


**PRACTICABLE VOCATIONAL AND ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS ACQUISITION FOR
JOB CREATION AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION AMONG NIGERIAN YOUTHS**

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history:</p> <p>Received 31 July 2023</p> <p>Accepted 23 October 2023</p>	<p>Purpose: This study examined the concepts of poverty, youth unemployment and vocational and entrepreneurial skills acquisition. It also identified the various factors responsible for poverty and youth unemployment in Nigeria. It highlighted the rationale for Nigerian youths to acquire vocational and entrepreneurial skills for self-reliance, income generation, wealth creation and employment generation for others.</p>
<p>Keywords:</p> <p>Vocational and Entrepreneurial Skills; Poverty Alleviation; Youth Unemployment.</p>	<p>Theoretical Framework: The aim of vocational and entrepreneurial skills acquisition is to make it practicable in order to drive and deliver the purpose of job creation and poverty alleviation among Nigerian youths. Making it more practicable achieves the driving force to creating economic values and creative business engagements by Nigerians. The focus also provides job opportunities for the teeming Nigerian youths, channels their future to productive activities and turn to make poverty and unemployment to be things of the past if the practicability is achieved through entrepreneurial activities.</p>
	<p>Design/Methodology/Approach: The study adopted the mode of conducting literature review and conceptualization of the variables and x-rayed the reasons for poverty and unemployment and deepen how the social problems can be identified and reduced to the barest minimum in Nigeria.</p> <p>Findings: Our findings revealed there is serious poverty and unemployment in Nigeria. It as well suggest that it is of valuable and useful direction to promote practicable skills acquisition among Nigerian youths and that the curricula of Nigerian educational institutions should be more pragmatic and have built-in-job training programmes that would enable students to acquire relevant practicable vocational and entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment, job and wealth creation and poverty alleviation. While all stakeholders should be actively involved in the funding of vocational and entrepreneurship education.</p> <p>Research, Practical & Social implications: This study in its focus contributes to a better understanding of the important role being played by entrepreneurial skills acquisition in achieving practicable vocational skills and to develop entrepreneurial attitudes of Nigerian youths that will form the economic growth of the country through their engagements and make them employers of labour through their acquired</p>

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practicable vocational skills acquisition to better the society. This study also contributes to a better understanding of the causes of the menace which therefore proffers solution to tackling the problem of poverty among Nigerian youths through the provision of a viable, robust, comprehensive and practical-oriented vocational and entrepreneurship education. It also expressed how the collective responsibility of all prominent Nigerians could be keyed-into supporting entrepreneurship programmes in Nigeria in the area of funding of vocational and entrepreneurship education in Nigeria which both Government at Federal, State and Local Government levels and the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

Originality/value: The added value of this study provides insights on how vocational entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes can be practicable effective in a way to structure the future of Nigerian youths and citizens for productive economic activities. It is as well sought how poverty and unemployment can be reduced and make citizens focus for economic growth and self-dependence businesses.

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AQUISIÇÃO PRATICÁVEL DE HABILIDADES PROFISSIONAIS E EMPREENDEDORAS PARA A CRIAÇÃO DE EMPREGO E ALÍVIO DA POBREZA ENTRE OS JOVENS NIGERIANOS

RESUMO

Objectivo: Este estudo examinou os conceitos de pobreza, desemprego juvenil e aquisição de competências profissionais e empreendedoras. Identificou também os vários factores responsáveis pela pobreza e pelo desemprego juvenil na Nigéria. Destacou a razão para os jovens nigerianos adquirirem competências profissionais e empreendedoras para autossuficiência, geração de rendimento, criação de riqueza e geração de emprego para outros.

Enquadramento Teórico: O objectivo da aquisição de competências profissionais e empresariais é torná-la praticável, a fim de impulsionar e cumprir o objectivo de criação de emprego e redução da pobreza entre os jovens nigerianos. Torná-lo mais praticável constitui a força motriz para a criação de valores económicos e compromissos empresariais criativos por parte dos nigerianos. O enfoque também proporciona oportunidades de emprego para os numerosos jovens nigerianos, canaliza o seu futuro para actividades produtivas e torna a pobreza e o desemprego coisas do passado se a praticabilidade for alcançada através de actividades empresariais.

Desenho/Metodologia/Abordagem: O estudo adoptou o modo de realizar uma revisão da literatura e conceptualização das variáveis e radiografou as razões da pobreza e do desemprego e aprofundou a forma como os problemas sociais podem ser identificados e reduzidos ao mínimo na Nigéria.

Constatações: As nossas conclusões revelaram que existe pobreza e desemprego graves na Nigéria. Sugere também que é uma orientação valiosa e útil promover a aquisição de competências praticáveis entre os jovens nigerianos e que os currículos das instituições educacionais nigerianas devem ser mais pragmáticos e ter programas de formação profissional integrados que permitam aos estudantes adquirir competências profissionais relevantes e praticáveis, e competências empresariais necessárias para o auto-emprego, a criação de emprego e riqueza e a redução da pobreza. Embora todas as partes interessadas devam estar ativamente envolvidas no financiamento da educação profissional e do empreendedorismo.

