

APPROPRIATE TECHNICAL EDUCATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SKILL TRAINING / ACQUISITION FOR TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper considered the development of enterprising people: especially youths in order to inculcate an attitude of self – reliance using appropriate learning processes, entrepreneurship education and training programme that are aimed directly at stimulating entrepreneurship which may be defined as independent small business ownership or the development of opportunity – seeking managers within companies. The paper considered national growth and poverty reduction by encouraging training that will lead to the development of enterprises small and medium scale industries and entrepreneurs amongst the teaming youths around the world and Tanzania in particular. The central focus was human capacity building for national growth and poverty reduction, appropriate technical education with a view to incorporating entrepreneurship studies and skill acquisition as vital component aimed at empowering the youths with adequate knowledge and entrepreneurial skills that would prepare them for the world of work.

Key words: Small and Medium scale enterprises, Skill Training, Entrepreneurship, Technical Education, and Unemployment.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The large and perhaps growing number of unemployed youth is one of the most daunting problems faced by developed and developing countries alike ⁽¹⁾. On the average, and almost everywhere, for every one unemployed adult, two young persons find themselves without a job ⁽²⁾. The social distress caused by this situation is well known. The long – term effects of youth joblessness are equally important. The unemployment spells over a worker's life circle are related to the ease of transition between school and work. Furthermore, it is disappointing to observe that the unprecedented expansion of investment in youth education in many regions is not being matched by higher employment levels ⁽²⁾. The present employment situation throughout the world shows only few countries have managed to generate decent employment for their youth, let alone their adult population. It is a global problem, but one thing is cleared; sustainable job – enhancing economic growth remains an indispensable component of any strategy to eradicate youth unemployment. Experience has shown that employment – friendly growth is essential. Starting from these premises, the paper examines the effects of youth unemployment and suggests strategies for the inclusion of youths in the process of development via entrepreneurial, technical education and skill training ⁽³⁾. The debate about education versus training needs to be revived. In an increasing mobile world, the need to acquire the ability to learn is, often, more important than the acquisition of a specific skill. There is, however some evidence to indicate that effective apprenticeship system eases the transition from education to work. Those systems must rely on the growth of enterprises in the formal sector. Investment in better, earlier and longer education might be more effective in promoting the attitude and competencies required for the world of work ⁽⁴⁾. It is hoped that this research paper will attempt to address some of the root causes of unemployment among the teaming youths and also provide suitable strategies to solving them, this attempt is geared towards poverty reduction and enhancing socio- economic development in Tanzania ⁵⁾.

1.2 THE STATE OF EDUCATION IN TANZANIA

A very high gap is seen when the gross enrolment ratio in developing countries of which Africa is the pivot is compared to that of developed countries like US and Britain. According to the "Report for the interregional symposium on strategies to combat youth unemployment and marginalization", Enrolment ratio vary considerably by degree of development, they range from 10.7 percent in developing countries to 44.7 percent in developed countries. Literacy Rates as Depicted by the National Literacy Tests; 1975 – 1992 carried out in Tanzania shows an increasing trend up to 1986 and thereafter begin to decrease. A decrease of 6.4 percent is noticed from 1986 – 1992 (Table 1). The average literacy rate which reached almost 90.5 in 1986 has dropped to 84 in 1992 and is dropping at a rate of 2 percent annually. As at 2000, (EFA Assessment; Country Reports for Tanzania main land) shows that the average literacy rate has dropped to 68 as against the initial 90.4 in 1986 ⁽⁶⁾. Insufficient supply of permanent teachers and lack of adequate incentives to voluntary teachers, competing priorities of survival due to poverty at individual family and community

levels and high rate of school drop - out among the primary school children who graduate into illiterate adults have been sighted in the EFA assessment as among the major causes of the increasing illiteracy rate in Tanzania. Initial indication that follows 1990 showed that there was little or no improvement in the quality, access and relevance of basic education offered to adults and primary school children ⁽⁶⁾. The primary school gross enrolment ratio dropped from 98, 81, 77.9 and 77.4 in 1981, 1991, 1997 and 1998 respectively. The net enrolment ratio was at 69.7, 53.8, 76.7 and 56.7 in the same years respectively. This clearly shows a steady decline in primary school enrolment which is attributed to a variety of reasons ranging from poor learning environment to lack of confidence of parents in the relevance and quality of primary education. Dropout rate has also increased significantly, ranging from 4.6 in 1981 to 6.7 in 1997 and leading to completion rates. Specifically the problems related to this sub - sector are among the following; ⁽⁵⁾

- Overcrowding due to inadequate school buildings in lower primary school classes. This has negative effects on teaching and undermines forward planning of facilities ⁽⁴⁾.
- Inadequate furniture, there are not enough desk and chairs for learners. A desk made for two pupils is occupied by three to four children while others have no desk at all ⁽³⁾.
- Many of the teachers are not qualified since they were trained haphazardly to meet the growing demands for teachers ⁽⁶⁾.

