



ACADEMICA
**An International
 Multidisciplinary
 Research Journal**
 (Double Blind Refereed & Peer Reviewed Journal)



DOI: 10.5958/2249-7137.2021.01920.0

**THE IMPERATIVES FOR VOCATIONAL AND ENTREPRENEURIAL
 EDUCATION: THE NYSC PERSPECTIVE**

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ABSTRACT

With the growing rate of unemployment in Nigeria, there have been concerns as to how it can be abated. An important direction towards solving this problem is through Vocational and Entrepreneurial Education. This study examines the need for vocational and entrepreneurial education in the face of limited 'white-collar jobs'. The paper takes a cursory look at the history of vocational and entrepreneurial education in Nigeria. It also examines Vocational and Entrepreneurial Training of the NYSC Skill Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development (SAED). It considers some of its marked achievements, as well as shortcomings. It also offers some important recommendations including the proposal that Vocational and Entrepreneurship Education be prioritized at the grassroots of the education system, preferably at the primary level.

KEYWORDS: *Vocational Education, Entrepreneurial Educations, NYSC, Unemployment, White Collar*

INTRODUCTION

In the second quarter of 2020, the total number of unemployed educated Labour Force in Nigeria spiked to over 23.9 million people with an estimated unemployment rate of 27.1% (NBS, 2020). This places Nigeria amongst the top 50 countries with the highest unemployment rate in the world (NBS, 2020). The surge in unemployment is no doubt the direct consequence of the coronavirus pandemic, which has made it difficult for the nation's economy to keep up with its teeming population (Olurounbi and Soto, 2020). For years, the population growth rate in Nigeria has outpaced economic output, making it the country with the highest number of poor in the world (Olurounbi and Soto, 2020). According to the United Nations, Nigeria has a fertility rate

of five children per woman and may become the third most populous country in the world by 2050, which may further compound the problem of unemployment (UN, 2019). Recently, the number of people looking for employment through Nigeria's biggest recruiting website Jobberman Ltd has jumped five-fold since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020 (Olurounbi and Soto, 2020). This grim reality is forcing the hands of the government and several policymakers to rethink better ways of addressing the problems of unemployment in the country. As a result, there have been calls from several quarters to diversify the Nigerian economy and encourage entrepreneurship and vocational training at the various levels of education in the country. This is important because of the crucial role of the informal sectors in the Nigerian economy. For instance, 41% of the labour population with a bachelor's degree is without employment compared to only 18% for people with vocational skills(NBS, 2020).

Interestingly, the unemployment rate for people with vocational skills is also lower than people with master's (23%) and doctorate degrees (23%)(NBS, 2020).This implies that there could be more vocational job opportunities than white-collar jobs in Nigeria giving the large size of the informal economy, where most blue-collar jobs operate. Also, it means that a university degree is not a guaranteed route to paid employment. In most of its national development plans, education has always been treated as an instrument for socio-economic development in the policy thrust of the Federal Government of Nigeria, however, existing conditions in the tertiary institutions do not reflect the required level of commitment deserving of such imperative concern. Since the Memorandum on education policy in British Tropical Africa was issued in 1925, vocation and technical education have evolved to become a more convoluted part of the Nigerian educational curriculum. To encourage self-reliance among young graduates, the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) which was established in 1973, formed an active partnership with the National Directorate of Employment in the 1980s and has continued to integrate skill acquisitions and vocational training as a vital part of its youth empowerment programmes, with the most recent being the Skill Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development (SAED) Programme. This paper is therefore, an advocacy for vocational and entrepreneurial education as an imperative for reducing unemployment and creating more job opportunities for graduates by exploring the successes of the NYSC skills and vocational programmes in the face of dwindling White-Collar jobs.