Implicações de investigação, práticas e sociais: Este estudo no seu foco contribui para uma melhor compreensão do importante papel desempenhado pela aquisição de competências empreendedoras na obtenção de competências profissionais praticáveis e para desenvolver atitudes empreendedoras dos jovens nigerianos que formarão o crescimento económico do país através os seus compromissos e torná-los empregadores de mão-de-obra através da aquisição de competências profissionais praticáveis para melhorar a sociedade. Este estudo também contribui para uma melhor compreensão das causas da ameaça que, portanto, oferece uma solução para enfrentar o problema da pobreza entre os jovens nigerianos através da oferta de uma educação profissional e de empreendedorismo viável, robusta, abrangente e orientada para a prática. Expressou também como a responsabilidade colectiva de todos os nigerianos proeminentes poderia ser inserida no apoio a programas de empreendedorismo na Nigéria na área de financiamento da educação profissional e de empreendedorismo na Nigéria, que tanto o governo a nível federal, estatal e local como as organizações não governamentais (ONG).

Originalidade/valor: O valor acrescentado deste estudo fornece informações sobre como os programas de aquisição de competências empresariais profissionais podem ser viáveis e eficazes de forma a estruturar o futuro dos jovens e cidadãos nigerianos para actividades económicas produtivas. Procura-se também como a pobreza e o desemprego podem ser reduzidos e fazer com que os cidadãos se concentrem no crescimento económico e nos negócios de auto-dependência.

Palavras-chave: Competências Vocacionais e Empreendedoras, Alívio da Pobreza, Desemprego Juvenil.

ADQUISICIÓN DE HABILIDADES VOCACIONALES Y EMPRESARIALES PRÁCTICAS PARA LA CREACIÓN DE EMPLEO Y EL ALIVIAMIENTO DE LA POBREZA ENTRE LOS JÓVENES NIGERIANOS

RESUMEN

Propósito: Este estudio examinó los conceptos de pobreza, desempleo juvenil y adquisición de habilidades vocacionales y empresariales. También identificó los diversos factores responsables de la pobreza y el desempleo juvenil en Nigeria. Destacó la justificación para que los jóvenes nigerianos adquieran habilidades vocacionales y empresariales para la autosuficiencia, la generación de ingresos, la creación de riqueza y la generación de empleo para otros.

Marco teórico: El objetivo de la adquisición de habilidades vocacionales y empresariales es hacerla viable para impulsar y cumplir el propósito de crear empleo y aliviar la pobreza entre los jóvenes nigerianos. Hacerlo más viable logra la fuerza impulsora para la creación de valores económicos y compromisos comerciales creativos por parte de los nigerianos. El enfoque también brinda oportunidades laborales para los numerosos jóvenes nigerianos, canaliza su futuro hacia actividades productivas y convierte la pobreza y el desempleo en cosas del pasado si la viabilidad se logra a través de actividades empresariales.

Diseño/ Metodología/ Enfoque: El estudio adoptó el modo de realizar una revisión de la literatura y la conceptualización de las variables y radiografió las razones de la pobreza y el desempleo y profundizó cómo los problemas sociales pueden identificarse y reducirse al mínimo mínimo en Nigeria.

Hallazgos: Nuestros hallazgos revelaron que existe una pobreza y un desempleo graves en Nigeria. También sugiere que es valioso y útil promover la adquisición de habilidades prácticas entre los jóvenes nigerianos y que los planes de estudio de las instituciones educativas nigerianas deberían ser más pragmáticos y contar con programas de capacitación laboral incorporados que permitan a los estudiantes adquirir prácticas vocacionales relevantes y viables. y las habilidades empresariales necesarias para el autoempleo, la creación de empleo y riqueza y el alivio de la pobreza. Todas las partes interesadas deberían participar activamente en la financiación de la educación profesional y empresarial.

Implicaciones de investigación, prácticas y sociales: este estudio en su enfoque contribuye a una mejor comprensión del importante papel que desempeña la adquisición de habilidades empresariales en el logro de habilidades vocacionales practicables y para desarrollar actitudes empresariales de los jóvenes nigerianos que formarán el crecimiento económico del país a través de sus compromisos y convertirlos en empleadores de mano de obra mediante la adquisición de habilidades vocacionales practicables adquiridas para mejorar la sociedad. Este estudio también contribuye a una mejor comprensión de las causas de la amenaza, lo que, por lo tanto, ofrece una solución para abordar el problema de la pobreza entre los jóvenes nigerianos mediante la provisión de una educación vocacional y empresarial viable, sólida, integral y de orientación práctica. También expresó cómo la responsabilidad colectiva de todos los nigerianos prominentes podría centrarse en el apoyo a los programas empresariales en Nigeria en el área de financiación de la educación vocacional y empresarial en Nigeria que tanto el gobierno a nivel federal, estatal y local como las organizaciones no gubernamentales. (ONG).

Originalidad/valor: El valor agregado de este estudio proporciona información sobre cómo los programas de adquisición de habilidades empresariales vocacionales pueden ser viables y efectivos para estructurar el futuro de los jóvenes y ciudadanos nigerianos para actividades económicas productivas. También se busca cómo reducir la pobreza y el desempleo y hacer que los ciudadanos se centren en el crecimiento económico y en las empresas autodependientes.

Palabras clave: Habilidades Vocacionales y Empresariales, Mitigación de la pobreza, Desempleo Juvenil.

