ENHANCING TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING TO COPE WITH SECURITY CHALLENGES IN AFRICA: NIGERIAN YOUTHS AND SOCIAL DISORDER

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Abstract

The essence of education is to train and mould individual to be productive so as to bring development to one's society. Lack of skill acquisition programme through technical and vocational education and training resulted to anti-social activities that led to security challenges in the society. The provision of vocational and technical training to Nigerian teaming youth especially those that are unable to go fulltime formal school system is the reliable avenue to address the issue of unemployment redundancy. The inability of these youth to be engaged in employable trade generated their internal ego so as to satisfy these egocentrism. The paper looked into the training opportunities provided through technical and vocational training in addressing the problem of unemployment among the youth in tackling rising security in our society. At the end, the paper calls for the authority concerned to expand vocational and technical training opportunities by involving private organizations in order to curtail the anti-social behaviors of these youth.

Key words: Social Disorder, Security Challenges, Technical and Vocational Training, Employment

The provision of education is meant to educate individual to become useful by being engaged in any gaining employment for self actualization. The employment could either be self-employed or be employed. However, the inability of the society to provide functional and qualitative knowledge leads to "frustration and disillusion which may result in crime or drug abuse" Olaitan in (Osalor, 2013). This is the ultimate end of unemployment among the youths. In the same vein Osalor (2013) opined that "the growing problem of unemployment in the country has contributed largely to the worsening problem of poverty among the populace".

The educational structure of any nation is geared towards developing economically and socially. Both these factors cannot be achieved without focusing the minds of the youths who are among the population that produces the   manpower needed in driving the economic and social development tools.

To an extent, economic development rests with the design and development of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) so as to engage the youth who are the wheel in economic development. The training is to develop their skills acquisition capacity through basic training programmes. Such programmes should go hand-in-hand with general education to provide a balanced ground to the whole system. This view is shared with Bennell in Alam, (2007) who opined that "all countries, especially developing countries, need balanced development through all of the educational sectors in order to make significant progress in terms of national development". Hence, while TVET takes care of skill development and the production of the needed manpower for the industrial or manufacturing sector, general education is concerned with instilling the sense of responsibility toward social or civil right as citizen, the self discipline and the mindset of participating in the business world by either being self employed or be employed.

Social Disorder as the Cause of Security Challenges

Social disorder is a combination of two words, though each stands on its own. However, the word 'social' according to Encarta dictionary (2009) from a mid-17th century Latin word *socius* meaning 'companion', while the same dictionary defines it in modern language as "relating to the way in which people in group behave and interact". While online dictionary of Meriam-webster defines social as "the interaction of the individual and the group, or the welfare of human beings as members of society". Similarly Encarta dictionary (2009) defines disorder as "public disturbance or breach of peace" while Meriam-webster online dictionary defines disorder as "a disturbance of civic peace- an interruption of that which is normal or regular, unruly behavior".

Combining the two words, one can deduce that social disorder refers to societal unrest cause by individual's unruly behavior that resulted to public or civil disturbance or disarray. Whenever social unrest erupted, the forefront actors are the youths whom are mostly involved out of frustration and disillusion (Olaitan in Osalor, 2013) they go out of their minds and ended up in public riot, chaos, violence, destruction of properties, which leads to under development, poverty, diseases, environmental deterioration and total collapse of the society. All these mess up are carried out by the youths in the absence of any business venture.

Every individual is a potential developer of his being and his society; on the other hand if wrongly handled, is vulnerable to all social vices that are detrimental to social living in general. Security challenges are seen as factors generating elements of insecurity. This is more connected to unemployment especially among the youth. Addressing the problem, Hag and Haq in Christian (2011) relating East Asian experience, state that "unemployment rates in the East Asian economies remained low essentially because the population possessed employable vocational and technical skills."