Conceptual Clarification

White Collar:

Hayes(2019) describes a white-collar worker as belonging to a class of employees known for earning higher average salaries doing highly skilled work, but not by carrying out manual labour at their jobs (para. 1). White-collar workers are usually associated with the "shirt and tie" set of workers who typically work in large spaced offices and companies. White-collar jobs are usually defined by office jobs and management, and not "getting their hands dirty" (Hayes, 2019) with fat salaries at the end of the month. This class of workers stands in contrast to blue-collar workers, who traditionally wore blue shirts and works at vocational plants, mills, and factories. White-collar work used to mean a high level of education and the assumption of securing a comfortable job with special privileges and remunerations (Hayes, 2019).Typical white-collar jobs include company management, lawyers, accountants, financial and insurance jobs, consultants, and computer programmers—among many others. White-collar positions are often

expected to offer opportunities to advance to more significant roles as managers or executives. A white-collar role is likewise expected to generate higher paying salaries with the potential to continue to rapidly scale up their income with further advancement (Hayes, 2019). In this regard therefore, attorneys, accountants, architects, bankers, real estate agents, business consultants, and brokers are often described as white-collar positions. Though the actual work performed typically is not menial, white-collar roles can require the professional to commit to extensive hours during the workweek, and sometimes on weekends because they are more, or less, office based (Hayes, 2019).

Vocational Education:

Vocational Education refers to the type of education that is aimed at equipping individuals to use their knowledge and hands to survive in a world that is essentially work-oriented (Olanipekun et al, 2015). Akpan et al (2012) describe it as a workshop – based education, which is concerned with the methods of processing materials using tools and equipment, into products of economic value (p.2). It also involves the provision of services as in home economics, health occupations and other service areas (Akpan, 2012). In this light, vocational education holds the key to national development. The key motivation that drives Technical and Vocational Education is basically to enhance human dignity and enthrone work and labour by making individuals acquire and/or develop enough saleable and employable skills, competencies, attitudes as well as knowledge to enable them to gain and maintain basic employment or self-reliance for a comfortable living (Olanipekun et al, 2015). Abdulahi as cited in Olanipekun et al(2015), sees vocational and technical education as that aspect of education that involves the acquisition of techniques and application of the knowledge of science for the improvement of man's surrounding. The major goal of technical and vocational education is to prepare the individual for the world of work empowering such individual to become reliant and make contributions to the general development of the society. Eru (2007) maintained that Vocational and Technical Education is an education designed for experts in the field of education to prepare individuals to acquire practical skills, basic and scientific knowledge and attitude required as craftsmen and technicians at sub-professional and even professional level.

Entrepreneurship

Over the years, entrepreneurship has become a near-obsessive term used by several advocates of capitalist orientation to describe the pursuit of wealth creation through the utilization of opportunities wherever they may abound (Gartner and Birley, 2002). As such, entrepreneurship lacks a generic definition. Shane (2003) describes entrepreneurship as the act of being an entrepreneur, and an entrepreneur is said to be "someone who perceives an opportunity and creates an organisation to pursue it" (Bygrave and Hofer as cited in Gartner and Birley, 2002, p. 14). Entrepreneurship has developed over the past decade and a half, to described ventures closely associated with risk-taking, astounding innovations and creativity in its service provision and product manufacturing. Entrepreneurship has been extended to cover such areas as socio-cultural, political, and educational forms of entrepreneurial activity (Olorundare and Kayode, 2014). In the context of education, entrepreneurship is targeted at three important goals. These are: to help learners to understand entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial activities and learn to help them become an entrepreneur (Hytti, as cited in Olorundare and Kayode, 2014). In contemporary time, any individual industry, or business leader with innovative and creative business abilities is

described as an entrepreneur or someone who engages in entrepreneurship (Okala as cited in Olorundare and Kayode, 2014). The entrepreneur explores the available opportunity for wealth creation by venturing into the business of organising and managing human and natural resources towards targeted goals. In a nutshell, the entrepreneur perceives a business opportunity and takes advantage of the scarce resources to profitably meet with unlimited opportunities (Olorundare and Kayode, 2014).

Entrepreneurship is a risky venture. The entrepreneur bears non-insurable risks and directs human and material resources to achieve economic, social, and financial goals of the enterprise (Olorundare and Kayode, 2014, p.158). Several authors have described Entrepreneurs as Adam Smith and Robert Cantillon in the late 17th and 18th centuries respectively, observed that the entrepreneur is an actor in macroeconomics but the study of entrepreneurship was ignored theoretically until 19th and 20th centuries, and empirically until a profound resurgence in business and economy in the last 50 years (Olorundare and Kayode, 2014, p.158). The understanding of entrepreneurship was not clear until the 20th century. This giant leap is credited to the works of economist Joseph Schumpeter in the 1930s and other Austrian economists such as Carl Menger, Ludwig Von Mises and Friedrich Von Hayek (Olorundare and Kayode, 2014). Most credit goes to Schumpeter who described the entrepreneur as a person who is willing and able to convert new ideas or invention into a successful innovation (Schumpeter, as cited in Olorundare and Kayode, 2014, p.158).

