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A VIABLE ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AS AN ANTIDOTE FOR ERADICATION OF POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTHS IN NIGERIA

**¹Akinola Emmanuel Taiwo, ²Afolabi Festus Oluwole &
³Afolabi Oluwaseun Ayooluwa**

¹Department of Business Administration,
Bowen University, Iwo Osun State, Nigeria

²Department of Educational Foundations,
Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo State, Nigeria

³Department of Sociology, University of Ibadan,
Oyo State, Nigeria

¹*Corresponding author: marshallakinola@gmail.com*

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria is passing through a period of uncertainty and pervasive economic recession which has further aggravated the problem of poverty and unemployment among Nigerian youths. These jobless youths take solace in all form of atrocities and social vices that pose a serious threat to sustainable development of the nation. This research took a cursory look at the concepts of poverty, youth unemployment and viable entrepreneurship education. It highlighted the lofty objectives of viable entrepreneurship education in Nigeria.

The various factors responsible for poverty and youth employment in Nigeria were identified. Attention was also directed to the role of viable entrepreneurship education in eradicating poverty and youth unemployment in Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among others, that the curriculum of educational institutions in Nigeria should be more pragmatic and have built-in-job training programmes which would enable all students to acquire relevant entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment, job and wealth creation and poverty eradication.

Keywords: Poverty, youth unemployment, viable entrepreneurship education.

INTRODUCTION

The democratic system of government in the Fourth Republic, which was ushered into Nigeria on 29th May, 1999, was well embraced by many Nigerians as evidenced in their mass jubilation and their firm belief in the rule of the country by the elected civilians, through the highly cherished 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. In spite of the dividends of democratic rule in Nigeria in the last two decades, it is disheartening that Nigeria is beset with multifarious socio-economic and political problems. Economic woes, political upheavals and social vices pervading the nation are being reported daily on television stations and radio broadcast and also reported in some national and international newspapers and magazines. Such cases include armed robbery, arson, rape, insecurity, feuds over chieftaincy affairs, land disputes, cultism and examination malpractices in educational institutions, epidemics, perennial problems of bribery and corruption, incessant strikes by workers, daily hike in prices of commodities including foodstuffs and the problem of poverty and youth unemployment.

Of all these socio-economic and political problems plaguing Nigeria, none is as agonising, devastating, virulent and persistent as the problem of poverty and unemployment among Nigerian youths. There is a large turnout annually of school leavers and graduates from various educational institutions in Nigeria who join the astronomical number of unemployed youths in the labour market. These youths get frustrated, when they could not secure white-collar jobs. According

to Ogunjobi (2014), “The available jobs in Nigeria Labour Market are either disappearing or shrinking, leading to a situation that more people are jostling for fewer jobs.” It is agonizing and very disheartening that some of the unemployed Nigerian youths take solace in all forms of crimes and social vices such as prostitution, bunkering and willful vandalisation of oil pipelines, drug abuse, armed robbery, political thuggery, kidnapping for rituals or ransoms and all forms of cybercrimes as often reported on television stations and radio broadcast, which pose serious threat to national sovereignty, economic growth and sustainable development of the nation. Ironically, unemployment breeds poverty, which paves way to social tension, insurrections and security challenges in Nigeria. The astronomical level of poverty among the teeming youth population of Nigeria has inevitably compelled some Nigerian youths to commit suicide and various acts of violence and crimes which constitute a serious threat to national security and sustainable development. As poverty continues to arouse the Nigerian youths’ anger, agitation, desperation and inordinate urge for money, food, shelter and necessities of life, all forms of criminalities and atrocities in various communities in Nigeria become inevitable. Adoju and Ocheja (2013) succinctly remarked that “poverty is globally singled out as a socio-economic problem that is so prevalent as a result of the high rate of unemployment which threatens most of the developing countries of the world.” As no nation can achieve its employment goals without emphasis on entrepreneurship education, thus a viable entrepreneurship education geared towards wealth creation, employment generation and poverty reduction among Nigerian youths is a central pillar of the economy, job creation and a catalyst for urban and rural regeneration in Nigeria. It is a fact that if the teeming youth population of Nigeria continues to wallop in abject poverty as a result of unemployment, the economic growth of Nigeria will be grossly retarred and the prevalent problems 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; incessant cases of kidnapping of people for ransoms or rituals in the South-East and South-West and the armed banditry across the length and breadth of the country will remain unabated. Other security challenges include the emergence of Fulani cattle herdsmen killing innocent people, raping women and destroying large hectares of farmlands in various communities in Nigeria. Others are the militant Niger Delta Avengers in the South-South, who vent their anger and revenge mission on the

