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VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

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Abstract

People have always realized that Vocational education is' the factor that brings' about national development. The central goal of Vocational Education is to prepare one productive employment. Such employment can be self-employed. This paper examines the problem militating against Vocational education, its implications for economic development and its products in terms of suitability for the changing environment. The world is changing as a result of technological and economic advancement and this creates peculiar problems and challenges which most vocational education graduates cannot cope with and this makes them not suitable for employment. This paper emphasizes the need to get Vocational Education graduates trained on entrepreneurship skills and knowledge through well planned and executed entrepreneurship education by Vocational Education. Vocational education graduates will be fulfilled. They will be productive and committed as employees or employers of labour as they transit to a meaningful life in the world.

Keywords: Vocational Education, Economic Development, Entrepreneurship Education.

Introduction

Vocational education has been an integral part of economic development strategies in many societies because of its impact on productivity and economic development. Despite its conditions, the leaders of the country have not given vocational education the attention it deserves, and that is one of the reasons for the nations underdevelopment Victor (2015).

Vocational Education policy measures were introduced in the past with the overall objectives of ,reducing poverty and creating job as well as attaining overall economic development, is equally hoped that vocational education will help to thrust the country into the forefront of modern technology, It is also obvious that many efforts made in this country to activate and propel the economy development through entrepreneurship education. The national open university of Nigeria (Noun, 2015) defined vocational education as an aspect of technical education is an education that combines both theoretical and practical knowledge, it exposes the students to the economic system of the country and equips one with

long skills that would enable one to make reasonable judgment as a producer, employee or consumer of goods and services. The American Vocational Association Okorie and Eze (2014) define vocational education as education designed to develop skills, work habits and appreciation encompassing knowledge and information needed for workers to enter and make progress in employment on a useful productive basis. This definition clearly points out the relevance of vocational education towards self-reliance and emancipation contributing to social upliftment and development and growth of the nation. According to the Nation Policy (2014), the goals of vocational education are as follows:

- (a) To provide trained manpower in applied science technology and business particularly at craft, advanced craft.
- (b) To provide the knowledge and vocational skills necessary or agricultural, commercial and economic development.
- (c) To give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals who shall be self- relevant economically.

The Relevance of Vocational Education

The importance of vocational education in the development of all round abilities of the individuals is justified in its ability to provide training in not only skills but also in the inculcation of desirable attitude to productive life and the establishment of worthy and social political ideals. There is a fresh awareness among policy makers in many African countries and the international donor community of the critical role that vocational education and training can play in economic development. The increasing importance that Ati government now attaches the vocational education and training is reflected in various poverty reductions strategy papers that governments have developed in collaboration with World Bank.

One of the most important features of vocational education is it's orientation to the world of work and the emphasis in the acquisition of employable skills. This means that vocational education institution can respond to the different training needs of learners from different socio-economic and academic background and prepare them for gainful employment and for economic development. It can be observed that the vocational education has an important role to play in the economic growth, this role is emphasized through entrepreneurship education with its abilities to equip persons with not only white collar jobs but skills and knowledge required for self-reliance as contained in the second national development plan to build a strong and self-reliance nation.

Vocational education according to Nagohn, and Cornelius (2015) is a potent vehicle for keeping the youth away from robbery, drug peddling and other social

ills but rather through entrepreneurship education keeps them gainfully employed. Vocational education provides the individual with relevant skills and knowledge required for them to obtain employment and satisfactory performance in their work places. Vocational education in Nigeria has five objectives which it must achieve to make the necessary impact in the economic development of the nation. These objectives are:

1. Training of individuals for initial employment
2. Retraining of workers
3. Giving support to the apprenticeship system
4. Reduction in the level of unemployment
5. Promotion of economic development

Concept of Economic Development

Economic development according to David, (2012) is an unprecedented advance for most of a nation's population in food, clothing, shelter, household, furnishing, health, education, and recreational services to the extent that due conditions such as malnutrition have virtually been eliminated. Wikipedia (2013) defines economic development involves both quantitative and qualitative changes in the economy. It is concerned with the development of human capital, critical infrastructure, regional competitiveness, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, health, safety, literacy and other initiatives. The above definitions imply that economic development being social in nature, deals with how the income generated from production is employed to increase welfare of people.