INTRODUCTION

Of all the socio-economic and political problems facing Nigeria in the last two decades, none is at critical, devastating, persistent and agonizing as the problem of poverty among the teeming Nigerian youths. This virulent and herculean problem of poverty among Nigerian youths has been widely attributed to high rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria. No nation can effectively achieve its employment goals and alleviate poverty completely, without

emphasis on vocational and entrepreneurship education, which equips individuals with vocational and entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, right attitude to work and re-sharpens their talents, natural endowments and competencies, so as to make such individuals self-reliant and successful entrepreneurs and eradicate poverty completely. It is very disheartening that the Nigeria educational system in the last two decades has been producing many secondary school leavers and graduates of tertiary educational institutions who are certificated, but jobless. These Nigerian youths have only been trained to be seekers of white-collar jobs rather than being educated to be self-reliant by venturing into economic activities. Furthermore, many parents and guardians hitherto sent their children and wards to schools for the purpose of passing their examinations and acquire relevant certificates that would enable them to secure well-paid jobs later in future, but ironically, these graduates and school leavers end up in frustration when they could not secure white-collar jobs in Government ministries and parastatals, corporate organizations and private firms.

There is a large turnout of graduates every year, from Nigeria tertiary educational institutions who joined the astronomical number of unemployed youths in the labour market. According to Anydaike, Emeh & Ukah (2012), “the youth unemployment in Nigeria is rapidly increasing with the disappearance of jobs in the public service and the turning out of an estimated 120, 000 graduates annually by Nigerian Universities and Polytechnics”. Also, Ogunjobi (2014), affirmed that “the available jobs in Nigerian labour market are either disappearing or shrinking leading to a situation that more people are jostling for fewer jobs”. According National Bureau of Statistics (2021), the unemployment rate comparism with other countries of the world, ranks Nigeria as 41st country with highest unemployment rate out of 181 countries of the world. Balogun (2010), declared that, “Nigeria has one of the highest rates of unemployment figures in the world and that Nigerian youths are the hardest hit by the menace of unemployment”. Also, Abiodun, Irefin & Olaposi (2015), noted that, “graduate unemployment becomes inevitable because skills which many job seekers possess do not match the modern needs and demands of employees in Nigeria”. Thus, it is becoming apparent that the curricula of the entire educational system in Nigeria should shift from passing examinations and the acquiring certificates to acquisition of practical and salable and relevant skills for self-job creation and self-reliant economically and for poverty alleviation. As Afolabi (2017), succinctly remarked, “any form of education that does not address the comprehensive tendencies of the individual members of the society and place high premium on skills acquisition is not worth the name”.

Nigeria returned to democratic system of government on 29th May, 1999, after a long-term political interregnum. The Federal Government in Nigeria in this Fourth Republic nurtured the idea of alleviating poverty, conservatism, unemployment, illiteracy and other social vices plaguing Nigeria and introduced some schemes aimed at making education accessible to all citizens irrespective of gender, racial, ethnic, tribal, religious and political affiliations. These lofty schemes include introduction of free Universal Basic Education for nine years of a child's schooling in 1999; highly subsidized secondary education in public schools; placing high premium on women education; introducing Nomadic Education; establishment of National Open University and encouraging the establishment of Private tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria. Also, quota-based admission system into Nigeria Public tertiary educational institutions was introduced and diversification of school curricula was given high premium, so as to ensure that all school leavers and graduates of tertiary institutions are well equipped with vibrant vocational and entrepreneurial skills, values and attitudes for entrepreneurial activities. Despite all these concerted efforts made by the Federal Government of Nigeria, poverty, youth unemployment and other social vices continue to plague the nation. Erinsakin (2014), remarked that "youth unemployment is cog in the wheel of socio-peace stability in the country". The myriad of socio-vices in the nation, such as prostitution, human rituals and trafficking, banditry, armed robbery, scams, religious hypocrisy, oil pipe-line vandalisation and other crises are traceable to poverty and youth unemployment. Poverty among Nigerian youths has become a critical and challenging problem and continues to feature prominently in many national newspapers and magazines and Broadcasting Corporations in Nigeria. If the teeming youth population of Nigeria continues to wallop in abject poverty as a result of joblessness and unemployment, the economic growth of Nigeria will be grossly retarded. No wonder, why the prevalent of problem of insecurity of lives and property being witnessed in various parts of Nigeria, such as Boko Haram insurgencies in the North-East, oil bunkering and ethnic militancy in the South-South and incessant cases of kidnapping of people for ransom or ritual in the South-East and South-West and the armed banditry and terrorism across the length and breadth of Nigeria, which have their genesis in poverty, joblessness and unemployment among the youths remain unabated.

As a way of alleviating poverty among Nigerian youths, the Federal Government of Nigeria in collaboration with the private sector set up the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in 2001, to empower the poor and ensure masses participation in the economic development processes. The programme seeks to involve communities, cooperative