The issue of unemployment is connected to many factors, one of which Alam, (2008) attributes to "drop-out students remain untrained for employment". The absence of opportunities to embark on ideal enterprise is the causes of much of the present social and industrial unrest. The inability of the educational system to provide the youth with the demands of industries has led to the turning out of restless and disconnected generation of youths (Ugwuja, 2010). Osalor (2013) also shares this view where he posed that "in Nigeria, the growing problem of unemployment in the country has contributed largely to the worsening problem of poverty among the populace." (Olaitan in Osalor 2013) further outlined the end result of such situation which he said "leads to frustration and disillusionment which may result in crime or drug abuse in a futile attempt to escape from and forget the pains and humiliation of poverty and lack". At the base of the lamenting situation is unemployment, which is affecting the life of these youths across the nation. Apart from drop-out, the problem has worsened as millions of school leavers and graduates of tertiary institutions have not secured gainful employments over the years. Unemployment has posed a serious problem not only to the welfare of individuals but also to that of their families. Many able bodied and highly qualified persons who could not secure gainful employment have remained economically dependent on their parents. This is because they lack the necessary occupational skills to be self employed and to effectively function in today's world of work. This predicament can be addressed to through TVTE, Osalor (2013) believes that "these occupational skills can be provided by technical and vocational education". He further elaborates that "technical and vocational education prepares one for the world of work with which the individual become reliant and can make contributions to the development of the society".

Constitution and National Security

Intellectuals have posed many definitions of what national security encompassed. Security is clearly positioned in the Nigerian constitution of 1999 as cited by Olugbuyi and Tyokase (2014) that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government". The Macmillan online dictionary defines it as "the protection or safety of a country's secret and its citizens". In essence national security includes all the totality of the efforts, energy, intelligence, commitment and the involvement of relevant organs to enforce and to ensure adequate protection of interest, people and property of a nation.

Paleri in Olugbuyi *et al*, (2014) further explained national security "as the measurable state of the capability of a nation to overcome the multidimensional threats to the apparent well-being of its people and its survival as a nation-state at any given time, by balancing all instrument of state policy through governance…."

"The prevailing situation of security challenges generated by the wave of unemployment has continually, for some decades now impoverished Nigerians in general. This quagmire has turned many youths to cultists, political thugs, criminals, advance free fraudsters, human traffickers, drug peddlers etc" (Usman and Gidado, 2010). It is believed that insecurity in Nigeria manifests in terrorism, illegal bunkering (vandalism), youth unemployment, porous border, kidnapping, ethic rivalry, corruption, poverty, among others. Further, Olugbuyi *et al* (2014) describes the menace to national security as "characterized by crime, violence and corruption". They further identify them as vandalism, thuggery, cultism, prostitution, armed robbery, kidnapping, rituals, bombing, child labour, school drop-out and high rate of unemployment.

Education and National Security

Every educational system is aimed at providing qualitative education and producing well-behaved individual with built-in potentiality of making developmental efforts to aspire for the better to one self and the society in general. However, the situation in Nigeria, education or academic calendar of the tertiary institutions has never been stable for over two decades, added with "indiscipline by staff as well as students, illegal levies collected by teaching and administrative staffs, varied forms of extortion and sexual harassment" (Olugbuyi, *et al* 2014).

A sound educational policy therefore must aim at attaining a high level of proficiency in all trades, service and every other occupation ranging from the professional to that of the unskilled laboured (Mbata, 2010). This assertion is not different from the view of Olugbuyi *et al* (2014) who opined that "effective and qualitative education is utilized in societies' struggles to overcome poverty, enhance peace and security".

Technical and Vocational Education and Youth Development

The development of the youth is the key towards stabilizing the society. This is to satisfy their ego as potential leaders. They need all the support from government and the society to prepare them to be engaged in productive skill. Technical and vocational are two terms merged because of their nature and relationship. Even though the society misconceived the two terms, but vocational education is seen more of academic training while Technical education, the National Policy of Education (2014) defined "as that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge". Technical education is designed at providing the skills, knowledge and attitude required for employment in trades or occupation of one's choice. Against this background, vocational and technical education for the purpose of clarity, is that skill-based programme designed for sub-professional level and based on a specific vocation (NCCE, 2012). Technical educating, on the other hand, facilitates the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. The major difference between the two terms is that, vocational education is designed for a particular vocation, whereas technical education does not target any particular vocation but gives general technical knowledge and skill. Thus, while every vocational programme is technical in nature, not all technical education programmes are vocational. This subtle relationship accounts for the interchangeable use of both terms in academic literature.