federal government and the oil companies by vehemently demanding for compensation for what they described as long years of neglect and ecological degradation of their land. The entrepreneurial skills acquired by Nigerian youths through entrepreneurship education will spur them to set up various types of business enterprises such as dry cleaning or laundry services; manufacturing of soap, detergents and cream; interior and exterior decorations; catering and restaurant business; snack business and nourishing drinks, tie and dye or batik, bread baking; soft furniture such as headrest, arm rest, throw pillows; bead making bags, flowers vase, necklace and earring bead curtains, tailoring and fashion designs and so on. These business enterprises will yield revenue for these youths and improve the socio-economic status of their families.

The way out of eradicating the problem of poverty and unemployment among youths in Nigeria is the provision of a viable entrepreneurship education for all Nigerian youths. According to Kareem (2015), entrepreneurship education takes the center stage in promoting prosperity by creating new jobs, reducing unemployment and poverty as well as increasing economic growth of a nation. Also, Sule (2014) remarked that quality entrepreneurship education will enhance job creation which will subsequently reduce unemployment, poverty and social vices in Nigeria. Entrepreneurship education can bring about economic growth in Nigeria, the establishment of various types of business enterprises established by Nigerian youths who have acquired entrepreneurial skills. This will enhance the use of Information and Communication Technologies, which will further enhance job creation and drastic reduction of poverty among Nigerian youths. This will also help to improve the standard of living, promote social, economic and political development in Nigeria, which is the cardinal objective of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Contributing to the inevitable need for a viable entrepreneurship education in alleviating the problem of poverty and unemployment among youths, Atoyebi and Afolabi (2014), declared that a proper integration of a viable entrepreneurship education into the curriculum of educational institutions in Nigeria will undoubtedly make the products acquire meaningful entrepreneurial skills and orientation that would make them self-employed and generators of employment for others. Ani, et al (2016) also maintained that “the only visible channel towards the reduction of unemployment and poverty rate is by investing heavily in infrastructure and human capital. Human capital development is further enhanced through a well- structured

academic curriculum that is entrepreneurial focused.” Some researchers have clearly indicated that entrepreneurial activities have the salient goal of pulling youths out of poverty, whether they embark on their own businesses or employed by other accomplished entrepreneurs (Afolabi, Omoluwa and Oyetayo, 2011; Silvinski, 2012; Lennox, 2013). Thus, the lofty goal of job creation and poverty alleviation among the youths can only be realized through a viable entrepreneurship education which empowers the youths with skills and competencies to become self-reliant. This study specifically set out to ascertain the extent to which the problem of poverty and unemployment among youths in Nigeria could be eradicated through a viable entrepreneurship education. Before delving into the objectives of a viable entrepreneurship education in Nigeria, it is pertinent to take a cursory look at the concepts of poverty, unemployment and viable entrepreneurship education.

- a) **Poverty:** The term “poverty’ according to Afolabi and Yusuf (2014), is “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 wallowing in abject poverty. These poor Nigerians could no longer participate effectively in the various socio-economic activities in their communities due to inadequate money to feed, clothe and shelter their families and not having jobs or sources of livelihood and also lack collateral security to obtain credit facilities from affluent or wealthy individuals or financial institutions.

- b) **Unemployment:** Youth unemployment is described by Adetayo (2017), as “a situation whereby there are qualified youths who are willing and able to work, but could not secure jobs.” Thus, unemployment connotes a condition of joblessness in which physically strong, intellectually curious and mentally alert people 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. Balogun (2010), affirmed that “Nigeria has one of the highest unemployed figures in the world and that Nigerian youths are the hardest hit by the menace of unemployment.”