Historical Development of Vocational and Entrepreneurial Education in Nigeria

Vocational education has been an important part of human societies for centuries (Roberts, 1971). It remains the oldest form of education in many parts of the world. In most African societies, occupations of individuals are first bequeathed to them by their families and closest relations (father to son or mother to daughter or uncle to nephew etc.). This was known as home apprenticeship system (Akpan et al, 2012). Little wonder then that a potter's child often becomes a potter and a blacksmith's son a blacksmith. In different cultures, it took unique approaches which allowed people to find work and satisfy their daily needs as well as cope with their physical environment (Akpan et al, 2012). In traditional Nigerian communities, vocational education was ingrained in the system of the people long before the coming of the Europeans and colonialists. Often, the type of vocations and occupations found in the various regions was greatly influenced by the geographical nature of the areas. Some of the most prevalent vocations were weaving, sculpting, blacksmithing, carving, farming, fishing, cattle rearing, hair plaiting, dressmaking, bead weaving, leatherwork, pottery, brick making, basket weaving, raffia works, mat weaving etc.

The coming of colonialism deemphasized some traditional systems in favour of foreign ones. For instance, to promote administrative and economic conveniences, most colonial policies on education were mostly tailored to churn out workers that are essentially needed to support missionaries or European administrators (e.g. catechists and clerks) (Fafunwa, 1995). As a result, vocational education was not given a meaningful place in the educational system. Consequently, educated people were those who majored in classics like, English, History, Latin, Greek, Milton and Shakespeare etc. Most of the earliest Nigerian scholars were famous for their literary erudition or "much book learning" (Fafunwa, 1995). Things would remain the same until 1909 when some form of vocational education programmes were introduced in the Nassarawa School

of the then Northern Region (Akpan et al, 2012). The Nassarawa School opened in 1909 had a technical wing, which offered training in leatherwork, carpentry, black-smithing, weaving and bookbinding (Akpan et al, 2012). Other early attempts at encouraging vocational education in Nigeria include Boys' Vocational School, Ididep, Ibiono-Ibom in present day AkwaIbom State of Nigeria and Blaize Memorial Industrial School in Abeokuta (Akpan et al, 2012).

As nationalist fervour began to grow in many West African colonies in the years preceding the First World War (1914 – 1918), colonial administrators began to make some major changes to keep the locals content. It was at this time that the Memorandum on education policy in British Tropical Africa was issued in 1925. The policy statement invited governments to take a more active part in the provision of technical education, which required more costly equipment and suitably qualified staff (Nduka, as cited in Akpan et al, 2012). Following this development, the government began to open trade centres and technical institutions, and by 1934, the Yaba Higher College was established. Following the demands of the memorandum which requested that the colonial government in the colonies create departments for training technicians, the government began to draft curriculum that was more technical and scientifically based. A major goal was to provide requisite skilled force for the Public Works Department, the Post and Telegraph Department, the Department of Agriculture, the Nigerian Railways and other commercial and industrial ventures.

The first set of students admitted to Yaba Higher College took courses in engineering, medicine, education and agriculture (Akpan et al, 2012). By 1946 when the ten-year development plan was put forward, it was recommended that vocational/technical education be given more attention to meet the growing demands for technicians and craftsmen in the colony. As a result, 14 craft centres were established in the North, 9 in the East, and 2 in Lagos (Akpan et al, 2012). The education given at Yaba College was mainly vocational that led to the award of the college diploma and guaranteed that there is constant availability of technicians and craftsmen to handle emerging industrial and technical challenges (Akpan et al, 2012). By 1952, technical institutions were found in Yaba, Enugu and Kaduna, while several other trades and handicraft centres were scattered all over the country.

