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SQUARING UP TO YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT THROUGH ENTREPRENEURIAL BASED LEARNING: THE LIBRARY AS A PANACEA

BY

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Abstract

The unemployment situation in Nigeria is like a worm that has eaten deep into the nation's fabric. The youth in Nigeria suffer the most because they make up the highest number of people in the country. The unemployment situation has caused macro-economic distortions in the country, it has also brought many crimes. As a result of this, there is need to train the youth to be entrepreneurial and self reliant so that the nation will be peaceful and as well prolific. The library has a role to play in inculcating the skills of entrepreneurship in the youth. Through the use of questionnaire, and interview the researcher examined perceptions of educators on the factors that contributes to youth unemployment in Nigeria, skills required for entrepreneurship. The researcher explored different library programmes such as project work, comic book writing, vacation programs etc. This was done through practical periods with the youth, in the course of the sessions, the researcher observed that indeed these library programmes inculcate entrepreneurial skills in the youth.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, youth, unemployment, library, Nigeria

Introduction

It has been observed that out of every Nigerian family of four youths, three roam the streets searching for white collar jobs. This situation has been noticed to be a problem that has resisted solutions. The youth is the backbone of every nation and they form the highest group of people in the country. A nation that has an ill informed youth is sick, in the sense that there will be high rate of crime in the Nation. Therefore there is need to engage the youth in reasonable jobs so as to improve the nation this is because the wealth of a nation depends on the quality of its youth.

The unemployment situation in Nigeria is a bad wind that blows no one any good. It has been linked to the socio-economic problems in Nigeria. An idle man is a devils workshop so says the adage. It is also said that nature abhors vacuum, this

means that something either good or bad must fill the vacuum. This goes to explain the reasons for cases of kidnaps, rape, suicide bombings, the recent Boko Haram Insurgency that is ravaging the country. The crime is prevalent among the youth. The question now is to what extent has the Nigerian government tackled the unemployment situation via the youth restiveness in the country? Is it amnesty program me, poverty alleviation or poverty eradication scheme, firing squad, or even teaching a course on entrepreneurship in tertiary institution? All these are good but it has not solved the problem of unemployment in Nigeria. There is need to nip the problem of unemployment in the bud, it becomes imperative to start inculcating the spirit of entrepreneurship from the root.

This root is inculcating the spirit of entrepreneurship in children and the youth from the scratch. Ajidofor (2013) noted that Nigeria values certificate more than knowledge in the subject field and that federal government has not properly addressed the philosophy of self in tertiary institutions which has the highest number of the youth. This poses a lot of problems to Nigeria as a nation. National government all over the world according to Nebo (...) is striving to achieve the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy, the United Nations Millennium Development Goal (MDG) or halving the incidence of poverty by 2015. Today the Federal Republic of Nigeria have reformed education to be resource based and as well prepare youth to empowering themselves for self employment.

Despite all these, the problem of unemployment still persists. The library has a role to play in inculcating entrepreneurial spirit in the youth. Through library services and programs the youth will be amicably nurtured into business like minds and the vacuums will be positively filled. Books according to Medina (2000) are the bread of

the intellect and ideas are easily gotten from books. The library as a repository of knowledge has a role to play in order to have lasting solutions to the problem of unemployment in Nigeria.

The paper therefore sought to find out the following:

1. Factors that contribute to youth unemployment in Nigeria
2. To find out the entrepreneurial skills required by youth for gainful self-employment
3. Library programmes tailored towards inculcating entrepreneurial skills in the youth

Literature Review

The Nigerian Youth: An Overview

The National Youth Development Policy (2001) defines youth as people aged between 18 and 35 years. This age group can be found in secondary schools and other institutions of higher learning. They constitute about 40% of more than 140 million people of Nigeria. The Federal Bureau of statistics according to Ajufu (2013) stated that Nigeria has a youth population of 80 million representing 60 percent of the total population of Nigeria out of the 80 million.

Jing Guo (2013) also stated that the young people made up more than 40% of the worlds total unemployment population. In view of this statistics there is need to keep the hands of the youths on deck so that the Nation will thrive .Jing Guo (2013) stressed the need to include the youth on the front lines of ending extreme poverty and youth unemployment.