- c) **Viable Entrepreneurship Education:** A viable entrepreneurship education, according to Atoyebi and Afolabi (2014), “is the type of education that aims at inculcating in the individuals, entrepreneurial skills and social values that will strengthen the individuals with vocational competence, industrial experiences and desirable ethical orientation towards sustainable human development.” Also, Suleiman (2010) describes a viable entrepreneurship education as “a form of education that equips people, particularly the youths, with skills and knowledge, which transform them into enterprising individuals by immersing them in real life learning experiences whereby they can take risks, manage results and learn from the outcomes.”
- d) Based on these definitions, a viable entrepreneurship education is defined in this research report, as a form of education that assists students to develop and use their creativity and to take initiatives, responsibility and risks. Such students are nurtured and empowered with enterprising abilities and habits that will enhance dignity of labour and desire for wealth creation. Such a viable entrepreneurship education is always properly planned and judiciously administered towards meeting the needs of daily life of the recipient, the hopes and expectations for tomorrow, and preparation for the uncertainties, challenges and problems of the unknown future.

Objectives of the Study

The study specifically set out to identify the various factors responsible for high rate of poverty and unemployment among youths in Nigeria and ascertain the role of a viable entrepreneurship education in ameliorating the problem.

The Objectives of a Viable Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria

It is becoming clearer that poverty and other social vices which have their genesis in high rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria would be greatly reduced, if a viable and properly managed entrepreneurship education is integrated into the curriculum of educational institutions.

This will enable the beneficiaries to be sufficiently equipped with entrepreneurial skills, knowledge and right attitude to work, that will re-sharpen their natural endowments, talents and competencies and make them more self-reliant and accomplished entrepreneurs.

The question that imbues one's mind at this juncture is: "What are the objectives of a viable entrepreneurship in Nigeria today?" The lofty objectives of a viable entrepreneurship education in Nigeria today as highlighted by Afolabi (2017) include the following:

1. To make Nigerian youths acquire entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, attitudes, abilities and competencies that would make them live happily and successfully in the society and contribute meaningfully to its development.
2. To inculcate in the youths desirable social and moral values such as respect for manual labour, regularity at work, positive attitude to team work, commitment and co-operation.
3. To make the youths actively involved in production work as they proceed from one level of education to another, and earning some wages while they are learning.
4. To break the vicious circle of poverty, economic stagnation and other socio-political vicissitudes that could beset a nation.
5. To provide Nigerian youths with opportunities for creative self-reliance, through the acquisition of practical and saleable skills.
6. To acquaint Nigerian youths with the world of work and services to their various communities.
7. To promote development goals among Nigerian youths by curbing high rate of youth unemployment and reducing poverty and other socio-economic challenges that the youths may be facing from time to time.
8. To create in Nigerian youths, a positive attitude of team work in self-employment.
9. To inculcate in Nigerian youths, attitudes and entrepreneurial skills required to effectively harness and utilize the available resources for the production of goods and services.

Causes of Poverty and Youth Unemployment in Nigeria

Before delving into the causes of poverty and youth unemployment in Nigeria, it is deemed pertinent to have a cursory look at the trend in the rate of youth unemployment in Nigeria. The National Bureau of Statistics December 2016, Unemployment/Under-employment Report

for the third quarter (Q3, 2016), shows a trend in unemployment and underemployment from 2015 to Q3, 2016, this shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Labour Market Statistics in Nigeria from Third Quarter 2015 to Third Quarter 2016

Details	Q3 2015	Q4 2015	Q1 2016	Q2 2016	Q3 2016
Employed ('000)	68,422	68,922	69,001	69,242	69,471
Underemployed ('000)	13,206	14,416	15,023	15,416	15,917
Full Employed ('000)	55,217	54,506	53,978	53,827	53,550
Unemployed ('000)	7,518	8,036	9,485	10,644	11,198
Not in Labour ('000)	28,374	28,065	27,515	26,804	27,364
Labour Force ('000)	75,940	76,458	78,487	79,886	80,669
Working Age ('000)	104,314	105,023	106,001	106,690	108,033
Unemployment Rate (%)	9.9	10.4	12.1	13.3	13.9
Unemployment Rate Initial (%)	4.8	5.0	6.4	7.2	7.4
Underemployment Rate (%)	17.4	18.7	19.1	19.3	19.3

Source: NBS: Unemployment-Employment Report Q3 2016, December, 2016.