societies and individuals by empowering the youth capacity to become more productive. The NAPEP also developed some schemes, aimed at generating employment opportunities for impoverished Nigerian youths with a view to alleviating poverty and enhancing national development. The programme was arranged into four schemes. The first scheme was the Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), which was concerned with providing unemployed youth, opportunities in skills acquisition, employment and wealth generation. The second phase of the scheme was the Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme (RIDS), to ensure that the provision and development of infrastructural needs in the areas of transport, energy, water and communication, quality primary and special education, strengthening the economic power of farmers, providing primary health care especially in rural areas. The third phase of the scheme was the Social Welfare Services (SOWESS), which aims at ensuring the provision of basic social services, quality primary and special education, strengthening the economic power of farmers and providing primary health care. The fourth phase of the scheme was the Natural Resources Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS), (Omoniyi, 2013). Other schemes include Social Welfare Scheme (SWS) in 2004, Youth Empowerment and Development Initiatives (YEDI) in 2011; Presidential Youth Empowerment Scheme (PYES) in 2016. National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) in 2014 with modifications. Micro-Finance Coordinating Scheme (MFCS) in 2005 and was revised in April, 2018 (CBN, 2021). Youth Entrepreneurship Development Programme (YEDP) was created in 2016; Capacity Enhancement Scheme (CES), which was created from National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP); Community Economic Sensitization Scheme (CESS); and National Resources Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDSC). According to Burhan, Turki & Alia (2023), emphasized that, to make entrepreneurship practicable, requires making it innovative education in order to receive wide attention at all levels of education and it has led to structuring entrepreneurship education into curricular of secondary and tertiary levels of education. This direction has really helped the developed countries build the youths productively and engage in innovative thinking and in turn make it practicable.

It is, however, disheartening that inspite of the lofty goals of these schemes to alleviate poverty among Nigerian youths, the various reports on the programmes clearly indicated that they have been marred with several obstacles such as poor planning, defective implementation strategies, paucity of funds, lack of political will, corruption, misappropriation of fund, and poor monitoring of the programmes thus indicating that poverty and unemployment among Nigerian youths are still lingering and unabated. Thus, the lofty goal of job creation and poverty

alleviation among Nigerian youths can only be realized through a viable vocational and entrepreneurship education, which empowers the youths with skills and competencies to become self-reliant. Thus, the study specifically set out to ascertain the extent to which the problem of poverty and joblessness among youths in Nigeria could be alleviated through the acquisition of appropriate vocational and entrepreneurial skills.

The main objective of this study is to determine the extent to which the problem of poverty and joblessness among youths in Nigeria could be alleviated through the acquisition of vocational and entrepreneurial skills for job creation and self-reliance.

The specific objectives are to:

- (a) Take a cursory look at the concepts of poverty, youth unemployment and vocational and entrepreneurial skills;
- (b) Identify the specific factors responsible for high rate of poverty and unemployment among youths in Nigeria;
- (c) Shed more light into the inevitable need for Nigerian youths to acquire vocational and entrepreneurial skills particularly at this critical period of socio-economic and political vicissitudes;
- (d) Identify the various vocations that the Nigerian youths can take up towards ameliorating the problem of poverty and joblessness particularly in this period of uncertainty in Nigeria; and
- (e) Set up a model of a viable vocational and entrepreneurship education for alleviating the problem of poverty and youth unemployment in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Poverty: The term “poverty” is aptly defined by Afolabi & Yusuf (2014), as a “condition in which the income of an individual is grossly insufficient to meet such individual’s subsistence needs such as nutritious food, portable water, comfortable shelter, high quality medical services and basic education”. The World Bank has listed Nigeria as one of the poorest countries of the world. Over 80.0% of the teeming population of Nigeria are walloping in abject poverty. These poor Nigerians could no longer participate effectively in the various socio-economic activities in their communities due to not having enough money to feed, clothe and shelter their family and not having jobs or sources of livelihood and also lack equilateral security to obtain credit facilities from affluent or wealthy individuals or financial institutions.

Youth Unemployment: Adetayo (2017), simply described youth unemployment as “a situation whereby there are qualified youths who are willing and able to work, but could not secure jobs”. Thus, youth unemployment connotes a condition of joblessness, in which physically strong, intellectually curious and mentally alert youths, who are willing to work at the prevailing wage rate, could not secure gainful jobs. The rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria is rapidly increasing, especially with the disappearance of jobs in the public service and the large turnout of school leavers and graduates annually from Nigerian educational institutions, who join the astronomical number of youths in the labour market.

Vocational and Entrepreneurial Skills: The vocational and entrepreneurial skills are the skills acquired by the individuals through vocational and entrepreneurship education which strengthen such individuals with vocational competence, industrial experience and desirable ethical orientation towards sustainable development. Vocational and entrepreneurship education essentially equips the youth with skills, knowledge and values which transform them into enterprising youths by immersing them in real life learning experiences whereby they can take initiatives, responsibility and risks, manage results, learn from the outcomes and prepare for uncertainties towards achieving their final goals.

Cause of Poverty among Nigerian Youths

The intriguing question that imbues the mind at this juncture is “what are the specific factors responsible for poverty among Nigerian youths? The specific factors that pave way to poverty among Nigerian youths are aptly discussed as follows:

Ignorance of the socio-economic values of traditional education in Nigeria

Traditional education is a form of education that makes the individuals self-reliant as the vocational and entrepreneurial skills acquired under Nigeria traditional education could be utilized for some profitable commercial ventures. Ironically, many Nigerian youths are completely ignorant of socio-economic values inherent in traditional education in Nigeria. They erroneously perceive traditional education as being primitive, conservative, and barbaric and outdated in content, nature and delivery. Unless the Nigerian youths are aware that traditional education is employment-oriented and is geared towards meeting the basic needs of the individuals within the community. Nigerian youths shall continue to remain idle, jobless and wallow in abject poverty.