The youth is noted for being full of energy, this makes them very active .they love working with their peers .At this stage they like taking decisions by themselves.

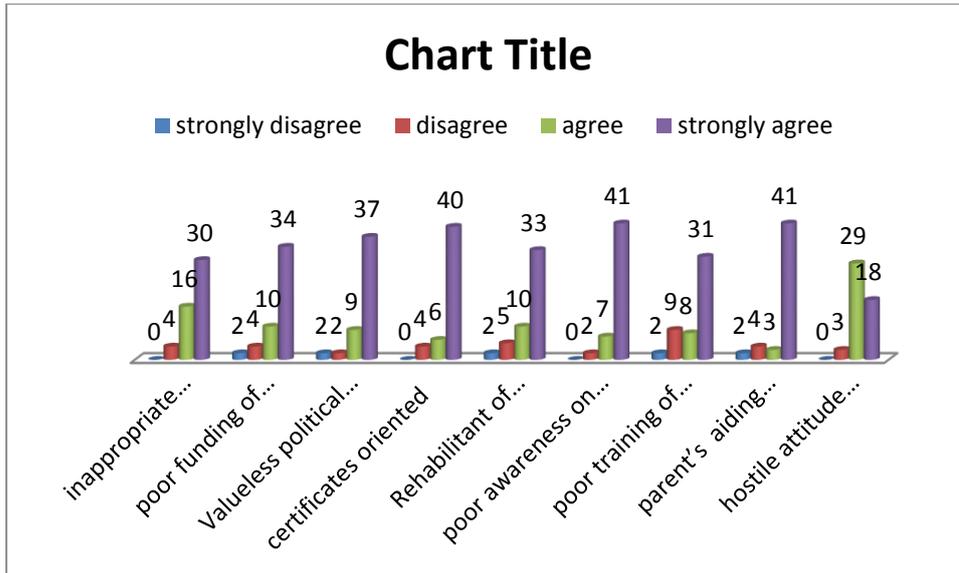
In fact, they experiment in every thing to the extent of even experimenting with their lives. It is worthy to note that in as much as the youth believe in making decisions themselves ,they lack the necessary experience that can help them progress in life. There is need to work with the youth having in mind their characteristics. This will help to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship in their lives effortlessly.

Methodology

The design of study is survey research design. The instrument used for data collection is questionnaire and interview schedule The questionnaire was designed to elicit views of the educators on the causes of youth unemployment and the skills required for entrepreneurship Through practical lessons and observation carried out with the youth, entrepreneurial skills which library programmes can inculcate were examined The population of study comprises fifty 50 youth within the age range of 12 and 17. Then the educators are 20 in number comprising resource persons involved in the library programmes.

Research Question One: Factors that contribute to youth unemployment in Nigeria

	strongly disagree	disagree	agree	strongly agree	Mean	Remark
inappropriate school curriculum		4	16	30	3.52	
poor funding of libraries	2	4	10	34	3.52	
Valueless political system	2	2	9	37	3.62	
certificates oriented		4	6	40	3.72	
Rehabilitant of retirees in govt establishment	2	5	10	33	3.48	
poor awareness on the role of libraries		2	7	41	3.78	
poor training of teachers	2	9	8	31	3.36	
parent's aiding truancy	2	4	3	41	3.66	
hostile attitude towards school		3	29	18	3.30	



It can be seen from the table above that the major factors that contributes to youth unemployment in the perception of educators are poor funding of libraries ,poor perception of the role of libraries ,certificate oriented education, poor school curriculum and valueless political system. These are mostly the factors that could contribute to youth unemployment in Nigeria

Unemployment among the youth is one of the socio-economic problems affecting Nigeria. Many writers have lamented on causes and consequences of youth unemployment in Nigeria. Writers such as Ajugo (2013) Akudolu (2010), Alanaria (2003) noted that youth unemployment in Nigeria has infested Nigeria with poverty, frustration, depression, hostility, abduction, and other social vices.