As clearly indicated in Table 1, the unemployment rate in Nigeria increased to 14.2% in the last quarter of 2016, from 10.4% a year earlier (Q4, 2015); fourth quarter in the year 2015. It is the highest jobless rate in Nigeria since 2009, as the number of unemployed increased from 3.5 million to 11.549 million.

- Lukewarm attitude of Nigerian youths to traditional education**
Traditional Education in Nigeria is employment-oriented and it is geared towards meeting the basic needs of the individuals within the community. This form of education makes the individuals self-reliant as the entrepreneurial skills acquired under Nigerian traditional education can be utilized for some worthwhile commercial ventures. Ironically many Nigerian youths perceive traditional education as being barbaric,

primitive and conservative in content, nature and delivery. Many Nigerian youths who have received Western education at various levels are being alienated from functional existence in their local communities, as they take joy in moving to urban cities for white-collar jobs in the public and private sectors. When they could not secure such white-collar jobs, they become frustrated and continue to wallow in abject poverty (Afolabi, 2017).

2. **Economic policies adopted for revamping the ailing economy**

It is disheartening that some economic policies adopted by the Federal Government towards revamping the ailing economy have brought hardship and poverty on the citizens. Such economic policies include Second-tier Foreign Exchange Market System (SFEM), Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), Value Added Tax (VAT), Naira Devaluation Policy, Petroleum Products Regulatory Policy and others. These economic policies have not only resulted to hyper-inflation in the country, but also paved way to mass retrenchment of workers in both private and public sectors under the orchestrated down-sizing policy (Afolabi and Yusuf, 2014); (Afolabi, 2017).

3. **Over ambition of Nigerian youths of becoming millionaires overnight**

Many Nigerian youths erroneously conceive the idea that Nigerian government and the society at large have no plan for them in securing gainful employment in the country. Consequently, the fear of unknown future has compelled them to nurse the ambition of becoming millionaires overnight, by all means. Some of these youths now take solace in all forms of nefarious activities like bunkering, drug trafficking, cultism, armed robbery, prostitution, impersonation, falsification of records, kidnapping of people for ransoms or rituals and cybercrimes. All these forms of criminality do not only aggravate the problem of youth unemployment and poverty, but also portray a bleak future for Nigeria (Afolabi, 2017).

4. **Inadequate infra-structural facilities in Nigeria**

In Nigeria, there are various infra-structural facilities that are required for all kinds of economic activities. These include good road network, portable water supply, electricity, 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 facilities are inadequate, non-functional, defective or non-existent, Nigerians will not be able to fully carry out their lofty economic activities and eventually become victims of deprivation. Thus, the problem of poverty and youth unemployment becomes inevitable (Afolabi and Yusuf, 2014).

5. **Desire for consumption of ostentatious and very expensive foreign materials**

Many Nigerian youths with very meager income show high propensity for consumption of highly expensive foreign materials. This paves way to low saving, which consequently results to low investible fund and low investment. The low investment will pave way to low productivity and vicious circle of poverty becomes apparent (Atoyebi and Afolabi, 2014); (Afolabi, 2017).

6. **Distressing socio-political tension and violence**

It has been the practice of many affluent and wealthy politicians to recruit many Nigerian youths as members of the Youth Wings of their political parties. Such recruited youths are enticed with money, cars, expensive cellular phones, party vests and caps and other ostentatious materials. Some of these youths are often equipped with dangerous weapons such as guns, cutlass, knives, axe and chemicals which can be unleashed on the political opponents of their mentors. Such political thugs have no respect for elders and constituted authority except their conservative political mentors. These political thugs among the youths are not gainfully employed and such youths continue to wallop in abject poverty (Afolabi, 2017); (Afolabi and Yusuf, 2014).

