

## **CO-OPERATIVE BUSINESS AND OFFICE EDUCATION: A PANACEA FOR YOUTH RESTIVENESS AND UNEMPLOYMENT**

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### **Abstract**

There is no time than now when the imperative of cooperative business and office education are made more manifest. This is because skill acquisition rules the world. The paper examined various ways cooperative business and office education could be used to reduce youths' unemployment and restiveness in the society. To do this requires strict adherence to the objectives of cooperative business and office education which enable the youths to have skills and competencies required for the performance of business idea, recognize and demonstrate their rights as consumers, play their roles as productive participants in the society, improve personal qualities and build attitudes necessary for adjustments to personal and other employment situations and to guide individuals for suitable placement in business and office employment. In other to achieve this, every child needs basic education, which emphasizes acquisition of skills and competencies and this, will enable the youth to be gainfully employed and restiveness among youths reduced. It was concluded that since the youths constitute majority of the workforce, education planning should be centered on their needs and aspirations.

### **Introduction**

At the end of every academic year, graduates from both the secondary and tertiary levels Hock the labour market-with the-hope of securing employment. The irony of the facts is that most of these graduates, who have spent many years in the secondary schools, colleges and universities, are unskilled and thus, find it difficult to secure jobs in the world of work. These unskilled, jobless and unemployable youths remain restive in their behaviour and in most cases they explore the environment negatively. In so doing, they become involved in all kinds of notorious and restive acts.

Unemployment and youths restiveness are new phenomena as most of the country's youths and graduates were gainfully employed at the late 70s and early 80s. Nowadays, the situation is quite different as graduates from both the secondary and tertiary institutions in the country are unemployed. These rates of unemployment among our youths are traceable to so many factors. Lambo (1987), opines that most of the urban unemployed are usually new entrants into the labour force who are with little or no cooperative vocational training and experience. According to Lambo, most of these green horns of tertiary institutions are unable to secure appropriate employment opportunities because the higher institutions they attended were not adequately linked up with the labour market.

It is the paramount responsibility of every nation to provide among other things employment opportunities for its teeming population and especially the youths. Cooperative Business and Office Education is known to accelerate the rate of linkage between industry and the training institutions, thus reducing the rate of unemployment and youth restiveness. This paper therefore examines the use of Cooperative Business and Office Education in curbing youth unemployment and restiveness.

### **What is Cooperative Business and Office Education?**

According to Vocational Education Amendment Act of (1968); in Ogbuzi (1985), Cooperative Education is "A programme of vocational education for persons who, through cooperative arrangement between the school and the employer, the school and the employer, receive instruction including required academic courses and related vocational field, but these two experiences must be planned and supervised by the school and the employer so that each contributes to the students' education and his employability". In another definition, Osuala (1999). considers cooperative education as a programme for students through cooperative arrangement between the school and employers, receive part-time vocational instructions in the school and on-the-job training through part-time employment. This type of programme offers in school and it develops certain insights that lead to business intelligence. Part-time education offers the student the chance to earn

some money and the curiosity for work and enables the student to earn some money and the employer benefits too in that he comes in contact with potential personnel from whom he can choose when the time comes (Osuala, 2004).

On the other hand, Igboka (1998), defines cooperative business and office education as a programme tailored towards meeting the objective of vocational business and office education which include enabling youths to attend school in the morning and work some hours in the evening in business houses within the community. Based on these definitions, cooperative business and office education are programmes of instruction designed to enable the youth apply such business skills learned at schools and also learn other skills not taught at schools, on-the-job. Thus, the student earns some stipend while he learns new skills on-the-job.

### **Objectives of Cooperative Business and Office Education**

According to FRN (2004:30), the objectives of vocational education included among others:

- a. provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business, particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical levels;
- b. provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agriculture, commercial and economic development;
- c. give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self-reliant economically.

From these three broad objectives of vocational education, Osulala (2004:29), stated the objectives of business education as:

1. To afford all students the pertinent information to enable them to explore and learn about the world of work and the relevant interest and career areas of their choice.
2. To help every student become an intelligent consumer of goods and services.
3. To provide the students with necessary occupational information to enable them to understand the various occupations found in the world of work.
4. To provide training that will result in developing individuals who are well adjusted in the sense that they are capable of coping with the world in which they live and to provide the understanding and appreciation of the actual functioning of the economic system.
5. To enable students acquire saleable skills in the field of their choice.
6. To help students prepare for, choose, enter into and progress satisfactorily in the occupation of their choice.
7. To train students for various business activities common to many professional, industrial, agricultural, distributive and home management occupations.

Cooperative Business and Office Education is an integral course in business education programme. Hence, Igboka (1998:2) came up with the following as the specific objectives of cooperative business and office education programme:

- a. to have the skills and competencies required for the performance of basic business jobs.
- b. to apply the various business concepts acquired in the class in the real life situation.
- c. to recognize and demonstrate their responsibilities and rights as consumers.
- d. with some business skills recognize and play their roles as productive participants or members of the society especially in our free enterprise economy.
- e. to improve personal qualities and build attitude necessary for adjustment to personal and other employment situations.
- f. to guide individuals for suitable in business and office placements.

The product from our academic institutions attest to the facts that these noble objectives of cooperative business and office education are far from being achieved. Hence the rates of unemployment and restiveness among the youths are very high. To reduce those two major problems among the youths, educational planners must go back to the drawing board and address the issue of achieving all the specific objectives of cooperative business and office education.