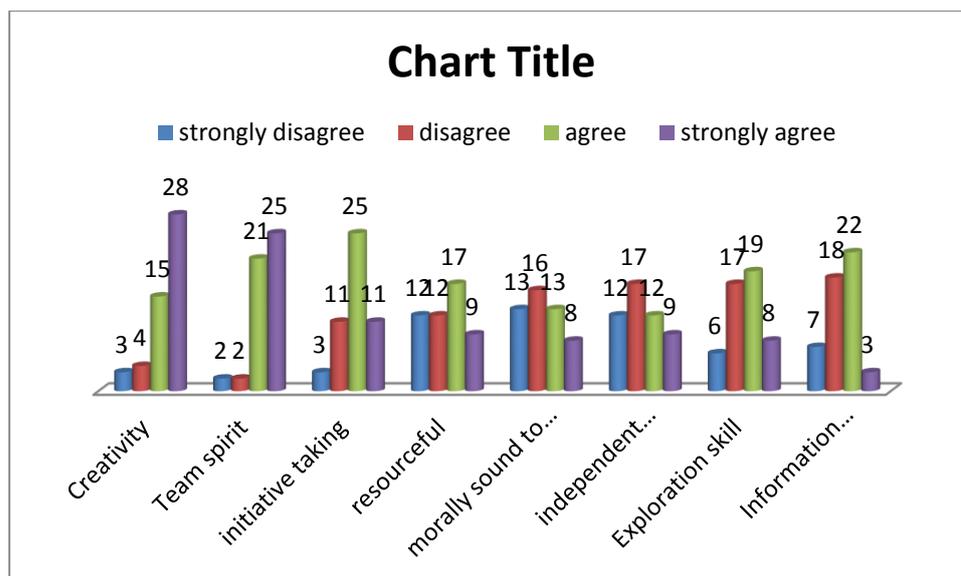
A country is measured economically by the level of talents acquired by its youth, if this is lacking, there is need to address the situation as quickly as possible. It has been noted that a lot of factors contributes to youth unemployment. Akingbola (2008) noted that the Nigerian educational system at all levels does not prepare the youth to stand alone. The Nigeria economy is gravitating to a point where paid employment is no longer guaranteed for the youth. This is an indication that unemployment situation will continue to rise except the Nigerian educational system

prepares the young mind to be innovative and creative, Ohaneme (2008) advocated for functional education at all levels.

Another cause of youth unemployment according to Ajuifo (2013) is inappropriate school curriculum, population growth, rural urban migration, perception of policy making and the youth themselves. Part of the problem aggravating youth unemployment according to Akinnesa (2012) is the poor funding of universities and valueless political system in Nigeria. Reviewing these problems is valueless if no remedy is sought to ameliorate the causes so as to move the nation forward. Banabo E and Ndimu (2011) noted that by making education entrepreneurial, these vices will stop. In a bid to do these, the same authors suggested a change in the curriculum and a change in the value system of the Nigeria youth. This change must start from the scratch of the educational system. And this system is entrepreneurial based education which will make education more functional than what it is today.

Research Question 2: Entrepreneurial skills required by the youth

	strongly disagree	disagree	agree	strongly agree	Mean	Remark
Creativity	3	4	15	28	3.36	
Team spirit	2	2	21	25	3.38	
initiative taking	3	11	25	11	2.88	
resourceful	12	12	17	9	2.46	
morally sound to take risk	13	16	13	8	2.32	
independent thinking	12	17	12	9	2.36	
Exploration skill	6	17	19	8	2.58	
Information handling skills	7	18	22	3	2.42	



Entrepreneurship requires many skills and in the perception of these educators the youth need to be creative, innovative, morally sound to take risk, resourceful and explorative. The response shows that these youth have need for all these skills most especially creativity.

Entrepreneurship is a concept that has been defined from the early centuries to the latest century but the definition accorded to this word depends on the culture of the people at that time. An earliest example of this definition is given by Marko Polo. An entrepreneur was viewed as a go between, this was a period that trade route were established, so there was need to have a go between to sign contracts . In the 17th century, an entrepreneur is seen as a risk bearer while in the 19th century entrepreneurship was viewed as the process of creating something different with value by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming the accompanying financial, psychological and social risks, and receives the resulting rewards of monetary and personal satisfaction. In the 19th century an entrepreneur is no more seen as a go between. Joseph Schumpeter stated that an entrepreneur is an innovator that develops

untried technology, Peter Drucker sees an entrepreneur of this period as one who maximizes opportunities. .