7. **The rapidly growing urban labour force**

Western education is being largely perceived by many Nigerian youths as an avenue to acquire certificates which will serve as “meal tickets” for them in a competitive labour market. After graduation, the next step is to migrate to urban cities in search for lucrative jobs in public and private sectors. Ironically, such jobs are no longer readily available and the problem of youth unemployment and poverty becomes unabated (Afolabi and

Yusuf, 2014).

8. **Rapid expansion of the educational system**

The rapid expansion of the educational system in Nigeria, has inevitably led to the astronomical increase in the supply of educated manpower above the corresponding demand for them. Thus, the problem of youth unemployment continues to assume a serious dimension in Nigeria today (Afolabi, 2017).

9. **Non-integration of entrepreneurship education**

Many educational institutions in Nigeria are yet to fully integrate entrepreneurship education into their curriculum. Their products are denied relevant entrepreneurial skills needed for employment. Thus, the nation continues to witness problem of high rate of youth unemployment and poverty, which is inimical to economic growth of the nation.

10. **The issue of extended family**

Extended family is a norm in various communities in Nigeria where many children, grandchildren and other family members will depend on the head of the family for their livelihood. The meager resources of the head of the family are shared among the members of such an extended family. This further aggravates the problem of poverty in the family as the income of the head of the family becomes grossly insufficient to meet the subsistence needs of its members such as food, portable water, health and basic education of the family members. Poverty in such an extended family manifests in poor health, food insecurity and malnutrition, social exclusion, high crime rate, increased child abuse and high level of illiteracy (Afolabi and Yusuf, 2014); (Afolabi, 2017).

11. **Economic recession in Nigeria**

The economic recession pervading the nation in the last decade has compelled many public and private organizations, firms and industrial establishments to place embargo on the recruitment of staff into their areas of need. Also, the privatization of the Power Holding Company of Nigeria which further paved way for irregular electricity power supply had forced many labour-intensive industries, firms and companies to either retrench their workers, or fold up and relocate to neighbouring West African Countries like Ghana and Republic of Benin. These

critical situations further aggravate the problem of poverty and youth unemployment in Nigeria.

12. High level of corruption in government ministries and parastatals in Nigeria

Nigeria, in recent times has been witnessing various corrupt practices and gross mismanagement of financial resources particularly in government ministries and parastatals. Ironically, when the financial resources are being squandered, misappropriated or mismanaged by the people to which they are entrusted, the Nigerian youths who are supposed to be beneficiaries are subjected to deprivation and poverty. Thus, the problem of poverty and youth unemployment will continue to assume a ruinous dimension as long as all pervasive corrupt practices and selfish attitudinal dispositions are not frontally addressed in the country by relevant government agencies.

The Role of a Viable Entrepreneurship Education in Eradicating Poverty and Unemployment among Nigerian Youths

The Nigerian Government has recognized that unemployment which paves way for poverty must be tackled collectively by all Nigerians. With this notion in mind, the Government in collaboration with the private sector has set up the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) to empower the poor and ensure mass participation in the economic development process. The programme seeks to involve communities, cooperative societies and individuals by enhancing their capacity to become more productive. The NAPEP also developed some schemes aimed at generating employment opportunities for the impoverished Nigerian youths with a view to alleviating poverty and enhancing national development. Such schemes include:

- (a) Social Welfare Scheme (SWS)
- (b) Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES)
- (c) Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme (RIDS)
- (d) Micro-Finance Coordinating Scheme (MFCS)
- (e) Capacity Enhancement Scheme (CES)
- (f) Community Economic Sensitization Scheme (CESS)
- (g) National Resources Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS).

The National Poverty Eradication Programme of the Federal Government of Nigeria is quite laudable in terms of its intention

to reduce the problem of unemployment among Nigerian youths. However, its lofty goal would remain onerous to accomplish, if prominent attention is not given to a viable entrepreneurship education.