It is important to note and discuss some of the variables that cause youths restiveness. The knowledge of these factors enable us address the issue of youth restiveness squarely.

### **Youths Unemployment and Restiveness**

In economic sense, a person who is able and willing to work yet is unable to find job is considered unemployed (Lawal, 1972). Unemployment is a serious social evil and for any economic policy to achieve full employment must in the first place deal with the various causes of unemployment. A major cause of unemployment among youths is lack of employable skills and this led some industries to resort to employment of skilled expatriates.

Furthermore, according to Tagbolo (2005), the rate of youth unemployment and joblessness have influenced some of them to be used by politicians, businessmen and community leaders to cause problems in the society. The youths sell their conscience for a token to do odd job for such bourgeois and in the process of being restive, some of them die. On the other hand, joblessness, lack of employable skills, love of money, badly educated and parent/guardian relation could cause youth restiveness difficult to control.

### **Joblessness**

Some of the youths are able and willing to work at any wage rate but the jobs are not just there for them, and as a result, they become idle. A jobless and unemployed youth remains a restive youth. He tries to explore the environment and he becomes involved in all kinds of notorious acts which are mimical to the society he lives in.

### **Love of Money**

Youths restiveness could be traced to love of money. Love for money and acquisition of wealth at the expense of others is evil (Tagbolo, 2005). To get rich quick syndrome among the youths lead to committing crime and they also become uncontrollable in the society. The elders in the community are not helping matters as funds meant for social projects are misappropriated and embezzled thus setting bad precedence for the youths to emulate. The youths become restive when they see these elders exhibit the ill-gotten wealth in the society.

### **Badly Educated**

The illiterates and badly educated in the society are the most restive than any other group of people. The educated brain-wash and use them to cause mayhem in the communities (Turaki, 2005). Some well-educated youths are still involved in restiveness having been involved in one cult active or the other while in the institutions of higher learning. Because of bad education they received wrong influence by their peer groups, they resort to terrorism. They kidnap expatriates and demand ransom.

### **Parent/Guardian:**

Most parents and guardians are not living up to expectations in the area of teaching their children and wards the correct norms, values and attitudes cherished by the society. Mothers and fathers are busy trying to put food on the table and pay other bills and have left the children uncared for. The vacuum created has been wrongly filled by the peer group influence. It is in this regard that Turaki (2005), asked parents and guardians to richly educate and advice their children and wards to disassociate themselves from wrong persons and groups.

### **Benefits of Cooperative Business and Office Education to the Students**

The following benefits are derived by the student according to Igbo (1995:104):

1. Exposes students to the actual world of work.
2. Provide opportunities for skill acquisition by students on real job.
3. Provides opportunities for wage earning by students.
4. Exposes students to meet people who are actually in higher chosen career.
5. Minimizes dropout from school since students who perform effectively in the cooperative arrangement are very likely to stay on in full-time employment after completing school programme.
6. Helps in fulfilling the objectives of cooperative business and office education.

## **Curbing Youth Unemployment and Restiveness**

Cooperative Business and Office Education has successfully prepared the youths for places in the world of work. Cooperative business and office education enables the youth to obtain basic education, acquire basic occupational skills and competencies, which will enable them, enter and progress in the world of work.

In total agreement with the view of FRN (2004); Tagbolo (2005), opines that education is good machinery' in curbing youth restiveness. It is important that every youth must possess basic education because no educated and skilled youth would want to waste his future in the midst of opportunities to excel in his chosen career. Allowing the youths to study about business concepts and philosophy will help to reduce unemployment and youths restiveness. The youth's exposure to other forms of business environment will rekindle his interest to open his own business and this will result into job creation and training scheme for other youths thus reducing unemployment and restiveness among the youths.

Cooperative Business and Office Education aim at (Okoro, 1995:67), developing occupational skills, which can be relied upon in securing employment and thus reducing youth restiveness. Here emphasis on training is on skills that are in high demand than on obsolete skills. After undergoing through the programme, the you becomes a wiser consumer and he will no longer accept restiveness as a way of life as this may mean blocking his future and means of livelihood. Cooperative education enables the youths consolidate knowledge; apply concepts and principles as taught in the classroom situation. The youths in the class are forced to be active, instead of passive, participant.

Brauaden (1984), rightly observed that unemployment leads to wastage of human resources and slows down the rate of economic development since individuals who form a section of the labour force are not allowed to contribute to the economic growth of the country. Through cooperative business and office education, the youth can now involve himself/herself in the production activities in the society thus contributing to the overall economic development and emancipation of the country and the youths.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the issues raised, n is therefore recommended that the objectives of Business Education that are oriented towards the youths must be emphasized at schools. Acquisition of business skills enable the youths to be employed in the world of work or enable them to be self-employed. It is further recommended that an economic policy that creates job opportunity for the youth need to be introduced. This will make the youth to be gainfully employed.

## **Conclusion**

The success of any nation's economy depends, to a large extent, on the quality of its work force. The youths of many countries constitute greater percentage of their workforce and their education, skills and competencies must be considered in the education policy. The programmes of Cooperative Business and Office Education provide the youths with knowledge, skills, competencies and guides to gain employment and placement on suitable jobs. It also provides the right attitudes and values that enable them to choose and progress in occupations of their choices.

Although most of the youths of today are unemployed and restive because of lack of confidence on government, private sector and some individuals who have jilted them in the past, the youths must be properly cared for now through appropriate implementation of the objectives of Cooperative Business and Office Education.

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