Defective economic policies put in place to revamp the ailing economy

The Federal Government of Nigeria put in place some economic policies aimed at revamping the ailing economy, such economic policies include Second-tier Foreign Exchange Market System (SFEM), Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), Naira Devaluation Policy, Petroleum Products Regulatory Policy and so on. These economic policies have proved defective as they have brought hardship and poverty on the citizens. It is also worrisome that these defective economic policies have led to hyper-inflation in the country, which forced many private and public firms, companies, industrial establishments and corporations to retrench many youths under the inimical down-sizing policy.

Lack of vocational and entrepreneurial skills

It is disheartening that the skills that many job seekers, particularly the school leavers and graduates of tertiary educational institutions, possess do not match the modern needs and demands of employers in Nigeria. It thus becomes expedient that the curricula of levels of education in Nigeria should be diversified and shift from passing examinations and acquiring certificates to acquisition of practical, salable, relevant and appropriate vocational and entrepreneurial skills for job creation and employment generation for others.

Privatization of Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) by the Federal Government

It is disheartening that the privatization of the Federal Government owned Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), which hitherto paves way to irregular electricity power supply had forced many labour-intensive industries, firms and companies to either retrench their workers or fold up and relocate to other neighbouring West African countries like Republic of Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast, and Sierra Leone. This pathetic and agonizing situation has further aggravated poverty in Nigeria.

Inadequate infrastructural facilities in Nigeria

In Nigeria, there are various infrastructural facilities that are required for all kinds of economic activities. These include good road network, portable water supply, uninterrupted electricity power supply, information and communication technology facilities and others. Ironically, these infrastructural facilities are not adequately available in Nigeria. Even the few available facilities are either not fully functional or defective. Thus, as long as these

infrastructural facilities are inadequate, non-functional, defective or non-existent, then Nigerian and foreign investors will not be able to fully carry out their lofty economic activities in Nigeria. This critical situation has further worsened the problem of poverty and unemployment among Nigerian youths.

Misappropriation of funds earmarked by government for poverty alleviation

In the last two decades, the Federal Government developed some schemes, which have been earlier reported in this research. These schemes specifically aimed at generating employment opportunities for the impoverished Nigerians youths, with a view to alleviating poverty among the youths and ensuring sustainable development in Nigeria. It is, however, disheartening that these funds are being squandered, misappropriated or mismanaged by some corrupt Government officials to whom they are entrusted. Consequently, the Nigerian youths who are supposed to be beneficiaries are subjected to deprivation and poverty.

Socio-political vicissitudes and resentments in Nigeria

Many affluent and wealthy politicians in Nigeria today, take joy in recruiting many jobless Nigerian youths as registered members of the Youth Wings of their political parties, by enticing such recruited Nigerian youths with money, cars, expensive cellular phones, party vests and other ostentatious materials. Some of the youths are often equipped with dangerous weapons such as, guns, cutlasses, knives, axe and chemicals which can be unleashed on the political opponents of their mentors. Such recruited thugs have no respect for the elders and constituted authority except their conservative political mentors. As these political thugs among the youths are not gainfully employed, they continue to wallop in abject poverty.

Desire to become young Millionaires Overnight

The fear of unknown future has compelled many jobless Nigerian youths to nurse the ambition of becoming young millionaires, without involving in any dignified job. Some of these over-ambitious youths are delighted in carrying out all forms of nefarious activities such as cyber-café, crimes, falsification of records, cultism, bunkering, prostitution, impersonation, kidnapping of people for ransoms or rituals and other criminal activities. All these forms of criminalities do not only aggravate the problem of poverty and youth, unemployment, but also portray bleak future for Nigeria.

Poor saving habit

Many Nigerian youth with very meager income shows higher propensity for the consumption of ostentatious and very expensive foreign materials, than saving part of the meager income received. These poor saving habits lead to low investible fund and consequently results to low investment. The low investment will pave way to low productivity and vicious circle of poverty becomes inevitable.

The Need for Youths to Acquire Vocational and Entrepreneurial Skills

It becomes highly imperatives for Nigeria youths to acquire vocational and entrepreneurial skills, particularly in this critical period of uncertainty, socio-political vicissitudes and resentments in Nigeria, due to the following reasons:

Alleviation of problem of poverty and unemployment among nigerian youths

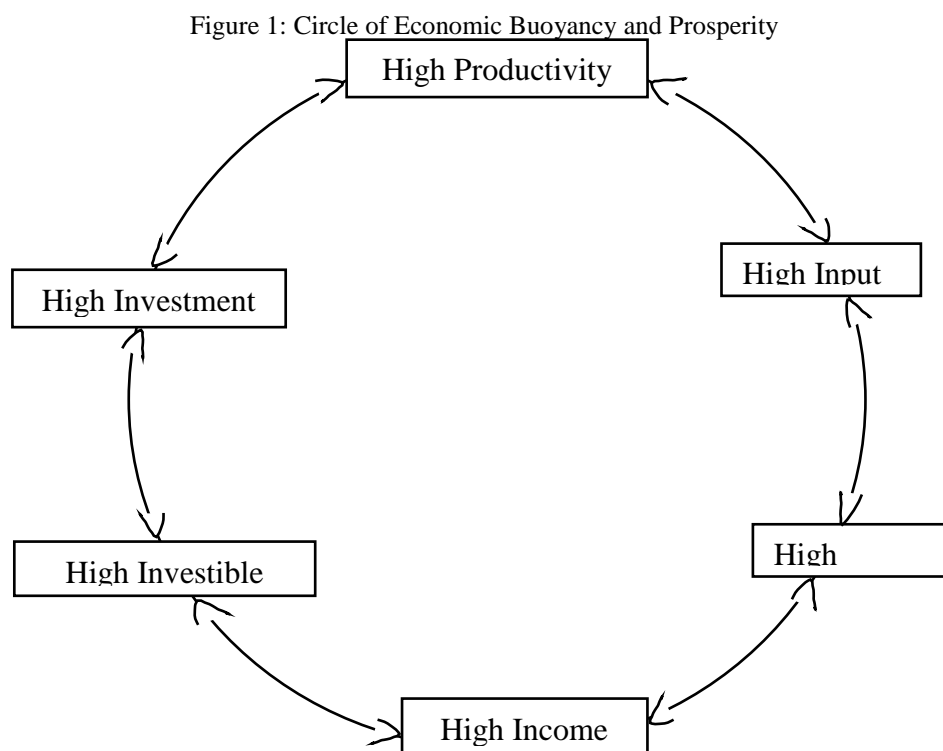
Acquisition of vocational and entrepreneurial skills by Nigerian youths through viable vocational and entrepreneurship education would enable the youths to be effective entrepreneurs who can hire other factors of production such as, capital, land labour for the generation of income and creation of utilities and wealth. This enterprising endeavor will undoubtedly go a long way in alleviating the problem of poverty and unemployment among Nigerian youths.

