Introduction

Every year, a lot of graduates are turned out into the labour market in search of employment. Incidentally, Geographers are among these graduates. Unfortunately, the geographers wait endlessly trying to fix themselves up in the government employment forgetting that by their own training, they are supposed to create jobs for themselves. That there is high unemployment rate in the country is no longer new. Among the Geographers, there is the complaint of limited career prospects in geography thereby making them to cross
over to other disciplines. There is also
great ignorance among employers about
the purpose and nature of Geography
(Ologe, 1990: 209). The Nigerian society
is also very ignorant of the potentials in
geographers (Sada, 1990: 192). Added to
this is the inability of our government to
meet the employment needs of her teeming
population.

In view of the above, there is the
need for this paper to enable the
geographers not only to know their
potentials but also create jobs for
themselves and to let the government be
aware of the capabilities of geographers.

Essentially, this paper will look at
two aspects which are geography
education for job creation and geography
for sustainable national development.
Before the first aspect is considered, it is
proper that Geography Education is
defined. Geography is the study
of the
locational and spatial variation in both
physical and human phenomena on Earth.
Education is defined as the process of
educating or teaching. Educate means “to
develop the knowledge, skill, or character
of …. ” From these definitions, it means
education has a purpose which is to
develop the knowledge, skill or character
of students.

From the above, Geography
Education may be defined as developing
the knowledge, skill or character of
students in the location and spatial
variation of both physical and human
phenomena on the Earth. Having defined
Geography Education, the writers will now
consider Geography Education for job
creation.

Geographic Education for Job Creation

In geography education, the
geographers acquire a lot of skills like
intellectual, map reading, cartographic,
computational and analytical and
management skills (Abegunde, 1988: 34 –
36).

The acquisition of these various
skills not only makes the geographers
capable of taking up jobs with the
governments, private companies but also
create jobs for themselves. Unfortunately,
most geographers only take up jobs with
the governments and fail to realize that
they can create jobs where others can also
be gainfully employed under them.

In the geographic literature, career
outlets for geographers have been
discussed (Akinbode, 1988: 57 – 66),
Abegunde (187: 476, 1988: 36 0 42),

At this point, it becomes necessary
to look at areas where the geographers can
create jobs for themselves and others in
stead of waiting to be employed by either
the government of other employers or
labour.
a) Self Employment:

Here, the geographer can operate at
the independent and sub-professional
levels. Before he can be self-
employed, he needs to have all the
relevant technical know-how by
taking certificate course in a school of
survey and advanced cartography.
Among the careers he can venture
into after acquiring the technical
know-how are draughtsmanship in
surveying, cartography and engineering, etc.

b) **Professional Establishments:**
Here, the geographer goes into the partnership with other professionals in architecture, estate management, surveying, journalism and gets paid in the process.

c) **Specialized Professions:**
In these professions, the geographer after the first degree can proceed to get Masters Degree or even Ph.D in land and quantity surveying, estate management, architecture, urban and regional planning, cartography, business management, insurance, water resources management, etc. In fact, these are highly skilled professions. After becoming specialized he takes professional qualifying examinations. After becoming specialized and qualified, he can set up a consultancy firm to provide services to governments, private individuals, organizations, etc.

d) **Collaborative Efforts**
Here, the geographer can collaborate with people from other disciplines where he can borrow from others, that is, adopting the interdisciplinary approach or eclectic approach or with the government because of logistics to carry out a particular activity or project.

Even Ofomata (1990: 137) noted “trained geographers can now work side by side with their colleagues from other disciplines in government and in business, in the public as well as in the private sector as urban (town) and regional planning officers, surveyors, rural development officers, administrative officers, business executive and research officers in various facets of our national life”.

