

Emergence of Unemployment: An Assessment of Nigeria Directorate of Employment (NDE) Skill Intervention Programmes between (2005-2011) in Lagos State

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Abstract

Generation of productive and gainful employment with decent working conditions based on skill development to absorb our growing labour force has become a critical factor in the strategy for economic development in Nigeria. This demands that the government must respond through policy interventions in setting institutional framework that will be responsible for enhancing the skill of products from different academia. Given the strategic position of Lagos State in Nigeria there is need to provide world-class vocational skills training and high quality technical education to Lagos unemployed youths . Young school leavers rush to Lagos in search of jobs. In order to achieve this target, the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and few other institutions were created. The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between skill development and youth unemployment. In analyzing the relevance of NDE in the development of skill and creation of job in Lagos state between (2005-2011), this paper observed that NDE has contributed significantly towards creating jobs for the unemployed youths within their capacity. However, the slow pace of NDE in responding effectively to the rate of unemployment and in attaining the millennium development goal (MDGs) will be an uphill task. The government needs to improve on their investment, and develop more institutional capacity to tackle the issue of unemployment in the country. Beyond policy initiation, strategies must be put in place for adequate implementation of the scheme towards eradicating unemployment.

Keywords: Unemployment, Job creation, Skill empowerment, National Directorate of Employment, Youths

INTRODUCTION

The growing unemployment in Nigeria and its concomitant consequences constitute a serious challenge to the economic development with negative effect for future generation, especially as the youths are mostly affected. A cursory look at the rush into Lagos state by unemployed and unproductively engaged youths may result to serious consequences, even though the government of Lagos state has continued to develop strategies to curtail the contagious effect of youth unemployment by providing youth development and empowerment programmes. This challenge demands the Federal government of Nigeria to develop and empower the Nigerian youths to enable them contribute effectively to national economic growth. The strategic issue is that the government must resolve to initiate policies through their main institutions for employment and wealth creation; Nigeria Directorate of Employment (NDE) and other relevant agencies in engaging the youth positively with skill development, acquisition, and empowerment packages that will explore their potentials and make them self reliant. Analysis indicates that unemployment in Nigeria is on the increase and only youth development and empowerment can mitigate this problem.

Lagos State being the Nation's commercial capital city is characterized with high unemployment due to the influx of people from every part of the country in search of job. Although the state on its own part has initiated youth development and empowerment programmes to handle youth unemployment in the state, it is not enough considering the fact that about 65% of unemployed school graduates from different states head for Lagos after graduation from different tertiary institutions. The belief is that Lagos state, being the former Federal Capital and centre of excellence has more job opportunities than other states and this has led to the profligacy of the rate of unemployment in the state, (Emeh, 2012:2). However, the majority of Lagos socio-economic problems especially unemployment have risen from the sheer pace of rapid urbanization that have outstripped effective planning and maintenance of new emerging cities of Africa and the third world. Solving Lagos' unemployment problems therefore poses a major challenge to the government and people of the state and the nation at large, (Rasaki 1988:1).

Resultantly, the lack of employment has created platform for criminal behaviors for some Nigerian university graduates and school leavers. Long -term unemployment has become a feature of the Nigerian labour

market, i.e. five years after graduating, many youths are in the labour market in search of jobs that are not available, thereby lending force to crimes such as armed robbery, car snatching, pipeline vandalization, oil bunkering, and prostitution among the youths.

Available information by National Universities Commission (NUC, 2004) reiterated that the massive unemployment of Nigerian universities graduates in the country is traceable to the disequilibrium between labour market requirements and lack of essential employable skills by the graduates (Diejonah and Orimolade, 1991; Dabalen et al, 2000 cited in Emeh 2012:5). This critical skill gaps inhibits the development of youths and the entire development of the nation, as more than half of the Nigerian populations are under the age of 30.

Therefore, youth development and empowerment have been recognized as vital tools, in life for building the human capital, eradicating poverty and preparing youth more fulfilling life. Hence, making sure that youths are well prepared for their future is enormously important to the course of poverty reduction and growth. Millions of young people face bleak employment opportunities and investigating the viability of engaging them with youth empowerment constitutes the objective of this paper with special emphasis on Lagos state, hence the objectives of the study is to:

1. Examine the relationship between skill development and youth unemployment
2. Analyze the relevance of NDE in the development of skill and creation of job in Lagos state
- 3 Evaluate the role of NDE in skill development in Lagos State between (2005-2011)
- 4 Examine the strategic importance of NDE in skill development

Research Methodology

The research adopted survey method in gathering the necessary information required for this work. Both primary and secondary data were used. The primary data was collected through unstructured interview carried out with officials and Head of Departments (HODs) of Nigeria Directorate of Employment located in their Lagos Zonal offices in Lagos, where few people were interviewed. The secondary data were collected through various leaflets, magazine, annual reports, periodicals, Journals, some published and unpublished research papers made available to us mostly from the offices of the Directorate.