A viable entrepreneurship education would undoubtedly contribute significantly to the eradication of the problem of poverty and unemployment among the youths in Nigeria. Some of contributions of a viable entrepreneurship education in ameliorating this problem according to Afolabi (2017) include:

1. **Generation of employment for idle school leavers and political thugs in Nigeria**

The acquired entrepreneurial skills by Nigerian youths through a viable entrepreneurship education will compel them to set up various types of business enterprises which will in turn motivate them to employ many idle school leavers and political thugs to boost their productivity. Also, the idle capital in the financial houses and abandoned land in various communities in Nigeria can be gainfully used for economic ventures.

2. **Increase in productivity**

The Nigerian youths who have received a viable entrepreneurship education could use their managerial expertise to boost productivity in their business enterprises. The high productivity will compel them to acquire more input which would lead to high output and substantial income will be realized. This will further spur them to invest more and produce more, thus rejuvenating the economy and eradicating the problem of poverty and youth unemployment in Nigeria.

3. **Generation of income and creation of utilities and wealth**

The development of cognitive and desirable habits and attitudes, as well as acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by Nigerian youths through a viable entrepreneurship education would enable these Nigerian youths to be effective entrepreneurs who can hire other factors of production such as capital, land and labour for the generation of income and creation of utilities and wealth. This enterprising endeavour will undoubtedly go a long way in eradicating the problem of poverty and unemployment among the youths.

4. **Reduction of crimes and social vices in Nigeria**

As a viable entrepreneurship education paves way to employment generation for Nigerian youths, the various atrocities and social

vices being perpetrated by many unemployed youths in Nigeria will be drastically reduced. When Nigeria youths are gainfully employed, all forms of criminality and social vices such as kidnapping of people for ransoms or rituals, assassination, insecurity, prostitution, cultism, banditry, political thuggery, cultism, drug addiction, bunkering and other vices will be curtailed. This will lead to conducive atmosphere for massive investment and further enhance employment generation.

5. **Boosting agricultural productivity in Nigeria**

The various small and large scale firms and industries set up by Nigerian youths who have received viable entrepreneurship education often require raw materials for them to flourish. To minimize cost, these young enterprising Nigerian youths 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 boosting 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 and high rate of poverty and youth unemployed will be drastically reduced in Nigeria.

6. **Promoting economic growth in Nigeria**

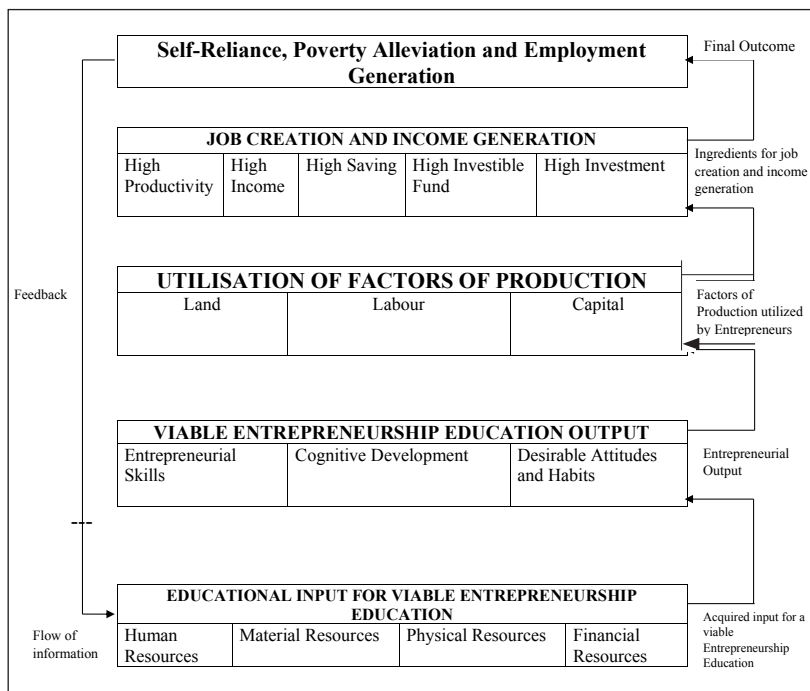
A viable entrepreneurship education would contribute significantly to the economic growth of Nigeria, as it encourages the establishment of various types of business enterprises, which in turn promote the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). As ICTs utilization continues to boost business enterprises in Nigeria, the rate of poverty and youth unemployment will be drastically reduced.