It is worthy to also mention here that the Tanzania commitment to providing educational opportunities to children still remains and is growing stronger with the increasing public demand for education and training ⁽³⁾.

1.3 ADDRESSING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF TANZANIA

In a multi - ethnic and multi cultural country like Tanzania, National unity is the very first attention if the educational problems can be solved. A national philosophy of education (NPE) must as a matter of urgency be established by the government of Tanzania. The need for NPE is to develop the potentials of individual in a holistic and integrated manner, to produce citizens who are intellectually, spiritually, and emotionally balanced. The NPE is normally regarded as a statement of vision for the ministry of Education in the pursuit of educational excellence. The Education for all programme (EFA) of Tanzania must not be carried out selectively or in isolation rather it should work in unity with other educational programme that have been synchronized with efforts to mold a national identity and to achieve unity in education at all levels. The following points are vital in this regards ⁽⁴⁾.

1. Creation / Expansion /Financing of Early childhood care and development activities. This can be achieved via the establishment of Childcare centers, and pre - schools. The major aim of the pre schools is to develop children's skills in the following aspects: social skills, intellectual skills, physical skills, spiritual skills, creativity, and appreciation.
2. Initiation of free education programme for children at the primary and secondary levels, make education highly attractive for the pupils via the provision of scholarship programs, provision of books and other writing materials for the children ⁽⁷⁾.
3. Improvement in the learning techniques used via Remedial education initiative and other initiative to cater for fast and slow learners. An example of this is the PTS programme in Malaysia.
4. The educational background of the staffs must be given attention. They should be granted study leave with pay and possibly bonded i.e. made to sign agreement that will keep them in the institution for a specific period before they can think of moving away from the job. Monetization policy of wages increment should be initiated as it will also boost the moral of the staffs ⁽⁷⁾.
5. Construction of new school buildings and the renovation of the existing one must be an urgent project for the ministry of education and the government of Tanzania. The government must provide learning facilities such as good writing tables and chairs. Classrooms should be made very descent and neat to make it habitable and very comfortable. Curtains should be provided if possible ⁽⁸⁾.
6. Award should be given to very creative staffs who distinguished themselves in relevant areas of education. Staffs should be sent on workshops aimed at improving their teaching techniques,
7. Formulation of good policies which takes into utmost consideration the educational needs of the youths and the entire people of Tanzania.

8. Tanzania government should solicit the support of international organizations such as UNICEF, UNESCO and World Bank in areas such as financial assistance and laboratory equipments, even non governmental and other donor organizations ⁽⁶⁾.

1.4 YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCE

A number of possibilities suggest themselves to explain the pattern of high and persistent unemployment amongst the young: aggregate demand; youth wages; the size of the youth cohort and lack of adequate skills to face the world of work. A number of other important changes in society accompany the high and rising levels of youth unemployment are correlated with a number of other social outcomes ⁽⁹⁾.

1. Unemployed youths are increasingly concentrated in workless house holds.
2. Increasing proportion of young people are living with there parents.
3. The young are increasingly involved in different crimes.
4. Increasing numbers of youths are committing suicide.
5. The level of frustration is on the increase among youths.

1.4.1 REDUCING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT/ALLEVIATING POVERTY THROUGH ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT

The future of Tanzania as a country depends largely on the knowledge and skills acquired by the youths today to face an increasingly competitive and challenging world of tomorrow. As such the government must accord high priority to entrepreneurial and skills training among youths, via the initiation of vocational centers where the youths will be trained on various skills acquisition programme that will enable them face the world of work. Gone are the days when people who attend vocational and commercial or technical schools are looked upon as intellectual inferiors. Many people in the world today thought that it is degrading for an intellectual to work with his hands. It is clear that Africa reconstruction, rebirth, development can only become a reality when Africa is prepared to place more emphasis on entrepreneurial education and skill acquisition programme. Continuing, the author noted that Africa builders of tomorrow will be drawn from an army of skill technicians and engineers and the likes that have technical skills and good educational background as well as artisans ⁽¹⁰⁾. Entrepreneurial education is the total of those organized and purposeful experience. Entrepreneurial education is defined as that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. The persistence of the youth labour market problems seems to demonstrate that standard economic policies have been insufficient. Western governments are searching for new alternatives. In Africa, the evolution of fast educational policies to face new changes is slow if not static.