De-limitation/Scope of the Study

This paper took a critical assessment of five years of NDE performance in Lagos State between 2005 - 2011. It is aimed at assessing the contributions of the NDE in facilitating youth employment in Lagos state. There is an influx of youths, mostly university graduates, to Lagos for job search because of the nature of Lagos as the commercial capital of Nigeria. NDE has over 80 different programmes for skill acquisition and other programmes for job creation. These programmes are targeted in impacting skill and creating jobs for both graduate and non- graduates, some programmes are designed for both groups. However, this paper is interested only in few strategic programmes which are targeted for graduates from tertiary institutions: (1) Rural Employment Promotion (REP) comprising RADTS and RHTS, (2) Entrepreneurial Development (Small Scale Enterprises (SSE), (3) Special Public Work Graduate Attachment Programmes, These few programmes analyzed were associated with graduates employment. Therefore, the target of this study is limited to graduates only. These include students from universities, polytechnics and colleges of education. The programmes available for those with lower level of education were not used as it is outside the scope of this work.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Generation of productive and gainful employment with decent working conditions based on skill development to absorb our growing labour force has become a critical factor in the strategy for economic development in Nigeria. One of the central public policy issues facing low and middle-income, countries in the design of poverty-reduction reforms is how to promote employment and support such employment creation through the formation of appropriate skills. Powell and Treichel (2008 :1-2) noted that in Nigeria, the employment situation has become more severe owing to the decline of certain industries, retrenchment in the civil service, and the fact that large-scale employment generation has not occurred despite impressive growth rates of non-oil growth sector. This situation is compounded by high population growth and the increasing numbers coming into the labour market for the first time.

Therefore skill development has become a strategic necessity in building a system of adequate capacity, towards ensuring equitable access to all, particularly the youth, disadvantaged groups, minorities, the poor, women, people with disabilities, dropouts, and those working in the unorganized sector, reducing mismatch between supply and demand of skills, diversifying skill development programmes to meet the changing requirements of the emerging knowledge economy by ensuring quality and relevance of training, building true market place competencies rather than mere qualification.

(Adebisi and Oni 2012) however noted how regrettably, training systems in developing countries generally and in Africa in particular, are inadequate in supporting those seeking work or self-employment, and

need to improve their relevance in the emerging competitive world. People are unemployed either as a result of lack of employment or lack of employable skills. The latter is the need that must be met if the individuals must be employed.

Yigitcanlar and Baum (2011: 42-43) also in their theoretical analysis pointed out that youth population is increasing explosively particularly in developing countries as a result of rapid urbanization. The continuous decrease in the manufacturing employment has made many of the young people facing three options: getting jobs in the informal economy with insecurity and poor wages and working conditions, getting jobs in the low-tier service industries, or developing their vocational skills to benefit from new opportunities in the professional and advanced technical/knowledge sectors. Moreover in developing countries, like Nigeria a large portion of young people are not even lucky enough to choose among any of these options facing as a consequence, long-term unemployment, which makes them highly vulnerable.

This demands that the government must respond through policy interventions in setting institutional framework that will be responsible in enhancing skill, and training to complement the products from different academia. This presupposes that technical and vocational education institutions can respond to the different socio-economic and academic backgrounds and prepare the clientele for gainful employment and sustainable livelihoods. Thus, the youth, the poor and the vulnerable of society can benefit from vocational/technical education. In other to achieve this target, National Directorate of Employment and few other institutions were created. Adebisi and Oni (2012:32-33) advocated that meeting the training needs of the prospective trainees of the National Directorate of Employment is what makes the training programmes of the Directorate relevant to the plights of the unemployed. To identify and evaluate people's needs, adult educator must understand the nature and role of needs in the training programmes. In their findings, they observed that the NDE has enough schemes and job categories from which the prospective beneficiaries can acquire necessary skills that will guarantee their employment.

However, their findings showed that trainees enrolled more in certain schemes at the expense of others which have scanty enrollment of trainees and also on the relevance of the NDE training programmes to the needs of the trainees. Their findings revealed that 447 (42.7%) trainees were looking for jobs, 258 (24.6%) were doing petty trading and 225 (24.4%) were doing casual work before enrolling in the NDE. These three categories totaled 960 (91.7%) were in the region of unemployment before enrolling for training under the NDE. Further investigation into whether or not the jobs they do now are the ones they learned in the NDE, all the ex-trainees, 120 (100%) answered that they have jobs/ businesses of their own and that the jobs/businesses they do now were the ones they learned in NDE. All these positive responses are indication that the NDE training programmes met the needs of the trainees, (Adebisi and Oni, 2012:36). This presupposes that the government should increase its investment in the scheme, to enable the institution fulfill its mandate toward reducing youth unemployment in the country.

Strategic location of Lagos and the challenge for skill development

Lagos will be the third largest megacity in the world by 2015 with a population of 25million people and is characterized by many investment opportunities that are attractive to investors be they local or foreign for domestic and foreign consumption(Olawumi 2012:1). The economy of Lagos is continuously vibrant and being revamped to turn around the economy of the nation. There is the need therefore to put in place measures that would expand domestic production, boost exports, generate employment and implement industrial incentives to boost the growth of the non-oil sector. Competent and skilled youths are demanded to operate and maintain these services. A major attraction therefore for sitting investments in any country/state is the availability of skilled, competent and trainable manpower, preferably youths with minimal industry/field exposure,(Gasper 2012).

