

## **EDUCATION, JOB CREATION AND SUSTAINABLE LIVING: IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING**

**BY**

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### ***Abstract***

*This paper examines the relationship between education, job creation and sustainable living in Nigeria implications for counselling. The paper is developed under a model framework of the concept of education, job creation, sustainable living and the impact of education on job creation and sustainable living. The concepts were defined to give the model a meaning. The model was used to establish relationships between the concepts and to answer some salient questions. The counselling implications of developing the relationship between the models were analyzed and the recommendations made focused on entrepreneurship based education which allows for job creation that enhances sustainable living.*

**Keywords:** Education, job erection, sustainable living, counselling and medium scale enterprises.

### **Introduction**

Education has been identified as an essential tool for achieving sustainability (U.N.C, 2003). It asserted that people around the world recognize that current economic development trends are not sustainable and that public awareness, education and training are keys to moving society toward sustainability.

Education for job creation, has become a key force of change in Nigeria, as it is capable of opening developing economies, bring in new investment opportunities and wealth creation. The emphasis on job creation which involves self-employment by successive Nigeria government is borne out of the lingering problem of unemployment which has bedeviled the nation for a long time. The type of education needed to address this problem becomes very imperative for discussion, as it can lead to sustainable living.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG, 2004) report identified illiteracy as one of the indicators of backwardness in the development of nations and this manifest itself in several ways in Nigeria, such as low labour efficiency, unskilled development, and low entrepreneurial skill to mention but some. These indicators of illiteracy has led to high rate of unemployment in the Nigerian society, as almost every school leaver from the elementary to tertiary level want to depend on the government for employment. It is evident that the government alone cannot meet the employment needs of the ever increasing population of school graduates hence there have been a clamour for a paradigm shift on our system of education. The emphasis should focus on entrepreneurship education which is titled towards job creation and self employment opportunities for school leavers as it involves initiative, imagination, flexibility, creativity, conceptual thinking and the capacity to see change as an opportunity (Frankie-Dolor, 2010). This is the focus of this paper.

Aminu speaking in an article in punch Newspaper by Adeloye (2010) stated that “there has been serious dearth of skilled manpower in some vocational skill areas in Nigeria for years which now made our industries to depend to a large extent on artisans and technicians such as plumbers, welders, electricians and joiners among others, from neighbouring West African countries”.

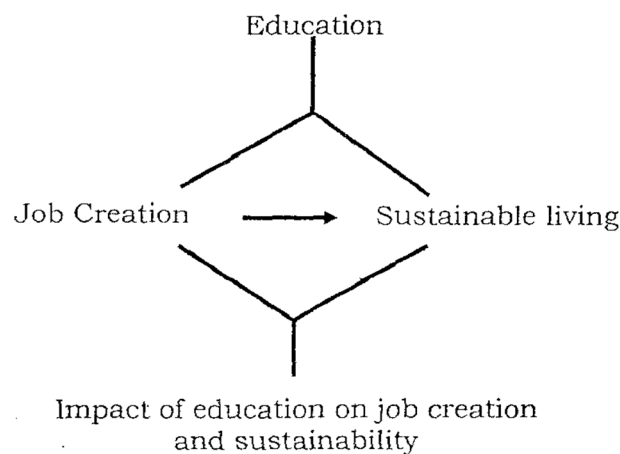
From the above quote, it can be inferred that lack of education for skill acquisition does not only affect graduates from tertiary institutions but also artisans and technicians who are illiterates and semi-illiterates. This development has made the Individual Training Fund (ITF) and the Nigerian Employers Consultative Association (NECA) to float a skilled manpower development Initiative Christened Technical Skills Development Project (Adeloye, 2010).

Education for job creation, is thus for the skilled and unskilled which guarantees skill acquisition and self-employment opportunities that enables an individual to live a sustainable life. Is there thus a growing relationship between education, job creation and sustainable living? This paper addresses this question from the framework below; as we believe that an investment in education is an investment in the future of the nation for sustainability.

### Conceptual Framework

A model for the paper is developed under the framework below to help us provide answer to the question of relationship between education, job creation and sustainable living.