Crime reduction in nigeria

Nigerian youths who have been taking solace in criminal activities and all forms of social vices, as result of poverty and joblessness; would definitely jettison these nefarious activities after acquiring vocational and entrepreneurial skills that would make them gainfully employed. When Nigerian youths who have acquired vocational and entrepreneurial skills are gainfully employed, all forms of criminalities and social vices such as terrorism, banditry, kidnapping of people for ransoms or rituals, insecurity, prostitution, political thuggery, assassination, cultism, bunkering and other vices will be curtailed. This will pave way to conducive atmosphere for massive investment and further enhance employment generation for other youths in Nigeria.

Metamorphosis of vicious circle of poverty to circle of economic buoyancy and Prosperity in Nigeria

Acquisition of vocational and entrepreneurial skills by Nigerian youths will undoubtedly make the youths more enterprising and focusing attention on high production of goods and services through their managerial expertise. Such high productivity requires more input, which paves way to high outputs and more income will be generated. This will compel the Nigerian youths to invest more and produce more by acquiring more inputs. This consequently results to high output and the vicious circle of poverty is broken and metamorphosed to the circle of economic buoyancy and prosperity as presented in figure 1 below.



Source: Akinola, E. T, Laosebikan, J. O, Akinbode, J. O, Afolabi, F. O. and Olamiti, A. O. (2023, Field work).

Accelerated transformation and sustainable development in Nigeria

Acquisition of vocational and entrepreneurial skills by Nigerian youths particularly in its critical period of socio-political vicissitudes, uncertainties and resentments in Nigeria, will compel the Nigerian youths to set up various types of business enterprises, which in turn promote the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). As ICTs utilization continues to boost business enterprises in Nigeria, the rate of poverty and youth unemployment will be drastically reduced, and this will pave way to accelerated transformation and sustainable development in Nigeria.

Employment generation for idle school leavers and political thugs in Nigeria

Acquisition of vocational and entrepreneurial skills by Nigerian youths will undoubtedly compel them to set up various types of business enterprises, which will in turn inspire them to employ many idle and jobless school leavers and political thugs to boost their productivity. Moreover, the idle capital in some financial institutions and abandoned land in various communities in Nigeria would be gainfully used for various economic ventures that would further pave way to sustainable development in Nigeria.

Rejuvenation of Nigerian economy

Acquisition of vocational and entrepreneurial skills by Nigerian youths would enable the youths to use their managerial expertise to boost productivity in their business enterprises. The high productivity will compel them to acquire more input which paves way to high output and substantial income will be realized. This will further spur these Nigerian youths to invest more and produce more, thus rejuvenating Nigerian economy and alleviation of poverty among Nigerian youths.

Enhancing agricultural productivity in Nigeria

The various small- and large-scale firms, companies and industries set up by Nigerian youths, who have acquired vocational and entrepreneurial skills will require raw materials for them to flourish. To minimize cost of importation of raw materials, these young enterprising Nigerian youths would source for the raw materials locally. Thus, utilization of locally produced food and cash crops by these young entrepreneurs in Nigeria will go a long way in enhancing agricultural productivity. Also, effective utilization of locally produced food and cash crops in the production of goods and services in the country will go a long way in reducing over dependence of Nigeria on imported goods and improve its balance of payment. While the astronomical rate of poverty and youth unemployment will be drastically reduced in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted review of an approach that is systematic in order for the identification and to analyze the relevant literature vocational entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes, concepts of poverty alleviation and unemployment in Nigeria. The conduct of extensive search was carried out in reputable relevant published journals within the last decade

for the exploitation of the targeted keywords for easy identification of relevant articles. Through a rigorous screening process, 35 relevant articles on the keywords were at first identified and

Constricted to the selection of 22 as the final articles to provide the most relevant guide and insightful references on vocational entrepreneurial skills acquisition. At the elementary stage where literature analysis was carried out, the conduct of directional mapping exercise was initiated to guide the comprehensive overview of the key concepts and themes related to entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes in Nigeria. This exercise of mapping accentuated focus and foundation for the succeeding in-depth analysis and synthesis of the selected articles. The articles were therefore ultimately decided for inclusion in this review. The review therefore provided clear understanding on ways to make vocational entrepreneurial skills acquisition programmes practicable for solving the problems of poverty and unemployment in Nigeria society.