In 1953, the first Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology was established in Zaria, followed by similar establishments in Enugu and Ibadan. These colleges offered courses in mechanical, electrical and civil engineering, telecommunication, and agriculture (Akpan et al, 2012, p.4). Eventually, most of these colleges would be upgraded into the status of a university. The University of Nigeria, Nsukka offered the first organized Vocational – Technical Education (VTE) programme in West Africa. The publication of the Ashby Commission Report in 1960 recommended the introduction of technical streams in the secondary schools and three levels of technical education in the country namely: 1. Pre-vocational and Pre-technical levels of training for secondary schools; 2. Craftsman training for technical colleges, trade centres and vocational schools; 3. Technical training for Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology (Fafunwa, as cited in Akpan et al, 2012, p.4).

The first National Policy on Education was outlined in 1977 by the Federal Government, granting a more robust ground for the development of vocational education in the country since its inception. This policy was reviewed in 2004 and strove to achieve the five goals, which targeted technological development in Nigeria. To achieve these ambitious goals, the government set up

agencies for effective monitoring and evaluation of the programmes. These agents are the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and the National Universities Commission (NUC). Each agency outlines the minimum expected standards of operation by the training institutions (Akpan et al, 2012).

In 2005, the National Council on Education (NCE) approved a new curriculum structure namely: lower basic education curriculum (primaries 1-3), middle basic education curriculum (primaries 4-6), and upper basic education curriculum (JSS 1-3) with subject listings (Akpan et al, 2012). Also, the Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (NERDC), was mandated to restructure the curriculum with the following objectives in view: Develop interest in science and technology; Acquire basic knowledge and skills in science and technology; Apply their scientific and technological knowledge and skills to meet the needs of the society; Take advantage of the numerous career opportunities offered by science and technology; and become prepared for further studies in science technology (Akpan et al, 2012). In 2006, the Federal Government directed Nigerian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to include entrepreneurship Education (EED) as a compulsory course for all students with effect from the 2007/2008 academic session (Aliu, 2008). This led to the inclusion of EED in the curriculum of all universities and other higher education in Nigeria. Most of the universities in Nigeria now have a centre for entrepreneurship education in their respective institutions.

Vocational and Entrepreneurial Education —The NYSC Perspective

The years that followed Nigeria's Independence came with a lot of turbulences. As the British left the shores of the country, the different regional governments tore at each other with such fierce cynicism that it was impossible to believe in the nation's continued existence. From the Federal Census Crisis of 1962 through to the Western Election Crisis of 1965, Nigeria's unity hung on a thin line. By December 1965, things had gotten worse, and in an attempt to salvage what was left as the military claimed, Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu carried out a military coup on 15th January 1966 leading to the death of some prominent Nigerian leaders including the Prime Minister of the federation. The ripple effects of these unfortunate events culminated into a Civil War that lasted from 1967 to 1970. At the end of the war, the Gowon administration introduced some important policies and programmes that were targeted at helping the nation heal faster. It was in this spirit of unity that the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) was introduced on May 22nd, 1973.

The NYSC was established by Decree 24 of 1973 (NYSC, 1999). This Decree was later revised to Decree No. 51 of 1993 and enacted as an act of parliament in the NYSC ACT, Cap. 84 of 2004 (NYSC, 1993, 2004) and is under the oversight of the Federal Ministry of Youth Development (FMYD, as cited in Arubayi, 2015, p.83). According to the decree, the establishment of the National Youth Organization was designed to develop young persons in simulated work conditions. The primary aim of the organization is to provide appropriate training in various skills in real working conditions, while inculcating a healthy attitude towards manual labour. The [NYSC] Corps was designed to be a project-oriented learning programme with a focus on deploying grassroots projects in rural communities involving the building of roads, bridges, schools and dispensaries (FRN, 1970, p.261). The NYSC scheme has four cardinal programmes and they include Orientation, Primary assignment, Community Development Service and Passing Out.

During the Youth Orientation and Induction Programme, skills acquisition and entrepreneurship development programmes, language seminars, socio-cultural and traditional lectures, development workshops, career mentoring programmes and religious activities are offered together with Man-O-War paramilitary training (NYSC, 2011). The expected outcomes of participating in these activities are to increase self-discipline and opportunity for ethnic interaction; reduce the fear of the unknown, enhance knowledge of the country's development agenda, and imbibe the culture of professionalism (NYSC, 1983, 2007, 2008).

For the last three decades, the major focus of Youth Service Schemes all over Africa have concentrated on Youth empowerment through vocational and entrepreneurship training. According to UNECA African Youth Report (2011):

The need to invest in human capital through education and skills development for young people remains of paramount importance...because of the return on education and the contribution to poverty reduction and achievement of the MDGs... Young people need an enabling environment politically, economically and socially to thrive in our countries. They need to be empowered so that they can be represented and participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives (p.viii).