The proactive development of youth entrepreneurs will provide lasting solutions to the problem of massive youth unemployment. It is an effective means of stemming or eradicating restiveness amongst the youths. When we have a critical and motivated mass of skilled youth-entrepreneurs the challenges of unemployment will be dealt with.

Given the strategic nature of Lagos State in Nigeria there is need to provide world-class vocational skills training and high quality technical education to Lagos youths desiring to acquire competences and aspiring to be skilled and seasoned entrepreneurs. Young school leavers rush to Lagos to seek for jobs and other means of livelihood and there is the need for government through the framework of institution for job and wealth creation like Nigeria Directorate of Employment NDE to equip and empower this mass unemployed youth with the mindset and practical skills required to become first class competent and technically skilled entrepreneurs creating wealth and offering employment to other youths. This will also create the platform through which aspiring youth entrepreneurs can access cutting-edge, practical strategies for sustainable business success.

Accordingly, (Onuoha, 2012:1) posited that Skills gap has been identified by several studies as critical, especially in Engineering, Road Construction, Transportation, Power and Water Supply, Housing,

Environment/Physical Planning as the global environment is changing rapidly.

One of the panaceas therefore is the provision of high quality technical skills to actualize the reduction of employment are the redirection of our youths to Technical and Vocational Skills acquisition. This acquisition must lead to a qualification and a certification conferring a national recognition for employment or as an entrepreneur. This will foster technological entrepreneurship, while enhancing the establishment and growth of Small and Medium Enterprise (SMES), a precursor to industrial and technological development of Nigeria.

It will also ensure a steady flow of skilled workers for the domestic industry. The Lagos State hosts over 60% of the manufacturing/industrial sector, a major driving component of the State's vision in job creation. However, such available jobs are only for young boys and girls with high quality technical skills.

Therefore, with the objective of Lagos state towards transforming to a Model Africa Mega-City by 2015, job creation through skill acquisition for the next generation will create economic reforms which are necessary and reflective of the kind of socio-economic progress the average citizen deserves. Noteworthy in the actualization of this vision is the strategic role of Nigeria Directorate of Employment NDE and other allied agencies designed to create employment and enhance skill among the Nigerian youths. However, it is important to note that the actualization of this vision and its targets is hinged on the production of High Quality Technical Skills in large numbers, from the Technical Education sub-sector.

Accordingly, (Akabueze 2012) pointed out that Lagos, as the nation's economic capital with vast potentials and investment opportunities will play a central role.

It is within this context and the place of Lagos as Nigeria's economic capital that the government needs to examine the economic potentials of Lagos. This shows the high level of commercial activities in the state." He also noted the economic capacity of the state which spans banking, travel and power generation. On the average, 40% of bank branches are in Lagos because of the high level of business activities here. Over 40% of the telecoms subscriber base is in Lagos. Two seaports in Lagos accounts for 70% sea trade in the country. The two electricity distribution companies Eko and Ikeja Districts account for 50% of PHCN's transmission power. About 80% of International air travel arrive in and depart from Lagos. All these point to Lagos as the economic nerve centre of the country. So, if Nigeria is being rated as one of the major players in the emerging markets, then he contended that Lagos is very strategic.

Opeyemi(2012) noted that this is a moment of opportunity for Nigeria as an emerging economy Lagos is not an oil producing state but because of its commercial and financial strength it dominates in other sectors like telecoms, law, medicine, architecture, engineering, transportation, power, insurance, capital market, media, entertainment, education and more. Lagos is a private sector driven economy. Growth in Lagos would have spiral effect on Nigeria as a whole.

A Mega city like Lagos, if the rate of unemployment is high, defeats its beauty. The issue of unemployment cannot just be treated in isolation, it is a total package. First of all, you have to evaluate the education, the quality of the graduates in the country, you must look at the state of the infrastructure, and you must look at the priority, economy and the regulatory framework available.

Lagos state government's it own effort to reduce employment on its own has been carrying out programme for skill acquisition to facilitate job creation and to create jobs through this means both direct and indirect. According to Kale (2012), about 20.3 million Nigerians are currently jobless and not employed in any form of job, the Statistician-General of the Federation, as well as the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) has pointed out that the number of unemployed youths in the nation may lead to a crisis situation in the Nigerian Labor market. There is also the need for deliberate collaboration between various governments and the NDE for definite capacity building both at the institutional and personnel levels or acquiring technical, organisational and managerial skills required for increased development renewable energy," he said. One of the challenges facing NDE is availability of funds to the directorate which had forced it to limit the number of graduate trainees resettled to 50 in each state and appealed to the state governors to absorb the others. He added that the number of trainees in subsequent trainings could increase very well if the state governors key into the programme and support the NDE in this market that provides great potentials.

