



TACKLING UNEMPLOYMENT CRISIS IN NIGERIA THROUGH SKILLS IN ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

“An idle mind is the devil’s workshop” is a popular adage; because of the negative impact it has on the society, therefore, for a large populace of a country (particularly youths) to be unemployed means that different vices cannot be a strange thing in such a community. There exist various areas in the field of electrical and electronic engineering technology. Skill in electrical and electronic engineering technology is

found to be a veritable tool at combating unemployment issue and for a country like Nigeria if adequately used will greatly reduce the rate of unemployment. This paper takes a look at the percentage of unemployed persons in Nigeria and the various skill areas available in the field of electrical and electronic engineering that can be used/accessed in order to solve this menace that has eaten the nation to the bone and through which the many social and economic crimes are being perpetrated in our society.

KEYWORDS: Unemployment, engineering, electrical, electronic, technology, skills.

INTRODUCTION

The Nigeria society is facing a great challenge of insecurity as a result of a large number of the society that is unable to get employment (Adebayo & Ekejiuba, 2014). Unemployment also generates low income or no income and therefore results in low or poor living standard. Unemployment represents wasted resources (Mankiw, 1994). Unemployed labour has the

potential to contribute to national income but are not doing so because they are jobless (Adawo et al, 2012).

Despite the fact that Nigeria is blessed with both human and natural resources she has remain one of the poorest countries in the world and has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in Sub-Sahara Africa, and despite its alleged strong economic growth. In respect of the above sad and deplorable situation, the government has done little to reduce the misery and frustrations of the citizenry. This has foisted a state of hopelessness on majority of young and old people who have resorted to any means including crime to succeed in life. They resort to vices because they are not gainfully engaged. In other words, they are unemployed; unemployed, not because they lack the qualification but because the system has been crippled politically, economically, socio-culturally and even religiously (Anyadike et al 2012, Okoye-Nebo et al, 2012).

Longe (2017) citing Oppong & Sachs (2015) stressed that the up-shoot of graduate unemployment has become an all reaching concern. It is a challenge that most economies are facing under the current economic circumstances. Even the developed nations have not shown exception to this frightful social problem, although the up-surge is more pronounced in developing world.

The objective of this paper is to look at the rate of unemployment in Nigeria and the role that skills in electrical and electronic engineering can play at reducing this.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nyong (2013) observed that unemployment rate has witnessed persistent rise over the years in Nigeria. Average unemployment rate in the past four decades (1970-2011) is about 9.67 percent, 5.52 percent during the period 1970-1989, and two-digit value at 13.46 percent during the period 1990-2011(CBN 2002, 2007; NBS 2010, 2011, 2012; World Bank 2005). The national unemployment rate masks significant disparities or differences among the states' unemployment rate. For instance, while the national unemployment rate was 19.7% in 2009, the unemployment rate for Bayelsa was 38.4%, Katsina 37.3%, Bauchi 37.1%, Akwa Ibom 34.1%, and Gombe 32.1%. The sectoral decomposition of unemployment rate with respect to age-group is even more revealing. The unemployment is highest for the youth 15-24 (age –group) at 41.6%, followed by the 25 – 44 age group at 17%, 60 - 64 age group at 16.7% and 45 - 59 age group at 11.5% . With respect to educational group the records show

that the unemployment rate is 20.1% for those who never attended school, 22.3% for below primary school, 14.8% for primary school, 23.8% for secondary school and 21.3% for post-secondary education.

Akintoye (2008) indicated that graduate unemployment as a percentage of total unemployment rose in Nigeria from 1% in 1974 to 4% in 1984. In less than a decade, between 1992 and 1997, it accounted for 32% of the unemployed labour force in the country (Dabalén, Oni & Adekola 2000). Eneji, Mai-Laifa & Weiping (2013) put the rate of unemployed graduates at about 60% of the Nigeria labour supply market while National Bureau of Statistics (2016) report indicated that a total of 52 million citizens within the economically active population of Nigeria is jobless and this figure consisted mostly of newly qualified university graduates.