- One idea is that policy should attempt to create more entrepreneurship among the teeming youths. It is not obvious however, that even a large new supply of young entrepreneurs would solve the job crisis. Self – employment present an opportunity for the individual to set his or her own business schedule. They can work when they like; they have to answer to nobody; and ultimately it is away to become rich ⁽⁴⁾.
- The relevance of entrepreneurship and skill initiative cannot be over emphasized. Entrepreneurship promotes innovation and thus creates new jobs for the youths. This will help alleviate poverty and promote economic growth, and there may be direct effect on employment if new, young entrepreneurs hire fellow youths from the dole queues ⁽⁷⁾.
- The government should establish a system of polytechnic education for the youths between 17+ through 20 years. The system should also address market demand for skilled work force. The primary objectives of the polytechnic educational system among others should be to provide broad based education and training to upper secondary school – leavers to enable them acquire the necessary skill to become technicians and technical assistant in the various engineering fields, and to provide relevant technological or entrepreneurial education and training to upgrade the basic skills of the youths ⁽⁸⁾.

1.4.2 EMPOWERING THE YOUTH FOR THE WORLD OF WORK VIA ENTREPRENEURSHIP / SKILL DEVELOPMENT

In order to reduce or eradicate youth's unemployment, alleviate poverty and promote socio – economic development vis a vis meeting the UN Millennium Development Goals (TABLE 11) in Africa and specifically in Tanzania, one important sector that needs to be developed is the Small and Medium scale Enterprise (SMEs) which is driven by entrepreneurial skills. The open secret of modernizing an economy is to transform millions of job seekers to job givers. People must be transformed into the nation of entrepreneurs who can provide employment for themselves as well as for others. It is on this note that the authors wish to advise the government of Tanzania to solicit the combined efforts of all stake holders, banks, non – governmental organizations (NGOs), and other community based organizations (CBOs) in order to develop and standardize the small and medium scale enterprises by providing an enabling environment for them. The Tanzania government must see it as a matter of urgency to establish a Small and Medium Scale Development Agency (SMEDA), which will be charged with the responsibility of promoting, facilitating and coordinating all policies affecting the small and medium scale enterprises. Cooperative banks must be created and saddled with the responsibility of giving soft loans with long-term repayment schedule to potential investors. The need for small and medium scale enterprise to succeed cannot be over emphasized owing to its capacity to generate employment and contribute to the nation's industrial development. It is on this note that it has become very imperative for the government of Tanzania to take a quick look at some of the factors that are likely to hinder the full take off of SMEs, in order to find lasting solutions to them. Such mitigating factors include among others ⁽⁹⁾

- Inadequate power supply.
- Low demand for services of SMEs.
- Import dependent factors.
- Lack of technical education and skill training.
- Lack of international support by international organizations such as UNESCO and UNICEF among others.

These factors must be assessed immediately, via provision of adequate power supply, discouraging importation and encouraging consumption of made in Tanzania goods. In addition to all these, the government of Tanzania should also introduce a policy on rural industrialization aimed at discouraging rural – urban drift by ensuring that job provision and wealth creation initiatives are taken to the rural areas ⁽⁷⁾. The need to rely more on SMEs is because worldwide government owned corporations have proven to be relatively inefficient, bureaucratic and stifle growth and innovation. It is particularly bad in Africa where political interference has negated the vision of most profitable ventures.

1.5 SKILLS TRAINING / ACQUISITION

Skills training is an innovation aimed at empowering the youths. It inculcates in them the spirit of motivation and self esteem. Its relevance cannot be overlooked by countries in their drive to meet the Millennium Development Goals. It is in this regard that the author also wishes to advise the Tanzania government to take all necessary actions to support technical education which happens to be the apex for skill training / acquisition.

Appropriate skill training can be achieved by building standard, world class and well equipped; ⁽²⁾

- Mechanic villages.
- Catering service units.
- Driving schools.
- Skill acquisition centers: (welding, electrical wiring, plumbing, bricklaying etc). This is aimed at reawakening the practical knowledge of the youths and preparing them for the world of work.