Also, Riordan (2006:1) noted that the nature of work is changing rapidly due to new technology and work organisation innovations. This has a dual effect by tending to dramatically reduce the number of low or unskilled positions available globally and additionally putting emphasis on the need to extend worker's skills over a shorter and shorter timeframe. Accordingly, he pointed out that it is no longer sufficient to only have initial skills in say, a recognized trade as the changing nature of work will require individuals to regularly upgrade their skills or add completely new ones in order to remain fully employable. Most of this upgrading or addition of skills can be gained in a training centre or within the workplace, but irrespective of how competency has been achieved, it should be formally recognized in the same way as the initial trade skills were.

Operations of NDE

The NDE was established under legislation to design and implement programmes to combat mass

unemployment. Most of its programmes are targeted at the informal sector, including the transfer of skills through master craftsmen. There are a total of 4 major programmes and the common vehicle for supporting the acquisition of skills is the traditional apprenticeship system involving master craftsmen.

On the positive side, the NDE programmes provide young people with work-related skills, the majority of which are certified by the NDE. However, in certain trades where there is perceived high demand, such as computer programming, there is a limited uptake of apprenticeships. The NDE has recognized this mismatch and is attempting to encourage a greater participation in this skill area by providing financial incentives for master crafts to train apprentices in this area, but it will take time to see if more people will be certified as competent in this area. The evidence on certification for 2006 also shows that very few young people are being certified in the area of business services, such as office maintenance, store keeping, cosmetology or secretarial services.

Strategic Importance of NDE in Skill Development

One of the most significant factors influencing employment levels within the formal sector and activities in the informal sector is the structure and growth of the economy.

The growth rates for the Nigerian economy have been high over the past eight years, but not significant enough to absorb the growing size of the country's labor force and make a dent in the unemployment rate. In view of these trends in the labor market, the question arises as to where these people can find work and what skills they require in order to earn a living. Powell and Treichel (2008:4) noted that there is no precise figure on the numbers working in the formal versus the informal sector, but the best estimates on the size of the formal sector is that about 2 million are employed in the civil service, 1 million in health and education and about another 2 million in private sector employment, hence approximately 10 percent of the labour force is in the formal sector. Agriculture is still the dominant sector and contributes about 42 percent of the country's GDP.

This calls for strategic importance of NDE in determining and assessing and providing data on the nature of demand for skills in the informal sector. The National Directorate for Employment (NDE) undertakes trade tests on a regular basis and successful candidates are issued with a certificate of competency. Under this test, a person is required to have worked in a particular occupation for a number of years and the certification provides a public record of his competency. These records are useful since they act as a proxy for skills demand, given that a person will only be an apprentice and pay to have their skills tested if there is an economic demand for their services. Over the 1991 to 2004 period a total of 363,716 people had their skills tested. This helps us to understand part of the picture of the demand for skills in the informal sector, as it reflects the structure of the economy described earlier, including regional dimensions (e.g. demand for leather skills will be higher in Kano than in other areas), Powell and Treichel (2008:6)

Administrative data on the numbers of people enrolled on the open apprenticeship scheme can also help signal where there is a high demand for workplace skills in the informal sector.

Under the open apprenticeship scheme, the National Directorate for Employment provides a young person with the opportunity to register for an apprenticeship with a master craftsman. There are a total of 86 trades and the length of the apprenticeship will depend on the trade. For the year 2006, Powell and Treichel noted that a total of 40,014 were registered on a program and the most common different type of trades.

In the study to identify what knowledge and skill graduates require to successfully enter the labor market, by the National Universities Commission in 2005, the employers were asked perception of graduate skills from the following disciplines: Administration, Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine, Arts and Social Science, Engineering, Environmental Sciences, Medicine Dentistry and Pharmacy, Education, Law and Science. The study concluded that recently qualified graduates exhibited a number of skill deficiencies, including lack of analytical and ICT skills.

The findings of the study indicate that graduates had underdeveloped entrepreneurial and problem-solving skills, as well as poor communication and literacy skills. This analysis can help provide policy makers with information on priority areas for supporting investment in skills development.

A look at public policies for supporting employment generation and skills development will help demonstrate how they fail to address labor market needs in a strategic manner and instead just operate as stand alone initiatives, often with minimal impact. Powell and Treichel (2008:8) posited that the education system plays a significant role in producing the country's skilled manpower, they pointed out that about 500,000 young people leave the education system annually, and on average about 120,000 come out of the tertiary education system, but only an estimated 10 percent is able to enter formal sector employment, with the remainder being unemployed or having to look for work in the informal sector. The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) emphasizes self-employment in preference to wage employment. The activities of NDE were structured into four main programme areas which entails job creation as well as productivity and income generating enhancement for the youths and other beneficiaries. The four-programme areas are: the Vocational Skill Development Programme (VSDP), the Small Scale Enterprise Programme(SSE), the Special Public Works Programme(SPW) and the Agricultural Employment Programme(AEP). The VSDP programme is a skill acquisition programme which

consists of 80 trades spread through its four ancillary themes of; (1)The National Open Apprenticeship Scheme.