Model for education, job creation and sustainable living



The model indicates a directional flow of education from where job creation and sustainable living emerges. Job creation then directly linking sustainable living and finally the impact which education has on job creation and sustainable living. However, before establishing the relationship the model provides between these concepts, it is imperative to define these concepts used in developing the model.

### **Defining Concepts**

- (i) **Education:** The concepts of education have received various definitions in scholarly journal and texts. We however define education in this paper simply as the process of acquisition of knowledge, aptitudes and skills that empowers an individual to live a meaningful and purposeful life. Thus, if an individual is provided with kind of knowledge that will enable him/her develop some basic (theoretical and practical) skills, he or she can use such knowledge to earn a living by creating job for himself.
- (ii) **Job Creation:** Job creation is the act of making jobs available for the labour force in a country. It involves the engagement in the establishment of different types of industries for youth and graduate employment in the country. Job creation goes beyond establishing firms or small industries but also entails setting up skill empowerment centres to equip the jobless class in our society, as a way of empowering and motivating them to be engaged in meaningful ventures to sustain them.
- (iii) **Sustainable Living:** From Wikipedia, Sustainable living and sustainability means different thing to different people making the concept to become complex in terms of an acceptable single definition. However, this does not make the concept indefinable. To, this end, we define sustainable living as a sum total of a person's lifestyle within limited resources in meeting his/her needs without compromising the needs of others, so as to create a balance between our socio-economic systems and the earth's natural resource systems.

### **Establishing Relationships between Concepts**

From our model, it is imperative to build relationships between the defined concepts to enable us answer the question of relationships between them. The paper therefore views a relationship between education and job creation, how does job creation enhance sustainable living and finally the impact of education on job creation and sustainable living in Nigeria.

### **Education and Job Creation Is There a Relationship?**

Education has been described as a tool for self realization through knowledge acquisition, skill development and empowerment for a meaningful and purposeful life. While job creation goes beyond establishing firms and industries but setting skill empowerment centres to equip employable people who are jobless so as to motivate them to be engaged in meaningful ventures for sustainable living.

Therefore, in integrating the two concepts, it can be established that if individuals are trained and educated either in a formal or informal educational setting, they will be able to acquire knowledge and skills that will prepare them to become innovative imaginative and creative to become self-reliant by creating jobs for themselves. The type of education that can foster this kind of relationship between education and job creation is entrepreneurial education which according to Igwe in Frankie-Dolor (2010) is the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas and coupling these with management and organization skills in order to combine man, money, machineries and other resources to meet an identified need and thereby create wealth.

Similarly, the type of education provided in informal institutions, is geared towards equipping artisans and technicians and other unskilled labour force to be self-reliant by creating jobs for themselves. Education therefore has a positive role to play in Job creation.

The present effort by the federal government in rehabilitating ex-militants from the Niger-Delta region for social integration is aimed at educating them informally so that they can be equipped with various skills for them to be useful to themselves through job creation. Even prisoners are equally given education for them to learn some skills and create jobs for themselves after serving their prison terms. All these goes to prove that there is a relationship between education and job creation.

### **Education, Job Creation and Sustainable Living**

The basic existence of man on earth is to have a meaningful and purposeful life through sustainable living. We can however ask how meaningful in the life of man without basic education? We need basic education to acquire knowledge to create wealth. Thus, the ability to use one's knowledge and talent to achieve success can guaranty sustainable living.

As indicated earlier, the (MDG, 2004) report identified illiteracy as an indicator of backwardness in the development of nations, and this has implications For job creation and sustainable living. Illiteracy breeds laziness and ignorance which ultimately affects people's standard of living negatively. We therefore posit that with little education even informally people can be equipped with skills to create jobs for themselves and thereby live a sustainable live. The current emphasis on the establishment of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) is in the right direction.

Another example of a relationship between job creation and sustainable living is the job creation exercise of the establishment of fish farms by individuals in some settlements both in the urban and rural areas after a little education on fish farming. These individual have been able to sustain themselves and live above poverty levels

thereby giving their lives a meaning. Thus education and job creation play a major role in sustainable living.

