opportunity to give our young graduates an employment opportunity and economic self-reliance

Arogundaba, (2010) stated that, there are numerous opportunity for entrepreneurial training in tertiary institutions. These include, among others, are the following:-

1. Skill in reprography and duplicating of document
2. developing of word processing skill
3. Printing works
4. Book binding
5. Repairs of computers
6. Skill in management of an internet café
7. Livestock management

8. Setting up and management of fish pond
9. Planting and harvesting of agricultural product
10. Skill in inter or decoration
11. Production of soap, pomade and candles e t c
12. Food procuring and packaging
13. Manufacturing of fruits drinks
14. Land scapping
15. Baking of bread
16. Bids making
17. Tailoring
18. Dyeing of textiles
19. Hair dressing and cuts
20. Vehicle mechanic
21. Motorcycle repairs
22. Repairs of hand sets
23. Carpentry and woodwork
24. Metal work
25. Wiring of houses
26. Photograph
27. Video coverage
28. Studio coverage
29. Production of sachet and bottle water

Social studies education is also rich, in entrepreneurial skills. This is because, the subject in an integrated discipline. It processes different concept, generalization and attributes that creates an easy channel of fusing it into any subject moreover, the nature of social studies programme provides an avenue for any entrepreneur to gather information that might assist him in taking any responsive decision for the development of his business.

Kadiri (2004) points out that broad knowledge is needed for individuals to function well in a complex society. He adds that, the holistic approach to curriculum organization in social studies makes it possible for vital issues such as population, environment, race, tolerance, drugs, family life and refugees to be accommodated.

The scope of social studies education is a tool for the teacher of entrepreneurial skill, Kadiri, (2004)

is of the view that, the broad nature of social studies enables it to cover a wider ground. The discipline investigates the totality of man's activities. Generating understanding desirable behaviours when a desired attitude has been attained, it becomes easier for the Federal Republic of Nigeria to achieve her desire to implement entrepreneurial education programme in tertiary institutions in the country. It also helps to gear up the entrepreneurial spirit in the students and would be able to think of engaging in productive activities relating to their course of study. Social studies teacher uses different approaches and techniques in carrying out his function in the instructional process.

Entrepreneurial skills in technical and vocational education cannot be over emphasized. According to the Federal Government of Nigeria, (2014) technical and vocational education are considered as an aspect of educational process involving in addition to general education. The study of related sciences and acquisition of practical skill, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. It recognizes technical and vocational education as a means of preparations for occupational fields and effective participation in the world of work. It is also considered to be a means of providing trained man power in the applied sciences, technology and business, most especially at craft and technical level. The areas in technical and vocational education that can provide the above exposure are

1. Automobile technology
2. Building Technology
3. Electric Technology
4. Metal Technology
5. Wood Technology
6. Foundry Technology
7. Ceramic Technology
8. Plastic Technology
9. Home Economic Technology
10. Educational Technology
11. Business Technology
12. Office Technology

13. Agricultural Technology
14. Computer Technology

CONCLUSION

One cannot dispute the bleak future the Nigeria's youth face in employment opportunities. It is a very unpleasant circumstances in the country where greater percentage of it youth are unemployed. Hence, the need for the government to review the current condition of our curriculum package and its implementation strategies with a view to create and develop a system that will give our children a means of livelihood. Failure to explore the opportunity, it is likely the country will face a negative social development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the Federal Government of Nigeria should do the following:-

1. The Federal Government of Nigeria should employ the services of local carpenters, furniture makers, mechanic, computer repairs etc. in order to train our school learners in secondary schools, and tertiary institutions.
2. The industrial training programme should focus attention on sending the graduates to the local craft men for their industrial training.
3. Government should provide the opportunity for the secondary school graduates and tertiary education as well as a loan facility to help them establish a business venture.
4. Establish a supervisory agency that will monitor closely the graduates in the area that they are interested to become entrepreneurs.
5. Government should provide the graduates a necessary financial support in the skill acquisition programme i.e Secondary, Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Universities.

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