In the 20th century the notion of an entrepreneur as an innovator was established. Andrew Carnegie best illustrates this definition, Carnegie invented nothing, but rather adapted and developed new technology in the creation of products to achieve economic validity. Carnegie, who descended from a poor Scottish family, made the American steel industry one of the wonders of the industrial world. In Nigeria it was in the 1980s when there were austerity measures that entrepreneurship was championed. Umuigbo and Jindl (2011) said that the need arose up till now.

The philosophy of the Nigerian education is to make the individual sound morally, intellectually. Entrepreneurship education seeks to prepare people especially the youth to be responsible and for education to be entrepreneurial, it must be resource based. For individuals to be entrepreneurial, that individual must be creative, initiative taking, organized so as to turn resources and situation to practical account. This is because entrepreneurship involves creative process, re-creating something new, the creative process must be imbibed in the person. Also, the person must be morally sound to take risks, this because entrepreneurship involves risk.. These qualities have implication in the youth most especially the undergraduate and graduates of Nigerian higher institution. There is need to develop the youth to be entrepreneurial.

The concept of development evolved through the emergence of capitalization which is an economic aspect of the human society. It is a concept frequently used in the 20th century to reflect economic development. Walter (1972) defines economic development as the ability and capacity of people to increase their ability to live a

more satisfactory life through exploiting the resources of nature, to have a good economic development, man developed from crude methods of living to a modern way of living through the use of modern technology. Development cannot be explained fully if seen only from economic aspect, this is because countries such as Denmark, Switzerland and Israel despite its small natural resources have developed more than countries like Nigeria that is well endowed with natural resources The reason is because of the level of human capital development prevalent in those countries.

No amount of investment will change the living standard of people who cannot participate in making decisions on what affects them therefore it becomes imperative for humans to be developed. For humans to develop they must be taught and be exposed to different ideas, aspirations, norms, principles that will make them functional citizens. The place of ideas is in the book and the repository of books is the library.

Research Question 3: Library programmes aimed at inculcating Entrepreneurial skills in the youth library role

S/N	Library Programmes	Mode of Activities	Entrepreneurial Skills
1	Project work	Practical work using topics in the curriculum. Making an album	Planning skills Communication skills Organization skills Interview skills Recording skills Observation skills Team spirit
2	Comic book writing	Practical work. making a book out on comics	Drawing skills Creativity Team spirit Organization Writing Observation
3	Story hour programme	story hour sessions using picture	Reading skills Speaking skills

		books and asking questions	Communication skills Socialization
4	Library vacation programme	Hands on approach to the activities .Inspection of the products made.	Career making Computer training Cookery lessons Art and crafts Photography Stimulation of interest
5	Club activities	Practical lessons on book review .debate clubs and drama clubs	Reading promotion Creativity Team spirit Vocabulary building Building of confidence Relationship management Risk management Decision making
6	Formal library instruction	Educating them on the use of library	Information handling skills Independent thinking Decision making

The findings in table three is an accumulation of research carried out by the researcher in several occasions. In 2006, the researcher in collaboration with other two authors (Dike, Amucheazi, Ajogwu, 2006) found out that project work encourages creativity in children, develops team spirit in them, management skills and documentation skills in children. This was found out through evaluation of projects done by the children during the moment.

In another study, (Ngwuchukwu, M. N, Onyebuchi, and Ejikeme, 2013), it was equally found that comic book writing develops authorship skill, creative skill, organization skill, team spirit, and many more in the youth. In addition to that, it engages the youth who are full of energy.