More of the unemployed graduate of the nation (Nigeria) that roams the streets does so because they do not have any skill that they could use. As a result of this high rate of youths and graduates that are unemployed insecurity has greatly increased with one menace facing a group of people and another. From Boko Haram in the north east, to farmers – herders clash in the north central, to militia attack in the North West, to Egbesu boys, Bakassi boys, OPC, Niger delta militant groups in the south, all these occur basically as a result of unemployment (Adebayo & Ekejiuba, 2014). Aibangbe (2013) found out that 50% of youths are unemployed and Adebayo et al (2012) were able to establish that this led to a high rate of insecurity.

Nigerian youths are said to be confronted with poverty, unemployment, urbanization, lack of capacity and skills needed to move the economy forward. This is because the youth faces unemployment and lack of necessary productive skills to keep body and soul together (Emeh, 2012).

Engineering and impact on unemployment

Engineering is the profession that puts power and materials to work for man. It is the translation of scientific discoveries into software for facilitating concrete products or goods for man's comfort (Adejuyigbe, 2012). Engineering is believed to be the oldest profession as it dates back to the ancient times when man begin to device apparatus and machines to work for them.

Electrical engineering on the other hand is the branch of engineering that deals with the technology of electricity. It is further subdivided into a wide range of subfields including electronics, digital computers, computer engineering, power engineering, telecommunications, control systems, robotics, radio-frequency engineering, signal processing, instrumentation, and microelectronics. Many of these sub disciplines overlap with other fields of engineering.

Various skills exist in electrical and electronics engineering that could be explore in trader to curb unemployment few among these are:

1. Satellite installation
2. House wiring
3. Electrical sockets / extension production
4. Production of rechargeable torch lights and lamps
5. Solar mobile charger
6. Automatic change over switch
7. Electric stove / oven
8. Inverter production
9. Loudspeakers production
10. Amplifiers production
11. GSM repairs
12. Electrical / Electronic Equipment repairs
13. Sale of electrical, electronics and GSM accessories
14. Computer cloning
15. Pop corn machine production
16. Battery charger production
17. Power supply production,
18. Inverter installation. (Adebayo & Ekejiuba, 2014)

As little as these opportunities may appear it can engage many people, thus mopping up the number / percentage of the unemployed populace.

Hindrances to the growth of these opportunities.

Basically, there exist some hindrances to the growth of the many areas of opportunities. Some of these hindrances are:

- a. Lack of capital

Capital has remain one inhibition to the growth of these areas of opportunities because of the people that may want to make use of these opportunities do not have the capital to start off.

b. Access to loan

Access to loan is another area that has not allowed many of these opportunities to be explored. Loans are not easily accessible and where they are available the interests which in most cases are double digit does not make it attractive to the people that would have been interested in accessing it.

c. Market opportunities

Another discouragement that is faced is market opportunities because where a person is involved in one of these areas of opportunities but does not have a ready market for the services that they are willing to offer.

d. Lack of electricity

A great hindrance to these opportunities is lack of electricity because the number of people that have access to electricity are minute and even these minute set of people does not adequate supply of electricity thereby making it stressful.

e. Price competitiveness

As a result of some other inhibitions price of the services are high thus not making them competitive with their imported counterparts.

f. Good road

Most of the roads are bad thereby making movement of services difficult.

g. Lack of enlightenment and awareness

Enlightenment and awareness have great impact on the access to services and product where there is a service or product to be offered but the people are not aware of it, then there is no way anyone could ask or make use of it.

h. Belief

Most of the time why our services and products are not asked after is the belief that local products and services are not up to standard, therefore, whoever has these services or products to offer are rarely patronised.

CONCLUSION

Unemployment is a great menace in our society and still ravaging the land from the north to the south. This menace has a great impact on what a nation becomes and how they are accepted by the international communities. It has made Nigeria not to have a place among the comity of nations but if all these highlighted opportunities in the field of electrical and electronic engineering is adequately explored then the rate of unemployment would be reduced greatly thus raising the way the nation is being viewed and rated by the international communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To make the impact of the opportunities available in the field of electrical and electronic engineering appreciable and thus a great reduction in the unemployment rate in Nigeria the following are recommended:

- i. Adequate access to loan
- ii. Reduction in interest rate
- iii. Good roads
- iv. Adequate electricity
- v. Adequate market opportunity
- vi. Adequate enlightenment

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