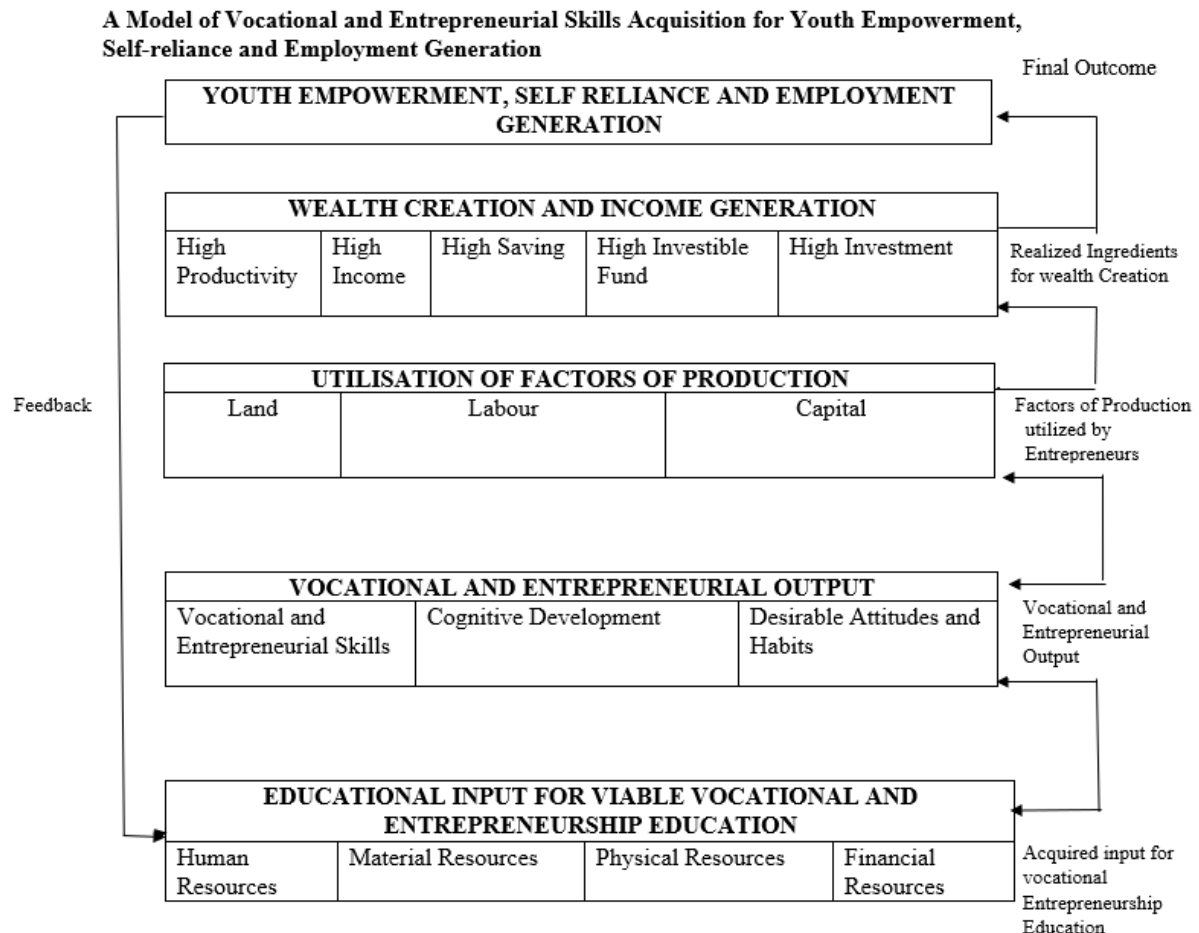
As part of the methodology, the study also adopted the use of model and circle to identify and explain the modality and direction at which the twined- problem bedeviling majorly youth population who are actually the future of the country on how the problems can be addressed and make them engage in productive economic and social activities for economic development of the country.

Available Vocations for Nigerian Youths for Overcoming Problem of Poverty and Joblessness

The acquisition of vocational and entrepreneurial skills by Nigerian youths will spur them to set up various types of business enterprises, aimed at alleviating the problem of poverty. Such business enterprises according to Adeyanju (2014), include dry cleaning or laundering services, manufacturing of soap and cream, interior and exterior decorations, catering and restaurant business, snack business and nourishing drinks, tie and dye or batik, bread baking, soft furnishing such as, headrest, arm rest, throw pillows, bead making, bags, flower vase, necklace and ear-ring, bead curtains, tailoring and fashion designs. Other vocations or business enterprises that Nigerian youths who have acquired vocational and entrepreneurial skills could embrace include, food processing, chalk-making, soap and detergents making, carpentry, upholstery and wood work, welding, fish farming, rabbitry, snailery keeping, poultry keeping, cassava processing and small-stock. Others include cloth weaving, textile works, crown, hat and bead making, hair dressing, block laying and concreting.

Setting up a model of Vocational and Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition for Youth Empowerment, Self-Reliance and Employment Generation. As depicted in figure 2

Figure 2: A Model of Vocational and Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition for Youth Empowerment, Self-Reliance and Employment Generation.