Next to be considered is geography and sustainable national development

**Geography and Sustainable National Development**

The contributions by geographers can help sustain the national development. Development takes place with people in the environment. The efforts by geographers therefore in exposing the spatial-temporal nature of developments over our space so as to know where there is even distribution of developments and then bridge the gap where there is uneven distribution can be said to aid a great deal in sustaining our national development. A few examples will illustrate the above thus:

In national planning, the physical planning of resources is one important aspect, but before the resource can be planned for a better use, there is the need to know where the resources exist and what potentialities there are for improvement or what uses to which the resources can be put into in addition to having information about the desirable goal of the society. Thus, the geographer has as one of his tasks in national planning to embark on a land-use survey along with an inventory of resources, present and potential (Ofomata, 1990: 134).
Anikweze (2004: 61) observed that geography has contributions to make towards the efficient management of resources in Nigeria in the areas of information and data base provision and their application in the fields of agriculture, forestry, water resources, land-use, census surveys and population estimation, cartography and mapping, weather and climate and most importantly, in environmental protection and disaster sensitization. According to him, the knowledge of geography could be exploited for environment impact assessment and sensitivity index mapping, cropland identification and farm-land appraisals; detection of water pollution and assessment of wet-land capabilities, delimitation of population centers into enumeration areas, monitoring of land-use changes over time in both urban and rural areas, detection of nature – related disasters and damage assessments due to storm, floods, drought, erosion, fire, etc and monitoring of transportation issues such as traffic assessment, allocation of parking spaces and bus stops, port decongestion and planning of new route-ways with reference to settlement.

According to him, in addition to this policy satisfying the balance in regional economic development of the country, it is likely that by involving the products of geographic education and discipline in government, it will draw the attention of democratic leaders to equitable distribution of development projects such as building of new settlements, construction and maintenance of route-ways, establishment and localization of industries, expansion of municipal utilities, expansion of food production, expansion of communication systems and the “intensification of inter-regional trade and greater spatial interaction among people (Areola and Filani, 1981). Furthermore, with this policy, there will be integration of environment such as parks and reservation areas for tourism, the improvement of man-made uncomfortable but rich environment (e.g. oil-pollution in Niger Delta and overcrowding in urban centers), coping with aversive environment (e.g. fighting desert encroachment and desertification in the northern fringes), and protection of national resources for regional development which will also cover the control of wastes and the conservation of resources for sustainable development.

The environment today is seriously endangered because of its exploitation by man with little or no efforts at mitigating the effects arising from its over-exploitation. As a result of this exploitation, the call now is that as the environment is being used, the needs of future generations must not be compromised, that is, sustainable development.

From the above, we can see how geography has been very useful with the environment being its laboratory. Adalemo (1990: 169) showed why despite the stigma attached to environmental determinism, geography cannot and should not run away from its responsibility in the area of environmental studies – a responsibility which many expect
geographers to perform and for which they are known to have the capability especially in environmental education, monitoring and management.

Olofin (2000:9) on the importance of environmental monitoring said “environmental monitoring is watching over or checking the environment in order to warn against, or control deterioration and advice in favour of quality. In carrying out this, the geographers use instruments and techniques that can ensure the measurement of environmental variables of concern on a regular basis and on a permanent basis.

According to him, the proper monitoring of environmental variables is useful first, in detecting the spatial and temporal trend of particular variables whether negative or positive. The knowledge of this trend is important in evaluating the environmental quality at any particular point in time and for a particular place. Thus, this evaluation enables us to know whether the overall quality of the environment is deteriorating or improving. Much more, this knowledge is important because it aids man to maintain the environment properly to achieve the desired sustainable use.

So far, we can see here that geography plays a very significant role in sustaining our national development apart from the fact that its acquisition can assist the geographers realize the potentials in them in relation to job creation.

Conclusion

Having examined the various areas where the geographers can create jobs for themselves and others as well as sustain our national development through geographic education, there is no doubt that there is the need for the continuous teaching of geographical principles and techniques to geographers in our institutions of learning in order to create the awareness in them for job creation and hence, less dependent on government for employment and also make the employers aware of the societal relevance of geography.

Unfortunately, according to Areola (1994: 29), these principles and techniques are not given much prominence in our curricular in many of our institutions in the department of geography. Furthermore, there is even there is the tendency in many departments towards the abandonment of the pursuit of these practical geography domains to physical geographers as if the techniques were not of much relevance to human geographers who interact more with policy formulators, development planners and decision-makers in government.

The need for the government to give more recognition to geography as done in the advanced countries of United States, Great Britain, Canada, etc. becomes necessary in view of the vital role it can play in the spatial analysis of our national economy.

Until the above is done, the Geographers may not realize their potentials in terms of job creation for themselves, and others in the sustenance our national development.
References


The meaning of Education: [http://www.teachersmind.com/education.htm](http://www.teachersmind.com/education.htm)