### **The Impact of Education on Job Creation for Sustainable Living**

(UNESCO, 2003), stated that qualitative education impacts positively on the overall development of the society. When the level of education is low, it hinders development and affects plans for a sustainable future, while higher level of education is necessary to create jobs for sustainable livelihood. Similarly, it is evident that basic education is required for a nation to develop and achieve sustainability for improved standard of living. The acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills enables the individual to develop himself into useful member of society by creating job opportunities for himself and living a meaningful and sustainable life.

A third impact of education on job creation and sustainable living is the acquisition, development and inculcation of the right values and orientation for entrepreneurship in employable individuals in the society, through the establishment of skill development centres. This provides the right environment that motivates the individual to learn and become sustained in life.

Fourthly, education provides the capabilities for intellectual, social and psychological skills for social integration into the society to enhance social development and sustainable livelihood. The rehabilitation programmes for ex-militants and prisoners is geared towards having a positive impact in their lives for successful integration.

### **Counselling Implications for Education, Job Creation and Sustainable Living**

A Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) 2005-2014 has been declared by UNESCO in 2003 to integrate education for sustainable development component which include job creation for sustainable living, into school curricular at all levels of education and all sectors of society. This has implications for counselling

- The importance of education in any society cannot be over emphasized as it is the bedrock of society's development. Counselors thus have an enormous challenge of not only enlightening people on the need for education but also to steer and motivate their interest towards getting education.

Beginning from their immediate environment, they can help to bridge the gap between the literates and illiterates in our society thereby helping to achieve one of the millennium development goals and vision 20:2020,

- The realization by the counsellor that the students whom he or she is counselling have diminishing prospects of ever getting employment for which they are being equipped (Mallum, 1988) calls for a compromise policy on enrolment at all levels and type of education being offered (Mallum, 1988). Counsellors should take into consideration the need to satisfy social demand for education and the economic need tailored towards meeting manpower requirement as an alternative towards education for sustainable living.
- The present clamour for entrepreneurial education should form the focal point of counsellors in career counselling. This is to adequately prepare and equip counselees towards skills acquisition in specific areas of education.
- Another implication for counsellors is that they should key into the youth empowerment and capacity building programmes of varies levels of government in Nigeria. As professionals, they should be able to market their services in this direction for effective and sustainable job creation programmes targeted towards youth empowerment.
- While it is important to acknowledge the training of youths in skills relevant to the oil industry as the main stay of the Nigerian economy, counselling focus should be shifted to the non-oil sector for skill acquisition in such areas as Agro-Allied industries, Information and Communication Technology (ICT),



technical and artisans related small and medium scale industries. This will not only guarantee job creation, but also enhance sustainable living in Nigeria.

### **The Way Forward**

From the model developed for this paper and the relationships established between the concepts, we recommend the following as the way forward.

- Education is a key factor in national development of the government at various levels should take urgent steps bridge the gap between the literates and the illiterates in our society. This is to enhance the intellectual development of the citizenry and broaden their academic horizons. This can be achieved through Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) position on paid advertorials.
- The emphasis on entrepreneurship education which brings about job creation should be vigorously pursued by all stakeholders in the education industry and the society at large. To this end, it becomes necessary for CASSON to include entrepreneurship counselling in her curriculum to instill the culture of skill acquisition in students airing career counselling.
- We also recommend that government at all levels should create an enabling environment for job creation and set employment programmes by establishing skill acquisition centres across communities for individuals to acquire training to be self employed. This will greatly reduce the dependence on government jobs and enhance sustainable living.
- CASSON should make a strong representation to the federal government for counselling rehabilitation programmes in our prison system and other rehabilitative agencies where professional counselors will be assigned for effective counselling in job creation, sustainable living and social integration.
- The school curriculum should be geared towards the promotion of both physical and intellectual skills in tertiary institution which will equip graduates after school to delve into other profitable areas and live sustainably.

Counselling activities can help to facilitate the success of these programmes in our schools.

## Conclusion

The challenges before developing economics are enormous especially the challenge of unemployment. This has led to emphasis in entrepreneurial education to equip individuals with job creation abilities through skill acquisition. There is therefore the need to conduct more research in this area while properly articulating and implementing research findings in this subject matter. With the involvement of all stakeholders in education in achieving entrepreneurial education, the problem of unemployment will be greatly reduced and people will be able to create jobs for themselves for sustainable and meaningful live.

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