EVALUATION OF NDE IN SKILL DEVELOPMENT IN LAGOS STATE (2005-2011)

Job Centre Unit

The job centre division serves as the gateway to all the NDE programmes. Thus, the centre in addition to documenting all employed persons interested in NDE schemes renders counseling services that help to ameliorate the disillusionment of Nigerian youths caused by long period of searching for job. The centre inculcates attitudinal change on the unemployed youth on the present realities in the Nigerian Labour Market through the services of counseling officers. Other services rendered by the centre include job linkages, among others.

Table 1: Number of Graduate Registered Job Centre Unit

YEAR	NUMBER OF GRADUATES REGISTERED	NUMBER EMPLOYED
2005	126	-
2006	224	-
2007	323	-
2008	319	69
2009	751	86
2010	951	62
2011	763	107
2012	731	17
Total	4188	341

Source: NDE Lagos state office (2012)

Table 1 shows that in 2005, 126 graduates registered and no record of employment. In 2006, 224 graduates registered. In 2007, 323 graduates registered, no employment was recorded. In 2008, 319 graduates registered 69 employment were recorded. In 2009, 751 graduates registered and 86 employments were recorded. In 2010, 951, graduates registered and 62 employments were recorded. In 2011, 763 graduates registered and 17 employments were recorded. In 2012, 731 graduates registered, and 17 employment were recorded. The number of employed is very infinitesimal compared to the data distribution in Lagos NDE (2007:6) data indicating the unemployed persons state and sex indicates, that in Lagos the registered unemployed persons with NDE, statistics shows that the male unemployment population is 190,745; (54.02%) and the registered female is 162,352 (45.98%). However, social statistics (NBS 2009:238) shows that the rate of unemployment in Lagos stands at about 6500. In 2005, the total unemployed in Lagos state was 15,500, in 2006, the number of unemployed was 10,200, in 2007, and 2008 the figure stood at about 19,500. This shows that NDE needs to do more to sensitize the target group about their programmes.

Rural Employment Promotion (REP) Dept.

The Rural Agricultural Development Training Scheme (RADTS) and Rural Handcraft Training Scheme (RHTS) were introduced to awaken the interest of youth in agriculture. With the advent of oil economy in Nigeria, there has been systematic abandonment of the agriculture sector through rural urban drift in search of paid employment, which is, at today, nonexistent. The focus of these programmes is to help the youth exploit tremendous opportunities for employment and wealth creation in agricultural sector and consequently to check the rural-urban drift of the youth. The training programme covers modern agricultural practices in the area of crop production, crop processing and preservation, livestock production and management, and other agro-allied ventures.

Another scheme aimed at enhancing standard of living of the rural populace through wealth creation is Rural Handcraft Training Scheme (RHTS). The scheme seeks to train rural farmers in various of-farm income generating activities in the production and marketing of hand craft, using cheap and local sourced local material. This is usually implemented during off-farm period. The graduates of this scheme are further empowered financially to set up micro farm/enterprise of their learnt skill.

Table 2: Rural Employment Promotion (Rep) Dept Comprising RADTS and RHTS in Lagos State

YEAR	RADTS	RHTS
2005	300	300
2006	---	86
2007	100	100
2008	120	75
2009	196	77
2010	120	---
2011	60	----
2012	50	-----
Total	946	138

Source: NDE Lagos state office (2012)

The table 2 above shows the current performance of the REP--- Rural Employment Promotion Department which comprises majorly two programmes. The Rural Agricultural Development Training Scheme (RADTS) and Rural Handcraft Training Scheme (RHTS). Within the period under review, as at 2005, RADTS graduated 300 youths while RHTS turned out about 300 the same year. In 2006 the record of RADTS was not available while RHTS trained 86. In 2007, 300 trainees each graduated from each of the two programmes. In 2008 and 2009, RADTS recorded about 120 and 196, whereas RHTS had about 75 and 77, from available record between 2009-2012. It is also pertinent to note that from the interview with the head of department, it was gathered that 30 RADTS trained were resettled in 2010. They were asked to concentrate on training and loan facilities was taken over by Agric Bank, beneficiaries are referred from the NDE

National Directorate of Employment Entrepreneurial Development (Small Scale Enterprises) Programme in Lagos State)

Small scale enterprises department of the NDE employs various strategies in order to create employment, increase job growth, and reduce change, innovation and competition in the economy. The strategies are all hung on the impartation of business/entrepreneurial skills to various unemployed cadres in the societies who are desirous of engaging in self-reliant enterprises.

The benefits of small scale enterprises to any economy are easily noticeable, and these include, among others, the following: contribution to the economy in terms of outputs of goods and services, creating jobs at relatively low cost of capital, especially in the fast growing services sector, providing a vehicle for reducing income disparities, developing a pool of skilled and semi-skilled workers as a basis for the future industrial expansion, improving forward and backward linkages between, socially and geographically diverse sectors of the economy, providing opportunities for developing and adapting appropriate technological approaches, offering an excellent breeding ground for entrepreneurial and managerial talent, the critical shortage of which is often a great handicap to economic development. They are usually characterized by dynamism, witty innovations, efficiency, and their small size allows for faster decision making process. In Nigeria, the development of small and medium scale enterprises is important for employment generation, solid entrepreneurial base and encouragement for the use of local raw materials and technology.