In some advanced countries vocational education and training is considered vital and defined more than ordinary training. These countries designed a development structure with focus by providing period of apprenticeship and traineeship. The periods vary according to each particular programme between three to four years of apprenticeship and one to two years of traineeship.

Europe monitors vocational education and training under European Center for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP). The 'Copenhagen Process' initiated the programme between member states. This is to help make vocational education and training better and more attractive to learners throughout the Europe.

Essentially, in the new economic environment for TVET, Mustapha & Greenan (1999) wrote that "vocational education is expected to produce an educated, skilled and motivated work force". This opinion is shared with Osalor (2013), who reiterated that "technical and vocational education prepares one for the world of work with which the individual become reliant and can make contributions to the development of the society".

According to Umoru & Okeke (2012) the UNESCO declaration on technical and vocational education among other objectives are the followings:

a.   A means of preparing for occupational fields and for effective participation in the world of work;

b.   An aspect of lifelong learning and a preparation for responsive citizenship;

c.   A method of facilitating poverty alleviation.

These objectives are the basis upon which all member nations of the United Nations (UN) developed their framework suitable and compatible to individual country including Nigeria. For the purpose of this forum, it is obvious to mention the National Policy on Education (NPE) position on technical and vocational education in relation to skill acquisition and employment. The NPE according to Ugwuja, (2010) is "the technical and vocational education and training (TVTE) refers to non-academic technical education and practical training that develop the skills and knowledge of apprentices (learner of trade or crafts) working in different sectors of industry and trainees/students trained indifferent technical vocational institutes, centers and schools". Mustapha *et al* (2013) in a study carried out on TVTE opined that "vocational education has sometimes become a tool for addressing the economic, political and social crises that are threatening the political and economic stability of some nations".

To this respect Umoru *et al* (2012) opined that "technical and vocational education through these objectives is given the necessary empowerment and mandate to provide quality technical and vocational education and training to effectively help students and workers develop their knowledge in science and technology across occupational areas'.

It is worth emphasizing at this point that education is the channel of preparing an individual in general life, while technical education and training is the only avenue in attaining fruitful life full of advantages by equipping each individual with skills and professional attitudes towards societal progress and development.

If all youths are trained to full employable status, the issue of traits of social security will be minimized to the least level. This is achievable by making government and relevant agencies to improve the TVTE position through enhancing its training programmes so as that the potential future leaders are trained to acquire skills and lifelong trade.

Conclusion

The problem of rising security challenges in our society is linked to the predicament of unemployment that persist; sky rocketing security issues from all directions are glaring every minute of the day. Likewise, the workforce to drive the economy to higher level for the social security and development while on the other hand because of their social status, they are vulnerable and a threat to national security, leading to all ramification.

To this point, such situation can be coped with by putting in place technical and vocational education and training to the teaming population, particularly the youths to empower them. Vocational training in particular and specifically will successfully cater for the drop-outs and those unable to go through formal school system. These categories constitute a substantial percentage from the total population of the manpower class.

Recommendations

It is obvious to the government and the society likewise to stand against the persisting security challenges we are in, which inevitable will downsize both the economic growth and development. Along this line, the followings recommendations can serve to impede the security problems in our society.

1. Provision of community vocational training for the teaming drop-outs and youths roaming the streets is one of the viable options to minimize political thuggery and redundancy.
2. The unemployed graduates should be provided with further opportunity of business frame work through micro finance institutions;
3. Policy should be evolved to bring down the thuggery practices by the politicians.
4. All institutions of higher learning should design a 3-month entrepreneurship training programme for the graduating students.

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