7. **Breaking the vicious circle of poverty**

The problem of poverty and youth unemployment in Nigeria would be eradicated when attention is focused on high production of goods and services which is achieved through managerial expertise of Nigerian youths who are the products of a viable entrepreneurship education. High productivity requires more input, which would lead to high output and more income will be generated. This will compel the Nigerian youths to invest more and produce more by acquiring more input. This consequently results to high output and the vicious circle of poverty is broken, to pave way to a circle of prosperity.

Figure 1

A model of a Viable Entrepreneurship Education for Eradication of Poverty and Youth Unemployment in Nigeria



Source: Akinola, E. T, Afolabi, F. O and Afolabi, O. A (2021) *Field Work*.

A Model of a Viable Entrepreneurship Education for Eradication of Poverty and Unemployment among Youths in Nigeria

Figure 1 depicts a model of a viable entrepreneurship education for eradicating poverty and youth unemployment in Nigeria.

As clearly depicted in Figure 1, a model of a viable entrepreneurship education for eradication of poverty and youth unemployment in Nigeria, the educational input for a viable entrepreneurship education includes human resources such as teaching and non-teaching staff, experienced artisans and other resource persons in the community. The material resources include the books and periodicals and audio-visual materials. While the physical resources include the institutional buildings such as entrepreneurship centres, classrooms, laboratories, technical workshops, libraries, administrative blocks and other

physical facilities. The financial resources refer to the available funds earmarked for a viable entrepreneurship education.

The acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, cognitive development and development of desirable habits and attitudes through a viable entrepreneurship education would help the recipients (the Nigerian youths) to become effective entrepreneurs, who can hire other factors of production such as capital, land and labour for job creation, income generation through gainful employment. This would ultimately pave way for self-reliance, poverty eradication and employment generation.

CONCLUSION

It is becoming apparent daily in Nigeria that acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, cognitive development and inculcating desirable attitude and habits will greatly assist youths in Nigeria on their lofty mission to eradicate poverty and create wealth through self-employment. According to Omojugba (2013), “managing problem of unemployment in Nigeria among graduates and other categories of people require robust, comprehensive and practical-oriented entrepreneurship education”.

The Nigerian youths who have received a viable entrepreneurship education will decide properly on the small scale business to embark upon and how to seek initial financial assistance or loans from micro-finance banks, commercial banks, affluent and wealthy individuals, philanthropic organizations, religious organisations, non-government organisations (NGOs) and the government through National Directorate of Employment (NDE). All these efforts would help Nigerian youths to eradicate poverty and become well-accomplished entrepreneurs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

At the phases of policy formulation and implementation on poverty alleviation and employment generation through a viable entrepreneurship education, the Nigerian government should involve all concerned stakeholders. Such policies must be based on relevant information and realities on ground. This entails regular consultation with prominent politicians, opinion leaders and influential members of local communities in Nigeria.

It is mandatory to make the curriculum of all educational institutions in Nigeria more functional and pragmatic with built-in-job training programmes which will enable all students to acquire relevant and appropriate entrepreneurial skills required for self-employment, job and wealth creation and poverty eradication.

The funding of a viable entrepreneurship education in Nigeria should be a collective responsibility of the Federal, State and Local Governments as well as the households, community, voluntary agencies, private individuals and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

All the three tiers of government in Nigeria should map out effective strategies on how to assist school leavers, graduates and other Nigerian youths who have successfully completed their entrepreneurship education programmes with take-off capital for their small-scale businesses.

The National Directorate of Employment, micro-finance banks, Bank of Industry, commercial banks and non-government organisations should be readily available to assist Nigerian youths with viable business plans and granting them loans for the take-off of their small-scale businesses.

For effective realization of the lofty objectives of a viable entrepreneurship education in Nigeria geared towards eradicating poverty and youth unemployment, the national regulatory and supervisory bodies, that is, the National Universities Commission, National Board for Technical Education, National Commission for Colleges of Education and other supervisory bodies at the State and Local Government levels should be more empowered in performing their monitoring and quality control functions.

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