If our economy is to develop, there is need to develop the entrepreneurial spirit of our youths through vocational education and training so that the fear of taking risks to initiate ventures will be wiped off their faces to enable most of them be engaged in meaningful economic activities that will result to increased productivity, increased standard of living and reduction in poverty level.

Concept of Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship education is viewed by Omolayo (2016) as the term given to someone who has innovative ideas and transforms them to profitable activities. Albert, Sciscise and Poli (2014) define entrepreneurship education as the structured formal conveyance of entrepreneurship competencies which in turn refer to the concepts, skills and mental awareness used by individuals during the process of starting and developing their growth oriented ventures. Entrepreneurship education goal is to promote creativity, innovation and self-employment by developing personal attributes and skills that form the basis of an entrepreneurial mindset and behaviour. Entrepreneurship education should not be confused with business education and economic studies.

Prospects of Vocational Education for Economic Development through Entrepreneurship Education

For Nigeria to remain viable and compliant in the present competitive and dynamic global knowledge economy, she required highly skilled and qualified manpower which can only be possible to reposition vocational education for economic development through entrepreneurship education, (Kayoma, 2014).

It is expected that vocational education through entrepreneurial education will be successful if the identified challenges are properly addressed. This type of education will training our youths to possess employable skills and be in the position to form cooperatives as a way to gain from government and voluntary agencies empowerment for establishing small and medium scale productive ventures which eventually transform into big companies arid conglomerates. Some of these companies should be patronized by government for her projects execution.

This reduces unemployment, social vices, insecurity and poverty levels while output and productivity will rise and if sustained over time will transform into economic growth and development.

Challenges of Vocational Education through Entrepreneurship Education

Vocational education and training has been part of educational system for the past half decades Kayoma (2013) since all these years it has not fully actualized its goal because of some challenges which have in one way or the other contributed to the poor implementation of vocational education. Some of these hindering factors include the issue of educators and trainers whose knowledge and skills are obsolete.

These trainers should be updated by retaining via effective in service training. To breed the brightest and best minds, the youths must be taught by the brightest and best minds. Adequate teachers and lecturers who can raise questioners and creators must be developed because questioning is the beginning of inventions (Aruosa, 2014). Other challenges include inadequate curriculum, lack of maintenance culture, inadequate science equipment and materials. insecurity of life and properties, poor status of library and research facilities and lack of political will by the leaders. These factors should be adequately tackled to reposition vocational education.

Conclusion

Vocational education which is very important to Nigeria helps in the preparation of skilled manpower and laying of a solid base for entrepreneurship education in the country. In view of this, our educational system should be directed towards

skill acquisition for economic development to help produce mass job creators that will employ our abundant but idle material for increased output and productivity which if sustained over time will lead to economic growth and development.

However, some factors are militating against this arid need to be addressed to vocational education to the required status.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. There is need for increased funding of vocational education. The fund should be applied to research and development, acquisition of appropriate and up-to-date equipment and tools and maintenance of faulty equipment.
2. Educators and trainers of vocational education should be updated by retraining effective or service training enough of them should be developed to help breed the brightest and best minds in vocational education.
3. There is need for good road network in our rural areas, likewise constant supply of electricity and water to encourage entrepreneurs establish in rural areas.
4. Skills training centre which is otherwise called post secondary training institute should be establish in every local government area for school leavers, tertiary institution graduates and adult learners for one year compulsory training in employable skills, knowledge and values needed in a competitive global economy and for self employment for onward poverty reduction.

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