Entrepreneurial/Business Training

The business training scheme of NDE is one of the many strategies designed to stimulate business initiative of graduates of tertiary institutions and retired public/private sector employees to enable them identify business opportunities and thereby combine factors of production to create self employment and wealth for themselves and the nation.

NYSC/NDE/EDP: Entrepreneurship development programme sensitization is designed for all tiers of NYSC members at their orientation camps nationwide

NDE/NACRDB Workshop

The national directorate of employment (NDE) in conjunction with Nigerian agricultural and rural development bank limited (NARCDB) is organized for collaboration for effective micro finance and job creation.

b) NDE/QikQik and NDE/EasyBiz Scheme.

The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) is established with a view to implementing and delivering robust programmes to address mass unemployment to create a platform for job creation, self-employment, poverty reduction and the provision of sustainable income opportunities. The NDE went into partnership with these organizations with a view to create over 200,000 jobs. One hundred persons have been trained on the use of mobile phones to conduct financial transactions. Beneficiaries under this scheme are known as NDE/Qik-Qik Agents.

On the other hand, in collaboration with Cards technology limited, one hundred participants were

trained in both Lagos and Abuja at the rate of fifty participants per centre. In collaborating with these organizations, the NDE aims at being in the forefront of the mobile banking business in Nigeria. The beneficiaries' under this arrangement are known as NDE/EasyBiz Agents.

These platforms –QikQik Mobile Money and EasyBiz systems were created to enhance the access of the average Nigerian financial services. This is expected to be achieved through delivering financial services to millions of Nigerians by bringing banking services to their doorsteps, using Agents Bankers. An Agents Banker delivers financial services using non-bank retail outlets that rely on technologies such as Point of sale (POS) terminals and/ or mobile phones.

Start Your Own Business (SYOB) Training

SYOB is designed to equip graduates of tertiary institution who had indicated interest in going into self-employment after the NYSC, with techniques of business start ups. However, financial constraints have been the major problem to full realization of this programme.

Table 3: Entrepreneurial Development (Small Scale Enterprises Programme (SSE) in Lagos State

YEAR	SYOB TRAINING	SYOB LOAN	ENTERPRISE CREATION LOAN	NDE/NYSC EDP	NDE/QIK-QIK	NDE/NACRDB	EASY BIZ
2005	176	-	-	1,245	-	22	-
2006	200	8	-	3,211	-	-	-
2007	79	-	-	1810	-	17	-
2008	65	-	-	7172	-	-	-
2009	150	-	-	7990	-	4	-
2010	50	66	-	13,476	-	-	-
2011	-	-	13	----	5	-	-
2012	-	NIL		----	-	-	41
Total	720	74	13	34904	5	33	41

Source: NDE Lagos state office (2012)

The data in table 3 shows that the performance of the departments in question in Lagos state, the department runs the following programme, SYNOB Training, SYNOB Loan, Enterprise Creation Loan, NDE/QIK-QIK, NDE/NACRDB and EASY BIZ. The assessment of the above table indicates that in spite of the large number of those employed in Lagos state, only few people have benefited from these programmes. It is only SYOB Training and NDE/NYSC EDP that seem to have made little impact. SYOB training in Lagos State recorded about 176 unemployed graduates as at 2005, with a little increase in 2006, a decrease in 2007, it was 200 in 2010 and 2011 there was no record for Lagos state, however, the NDE/NYSC EDP seem to have made a little impact on the graduates in Lagos. In 2005, the department equipping total number of unemployed graduates of about (1,245), 2006; (3, 211), 2007 (1810), 2008 (7172), 2009 (7990), 2010 (13,476) .It is observed that the other programme in the same department is almost extinct. Some have record of achievement in Lagos state, due to some of the challenges confronting the organization. NDE/QIK-QIK had a record of with only 5 trainees in 2011, EASYBIZ had only 41 trainees in 2012. I suggest that this programme needs to be re-evaluated to meet the employment challenge in Lagos state that is the hub of new school leavers looking for jobs.

Table 4: Special Public Work Dept Graduate Attachment Programme in Lagos State

YEAR	NO OF REGISTERED GRADUATE	NO POSTED	NO RETAINED
2005	206	20	12
2006	200	25	17
2007	539	423	189
2008	447	223	74
2009	512	200	63
2010	564	233	64
2011	602	75	15
2012	-	-	-
Total	2528	1199	434

Source: NDE Lagos state office 2012

Graduate Attachment Programme (GAP)

The table 4 shows the performance of the above special unit, the Special Public Work Department Graduate Attachment Programme in Lagos State. Analysis indicates that as a result of skill mismatch and lack of cognate experience required by both public and private sector organizations, most graduate of tertiary institutions find it difficult to secure wage employment. The graduate attachment programme of the NDE therefore takes care of the skill mismatch/gap by providing graduate of tertiary institutions with practical skill in companies,

industries and government establishment where their services are needed with regards to their disciplines. Temporary job opportunities are provided for the recruited graduates to the NDE source outlets for a period of months to enable them acquire some work experience and develop professional skills that will place them at vantage position to get good jobs or go into self employment in their areas of competences.