Furthermore, in another research by M. N. Ngwuchukwu and Grace Onyebuchi (2013) it was found through instrumentation design that library period is a forum for developing the creative abilities lacking in children. Formal library instruction was found to be one of the ways of teaching students how to search for information. By so doing there is hope that the library will help improve the standard

of students research to acquaint them with entrepreneurial skills. In library vacation programmes also, entrepreneurial skills comes to life as the youth can learn other activities that if per adventure they find delight in can themselves employed. Storyhour programmes helps in inculcating morals that makes the youth morally sound to take risk in any entrepreneurial endeavour. The library club increases the youth knowledge in management, public speaking and creative thinking which is a very important skill in entrepreneurship.

The professional bag of a librarian is information dissemination. The library whether digital or analog is a repository of knowledge and so it is a panacea to youth unemployment in Nigeria .It has a role to play in inculcating the spirit of entrepreneurship in the youth.

Medina (2000) stated that books are the bread of the intellect because it has information that will develop an individual in all aspects of life. Information that can make one think creatively, it also makes one independent, disciplined and innovative. The value being that it removes youthful exuberances, and makes them thinking beings that can think out something doing for themselves. Libraries helps in inculcating the spirit of entrepreneurship in different ways.

These ways are development of critical thought, development of sound attitudes and ethical values ,inculcation of information literacy skills and skills in information management. The library also helps to instill discipline among the youth .It also provides a conducive atmosphere for independent study. Dike(2008) noted that the library develops critical thought among the youth through the use of fictional materials that are rich in content and issues of concern for instance fiction exposes them to the effect of prejudice, bias and malice, it also redirects their lives to the positive values which at the long run equips them with entrepreneurial qualities.

Watkins(2002) also asserted that libraries build communities , break down barriers and informs citizens. This is achieved through the wealth of resources and activities of the libraries such as talk shows on good grooming, how to achieve peace how to be a good citizen , debating clubs, young readers club etc. Libraries through activities such as project works ,comic book writing ,book review club according to Dike ,Ajogwu and Amucheazi(2006) promotes full information handling skills which is one of good qualities of an entrepreneur.

In a study carried out by Olukotun and Ogbadu (2009) on entrepreneurial fears, it was discovered that the necessary ingredients for entrepreneurial spirit is knowledge on success achieved by others, personal conviction, pride of ownership etc. Author Biography and Biography, of great entrepreneurs such like Steve Jobs, Camegie and Mary Baker Eddy when read by youth can spur entrepreneurial spirit in the youth. The best place to get and read these books is in the library whether school library academic, private or public libraries. It is the library that provides a more conducive atmosphere for reading most especially for the youth ,who are easily distracted from the social media(Dike,etal2013).The library provides room for independent reading .Libraries according to Afolabi(1989) are the most potent instrument for developing an individual most especially the youth. He noted that through information from books, revolutions can take place. It was reported that Thomas Jefferson donated his personal books to start off the library of Congress. This goes to explain the value accorded libraries in Western countries. Daniel(2005) asserted that the best way of caring adequately for the mental ,moral and physical development of a person is to ensure that the person enjoys all reasonable opportunities to use books. This is because no teacher can teach all the knowledge but

the best teacher is one who leads students to ideas in books. These books can be easily accessed in the library.

Libraries train future entrepreneurs, the future entrepreneurs are the youth are the leaders of tomorrow. A nation that has a well informed youth will be productive and peaceful therefore there is need to equip the youth to be independent and the best way to do that is to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship early in life .The mind must be prepared for risk taking, for broad thinking ,before it becomes entrepreneurial and innovative and the best place the researcher thinks is the library.

Recommendations

1 Libraries are brooders of ideas, these ideas are contained in the books therefore it is recommended that libraries should be developed from primary to tertiary level as it has been found that entrepreneurial qualities can be fostered through the services of the library.

- 2) Teachers have to be trained on the best ways of teaching young people – the learner approach should be the best. Instead of focus on teaching the subject matter, the learner should be taught in a way to develop his/her talent
- 3) It is also recommended that curriculum of all the courses in secondary and higher institutions should be entrepreneurial. That is, there should be a practical approach to learning.
- 4) It is also recommended that Federal Government should set aside money for the development of libraries at all levels, they should borrow a leaf

from developed countries as it has been established that these developed countries do not underestimate the need for libraries.

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