10.5 CONCLUSIONS

The role of technical education, entrepreneurship and skill training under globalization is to prepare young people to deal with the changing world and to empower them to cope with different aspects of globalization. Technical education, entrepreneurship and skill training empowers an individual to rise

...ve the economic conditions and improve his quality of life. In this way, the Tanzania government in conjunction with other international organization holds in its hands to provide the youth with appropriate technical education and entrepreneurial training. To do this, government must put in place good educational policies that will integrate creativity and entrepreneurial development with theoretical learning. The Tanzania government should possibly apply some of the policies recommended on education that were formulated during the conference on globalization with a human face held on 30th – 31st July, 2003, in Tokyo Japan. Some of these policies among others include:

- Technical and entrepreneurial education should focus on problem solving rather than merely the acquisition of theoretical knowledge. Technical education should enhance communication skills and cultural awareness through the use of information and communication technology.
- Technical entrepreneurial education should help equip people with the skills to obtain and evaluate knowledge and information. It should utilize participatory and experimental learning within the natural and social environment and also encourages comparative thinking.

It means therefore that the government of every nation, Tanzania inclusive should begin to integrate entrepreneurial development into the curriculum of technical education, as a way of empowering the youths to be potential job givers with the required educational background. This kind of policy will not only prepare the youth to be self employed, it will also make them absolutely very creative and good thinkers. Entrepreneurship is a creative activity and the entrepreneur is therefore an innovator. In other terms, entrepreneurship is a creative and innovative response to the environment. Such response results in the introduction of new products or services into the economy or in the improvement of existing methods of providing products or services. Entrepreneurship development is aimed at empowering the entire nation. Entrepreneurship development involves the integration of business management and entrepreneurial skills with engineering and technical skills, leading to the formation of engineer- entrepreneur who is well rounded, resourceful, creative, innovative and practical; self motivated and equipped to contribute to the nation's technological, industrial and economic development. It is geared towards meeting the UN Millennium Development Goals anchored on poverty reduction. There has been a global realization that entrepreneurial capabilities are a critical vehicle for economic development. For an economy to develop there is the need to supply more entrepreneurs. They are agents of change; they introduce new methods of production and new products into an economy. They are innovators; recent findings have shown that entrepreneurial development can be best established by well structured educational and training programme. A case of India is a vivid example where entrepreneurial techniques were introduced into the curriculum of both secondary and tertiary education. A series of recommendation are made for careful monitoring:

- Employment – intensive economic strategies that boost aggregate demand must be adopted.
- Economy specific, dual apprenticeship – education systems should be implemented.
- The enhancement of self – employment and small enterprises in the formal sector is a promising strategy that must be backed up by adequate training and financial support.
- The effects of strategies and policies to combat youth unemployment must be carefully assessed. This assessment must be carried out over the long term and calls for sophisticated evaluation methods with the control groups
- The government of Tanzania must recognize the unalloyed role of international organization, and appreciate it. Government must seek technical assistance from NGOs, CBOs, and other stake holders such as banks

On the whole, youth empowerment, poverty eradication and economic development require hard work, political will and commitment as exemplified by the Chinese government that reduced poverty level from 80 million to 58 million within three years (1994 – 1996).

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TABLE 1: TANZANIA LITERACY RATE ASSESMENT ⁽¹⁾, (DEPICTED BY THE NATIONAL LITERACY TESTS 1975 - 1992)

| Year | Male | Female | Average |
|------|------|--------|---------|
| 1975 | 66 | 56 | 61 |
| 1977 | 79 | 67 | 73 |
| 1981 | 85 | 73 | 79 |
| 1983 | 90 | 79 | 85 |
| 1986 | 92.9 | 88 | 90.4 |
| 1992 | 87 | 81 | 84 |

TABLE 2: UN MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs)

| | | |
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| 1 | Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger | Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar per day. Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. |
| 2 | Achieve universal primary education | Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling. |
| 3 | Promote gender equality and empower women | Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015. |
| 4 | Reduce child mortality. | Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five. |
| 5 | Improve maternal health. | Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio. |
| 6 | Combat HIV / AIDS, malaria and other diseases. | Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV / AIDS. Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases. |
| 7 | Ensure environmental sustainability. | Integrate the principle of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources. Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water. |
| 8 | Develop a global partnership for development. | Develop further an open trading and financial system that is ruled - based, predictable and non - discriminatory. |