The above data (table 4) shows that in Lagos state in 2005, a total number of 206 graduates registered for this programme, 20 were posted and 12 retained, In 2006, 200 were registered, 25 were posted while 12 were retained in different organizations. Data shows that in 2007, a total number of 539 were registered for this programme and 25 posted to different organizations while 17 were retained. In 2008, 447 were registered for this programme, 223 were posted and 189 retained by the organization. In 2009, 512 were registered for this programme 200 were posted and 63 were retained. In 2010, 564 were registered for this programme and 233 were posted and 64 retained. In 2011, 602 were registered for this programme, and 75 posted while 15 were retained. It is worthy of note that total number that participated in Lagos within the five years under consideration is infinitesimal compared with the total figure of unemployed 190,745; (54.02%) and the number of registered female was 162 (45.98%) out all the total unregistered unemployed person in Nigeria which is 353,097. This shows that more needs to be done to deal with this problem.

Data Analysis of Distribution of Registered Unemployed Persons, State and Sex; Length of Time of Unemployment; Age Group and Skill of Interest in Lagos State.

The distribution of registered unemployed persons state and sex indicates that in Lagos, the registered unemployed persons with NDE, statistics shows that the male unemployment population is 190,745; (54.02%) and the registered female is 162,352 (45.98%) out all the total unregistered unemployed person in Nigeria which is 353,097. The total male figure stands at 2,081,652,(62.44%) while total female figures is 1,252,437(37.56%) The grand total for both sexes is 3,334,089 in the federation, NDE (2007:6)

Distribution of registered unemployed persons state and length of Time of unemployment shows that figure of Lagos state under 3 years stands at 157,278,(44.54%) out of the total national figure of 11,068,464(32.05%) . For the length of time between 3-5 years, the figure in Lagos state is 112,113(34.58%) out of the total of 959,055(28.77%) in Nigeria. Distribution of registered unemployed persons' state and sex indicates that in Lagos state, the registered unemployed persons with NDE from 5years and above, the data indicates that for 73,705(20.87%), and the total in Lagos 353,097, and total all over the federation is about 1,306,570(39.19)grand total of both sexes is estimated of 3-5years and above is 3,334,089 NDE 2007:8

Distribution of registered unemployed persons state and age group shows that in Lagos state at 2007, that the age group between 15-24 stands at 121,778(34.49%) out of the total of 1,158,892(34.70%) for the entire federation, Also the data table shows that age group of 25-34; in Lagos state is 142,920(40.48%) out of total of 1,304,808(39.14%) for the whole country. The age group between 35-44; shows that Lagos has a record of 64,701(18.32) out of the total of 574,856(17.24) from all over the country. The grand total of the age groups from all the country stands at 3,334,089. (NDE 2007:12) Distribution of registered unemployed persons' state and skill of interest in Lagos state shows that those with vocational skill number 112,052(31.73%) out of total number in the federation which is 1,450,072(43.49). On entrepreneur, statistics indicates that entrepreneurship number at in Lagos stands at 79, 008(22.38) out of total figure in the 36 states and Abuja which is 1,069,687(32.08), NDE table shows that 162,037(45.89) are without skills, out of total in Nigeria which stands at 814,330(24.42%). The total distribution of registered unemployed persons, state and skill of interest in Lagos is 353,097 out of the grand total of 3,334,089. (Distribution of registered unemployed persons state and skill of interest in all 36 states and Abuja NDE 2007:16)

It is pertinent to observe that NDE as an institution has contributed in no small measure in developing vocational skills, training and creating job for the unemployed within their capacity. This is just a tip of the iceberg. In view of the slow pace of NDE in given heed to the above distributions, attaining the millennium development goal will be an uphill and great task. The government needs to improve on their investment and develop more institutional capacity to tackle the issue of unemployment in the country. Beyond policy initiation, strategies must be put in place for adequate implementation of the scheme towards eradicating unemployment.

Policy Implication

A comparative analysis of social statistics (NBS 2009:238) with NDE (2007:6) data shows that the male unemployment population is 190,745; (54.02%) and the registered female is 162,352 (45.98%). However, social statistics (NBS 2009:238) shows the rate of unemployment in Lagos stood at about 6500. In 2005, the total unemployed graduates in Lagos state was 15,500 , in 2006, the number of the unemployed stood is 10,200, in 2007, and 2008 the figure stood at about 19,500. This shows that NDE needs to do more to sensitize the target group about their programmes.