Source: Akinola, E. T, Laosebikan, J. O, Akinbode, J. O., Afolabi, F. O, and Olamiti, A. O (2023 Field Work).

As clearly depicted in figure 2, a Model of Vocational and Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition for youth empowerment, self-reliance and employment generation in Nigeria was set up. The educational input for vocational and entrepreneurship education includes human resources such as teaching and non-teaching staff in the Vocational and Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Centres, experienced artisans and other resource persons in the community. The material resources include the books and periodicals, audio-visual materials including computers. The physical resources include Vocational and Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Centre buildings such as classrooms, laboratories, technical workshops, libraries, studios, administrative blocks, assembly halls and other physical facilities of the Vocational and

Entrepreneurial Skills Acquisition Centre. The financial resources include the available funds earmarked for vocational and entrepreneurial skills acquisition in the Centre.

The acquisition of vocational and entrepreneurial skills, cognitive development and development of desirable attitude and habits through vocational and entrepreneurship education would help the Nigerian youths (the recipients) to become effective entrepreneurs, who can use other factors of production, namely capital, land and labour for creation of utilities and wealth and generation of income. This enterprising endeavor will pave way to self-reliance, empowerment and employment generation for others. Furthermore, the vocational and entrepreneurial skills acquired by the Nigerian youths will spur them to set up various types of business enterprises and engage in more commercial ventures, which will compel them to employ many unemployed youths and utilize other unproductive resources such as the idle capital in financial institutions and abandoned land in their communities.

Poverty among Nigerian youths is being drastically reduced, when attention is now focused on high productivity which is achieved through managerial expertise of the Nigerian youths who have acquired meaningful vocational and entrepreneurial skills. High productivity requires more input, which will pave way to high output and more income will be realized. This will compel the entrepreneurs who are largely the Nigerian youths to invest more and produce more by acquiring more input and consequently lead to economic buoyancy and such Nigerian youths become wealthy and prosperous (Gunartin, Agung & Nurika, 2023).

Making entrepreneurial skills acquisition effectively conducted to solve the menace of poverty and unemployment among the youths will be that possible through inculcating management competence in them. For an entrepreneur to be successful, the nitty-gritty of management principles would guide organizational structure of the business (Gunartin, Agung & Nurika, 2023, Burhan, Turki & Alia, 2023).

CONCLUSION

The task of poverty alleviation particularly among the youths is quite onerous, herculean and challenging and the approach to it differs from one nation to another. In Nigeria, the problem of poverty can be effectively tackled if prominent attention is given to the provision of functional, properly managed, adequately funded, comprehensive and practical-oriented vocational and entrepreneurship education, which will make Nigerian youths to be sufficiently equipped with entrepreneurial skills, knowledge and right attitude to work. As Omojugba (2013), re-echoed, a “managing problem of unemployment among graduates and other

categories of people require robust, comprehensive and practical-oriented entrepreneurship education”.

The various crimes being committed by most Nigerian youths in recent times such as kidnapping for ransoms or money rituals, bunkering, prostitution, banditry, terrorism and cyber-crime could be attributed to poverty and joblessness among the criminals. Undoubtedly, acquisition of vocational and entrepreneurial skills by Nigerian youths will re-sharpen the youths’ natural endowments and make them more self-reliant through job creation and employment generation. Capital should be provided for the Nigerian youths who have acquired vocational and entrepreneurial skills, to enable them establish their business enterprises that will make them to live above the poverty line. Also, concerted efforts must be made by the Nigerian Government for the provision of infrastructural facilities such as, good road networks, regular electricity supply, portable water, hospitals and Information and Communication Technology facilities to boost the commercial ventures of the enterprising Nigerian youths.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Tackling the problem of poverty among Nigerian youths through the provision of a viable, robust, comprehensive and practical-oriented vocational and entrepreneurship education should be a collective responsibility of all prominent Nigerians. Thus, the funding of vocational and entrepreneurship education in Nigeria should be a collective responsibility of the Federal, State and Local Government, as well as households, communities, voluntary agencies, private individuals and Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs).

It is expedient to make the curricula of all levels of education in Nigeria more pragmatic and have built-in-job training programmes which will enable all students to acquire appropriate vocational and entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment, income generation and wealth creation. Moreover, every tertiary educational institution in Nigeria must strive hard in having a spacious, well-ventilated, aesthetically pleasing and well equipped Vocational and Entrepreneurial Education Centre.

The three tiers of Government in Nigeria notably Federal, State and Local Government should map out effective strategies on how to assist the school leavers, graduates of tertiary educational institutions and other Nigerian youths who have acquired vocational and entrepreneurial skills, with the take-off capital for their small-scale businesses. Moreover, the National Directorate of Employment, Micro-Finance Banks, Bank of Industry, Commercial Banks and Non-

Governmental Organizations should be readily available to assist Nigerian youths with viable business plans, in granting of loans to them, for the take-off of their small-scale commercial ventures.

As vocational and entrepreneurial skills are useful in Government establishments and parastatals, the three tiers of Government in Nigeria should widen their industrial base, diversify their economy and the productive sector towards absorbing school leavers and graduates into gainful employment. This approach will go a long way in minimizing youth unemployment and make education more attractive, pleasurable and meaningful to Nigerian youths.

It is quite imperative to properly consider desires, needs, aspirations and peculiarities of various communities, while formulating and implementing poverty alleviation policies in Nigeria. This entails regular consultation with prominent politicians, opinion leaders and influential members of local communities.

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