The two critical issues are that Nigeria's university graduates have limited chances of becoming gainfully employed; that the country's economic condition is such that, it is hardly able to absorb an optimal

proportion of the product of its own educational system. Nevertheless, it may be optimistic that the situation offers a condition for creative, alternative avenues to gainful employment and that such alternative deserves to be examined and funded.

One of the agencies saddled with the responsibility of job creation in the country is the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) which was established in 1986, with the mandate of providing skills for the unemployed persons. Consequently, the Directorate has, since its inception in 1986, introduced different skills acquisition training programmes for young entrepreneurs. The training scheme is specifically designed to tackle unemployment, reduce youth restiveness through the provision of functional skills.

Indeed, the Directorate started with Masters' Trainers Programme where unemployed persons were attached to craftsmen and women for training for some months. But it was soon discovered that regulating and regularizing the standard and quality of training was not within the control of the Directorate. The NDE, with its various training programmes, is yet to achieve a significant result in attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) despite its effort towards reducing unemployment rate especially among youths. In this, situation, there is the need to design strategies towards employment training scheme, and ensure quality and standardization.

Since its establishment, NDE has been grappling with the issue of employment creation through its various programmes such as employment counseling services and job linkages, vocational skills acquisition training, entrepreneurial training and enterprise creation, training for rural employment promotion, training for labour-based transient works, collaboration with other relevant agencies and organization, among others.

The goals of the programme especially of its Skill Acquisition Scheme, are specially designed for the mutual benefit of both the public and private sectors. To this end, the Federal Government through her employment agencies needs to take a bold step to give members of the private sector the opportunity to actively demonstrate their commitment to the development of Lagos State, in order to enhance the promotion of a better life for the citizenry of the State. Considering the fact that Lagos, is the nation's economic capital with vast potentials and investment opportunities in banking, travel and power generation, telecommunication, among others, the government must ensure that the policy put in place leads to productivity at all level. The issue of unemployment cannot just be treated in isolation. It is a total package. The educational status, the quality of graduates in the country, the state of infrastructure, the priority of the economy and the regulatory framework available must all be critically examined at both the formulation and implementation level.

There is also the need for deliberate collaboration between various governments and the NDE for definite capacity building both at the institutional and personnel levels. One of the challenges facing NDE is availability of funds. Provision of relevant job skill training is very essential to meet employable skills that might be lacking in the unemployed. Inadequate skilled human capital has become a major challenge to labour market development in Nigeria in spite of the myriad of educational institutions and large number of graduates that come out of the higher institutions every year. There is the need to assess and to provide relevant training in skills that meets the labour market demand, which no doubt will bridge the gap between our academic output and the labour market demand.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Lack of current data is a serious defect on the operation of the scheme, NDE should update their data base, and this will give them a broad view of their mandate and make for proper planning. NDE cannot operate without adequate data if their objective must be attained. The oblivious state of NDE has created a disconnection between the institution and its target groups. The NDE and its programmes are unpopular to the public, most unemployed graduates and school leavers, are not aware of the programmes. There is a disconnection between NDE and the mass of unemployed youths. The NDE needs to advertise its programmes especially in higher institutions through the use of mass media. A major antidote to the problem of unemployment in the country is through the development and promotion of entrepreneurial education. Efforts made to introduce the study and acquisition of entrepreneurial skills into the curriculum of tertiary education needs to be sustained through adequate funding. Each State should commence programmes that will motivate and re-direct the army of youth school leavers and graduates, who are unskilled, agitated, unemployable and unemployed into a structured competence-based training between 9-24months leading to international certification.

The compulsory introduction of job creation skills into the curriculum of higher education will enhance the training and production of employers of labour. Our tertiary institutions will henceforth be able to produce job creators, who will in turn train others to be self-reliant and thereby reduce dependence on the government for employment. Vocational classes should be taught at the primary level so that by the time the individual gets to the University level he or she is already producing something. Vocational education is one of the plausible ways of tackling unemployment in Nigeria. More productive graduates will only translate to a productive economy and a reduction in the climbing unemployment indices in the country.

CONCLUSION

A close study of the statistics made available by different agencies does not indicate positive outcome in the issue of solving unemployment problems in the state. Towards the end of 2011, the National Bureau of Statistics placed the country's unemployment index at 34%. The data showed that in the first half of 2011, the rate was 23.9%, up from 21.1% in 2010 and 19.7% in 2009. Another data that originated from the office of the National Directorate of Employment, NDE, on 26 January 2012 was even more discouraging. According to Mohammed (2012), the rate stood at 40%! Every quarter, thousands of graduates are released into the labor market by the National Youth Service Corps, NYSC. Many of these graduates come into the society expecting a job opportunity. In the absence of employment, they consequently engage in criminal behaviors. It is noted that unemployment and its twin sister, poverty are the major progenitor of alarming crime rate in Nigeria. The pace of NDE's response in effectively reducing the rate of unemployment and attaining the millennium development goal (MDGs) is still low. The government needs to improve on their investment, and develop more institutional capacity to tackle the issue of unemployment in the country. Beyond policy initiation, strategies must be put in place for adequate implementation of the scheme towards eradicating unemployment.

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