In 2012, the Federal Government of Nigeria introduced a training programme into the NYSC known as the Skill Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development (SAED) project (Deboom et al, 2020). The Project was targeted at promoting vocational skill acquisition amongst corps members as a panacea for graduate unemployment and underemployment in Nigeria. The SAED project operated on the mandate of providing youth corps members with open access to the acquisition of requisite and essential skills needed to make them successful entrepreneurs (Deboom et al, 2020). The Skill Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development (SAED) as a Department in NYSC is headed by a Director and is made up of two divisions namely: Skills Acquisition Division and Entrepreneurship and Empowerment Division. According to Deboom et al, (2020) these two departments are saddled with the responsibilities of:

- Giving orientation and training to over 200, 000 corps members for skill acquisition yearly.
- Assisting the training and tutoring of 100, 000 young graduates in skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development for self-reliance annually.
- Developing an entrepreneurship partnership aiming towards self-reliance of the youths between the private sector and the public sector as well.
- Providing new ways and methods on how best Nigerian youths' employment and empowerment are done.
- Supporting evidence-driven funding programmes to formulate policies that enhance youth Nigerian youths' employment and empowerment.
- Organising orientation training programmes on the importance of corps members to enrol into the skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development program.
- Developing a standard curriculum for the in-camp skill acquisition exercise.

- Identifying organizations at the state level to provide training and mentoring in specific skills sets.
- Attaching the corps members to the various organizations for skill acquisition and entrepreneurship development.
- Monitoring and supervising trainee corps members and
- Facilitating access to available funding opportunities.

Currently, the NYSC scheme seeks to develop life skills and build on economic philosophies that are targeted at skills acquisition and entrepreneurship, which challenges youth corps members to become more 'self-reliant' so that they can be: independent and entrepreneurs; resourceful and have initiatives; and become employers of labour (Arubayi, 2015).

The SAED program has an ambitious vision to enable the creation of at least 20,000 sustainable enterprises annually, and get a minimum of 150,000 corps members to be productively engaged, generating sustainable economic value through employment or entrepreneurship, annually, in these sectors: Power and Energy; Information & Communication; Education; Agro-Allied; Culture & Tourism; Construction; Film & Photography; Food Processing & Preservation; Beautification; Education; Cosmetology; and Automobile.

The SAED policy is one of the few outstanding vocational and entrepreneurial policies in the country that is impacting on youths 'vocational productivity (Deboom et al, 2020). In the course of the 2012 Batch "B" orientation, the NYSC SAED empowered about 45,000 corps members with requisite vocational skills (Utomwen, 2012). Out of this SAED trainee, 5,404 corps members were trained in agro-allied skills, 5,509 corps members enrolled in food processing and preservation, 8,035 were trained in culture and tourism-related skills while 5,062 participated in cosmetology (Deboom et al, 2020). Furthermore, over 8,000 corp members were empowered in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Under power and energy a total of 8,119, and 2,672 trainees were trained (Deboom et al, 2020). Since its inception, The NYSC-SAED programme has impacted not less than 971,272 corps members through its skill acquisition programme, while over 7000 have established their preferred business (This Day, February 6th 2019 as cited in Deboom et al, 2020). In 2014, about 159,732 corps members had completed the NYSCSAED programme which comprises of 69,904 females and 89, 828 males. Over 500, 000 corps members have been trained under the NYSC-SAED program since its inception (Deboom et al, 2020, p.149). According to a report in its official website, the Scheme reported that out of the total number of trained entrepreneurs, 1,600 had become full-time entrepreneurs (NYSCSAED, as cited in Deboom et al(2020).

Ekezie and Deebom (2019) researched extensively on the impact of the NYSC SAED programme and reported that Skills such as Snail Production, Cat Fish Production, Broilers Production, Layers/Egg Production, Fashion Designing, Hat Making, Tie & Die Ankara, Tie & Die Ankara, Perfume Making, Electrical Installation, Solar Installation, and Cosmetology offered by the NYSC-SAED programme has helped to empower youth in Rivers State. With the realization that the NYSC vocational and entrepreneurial training programmes have a scalability prospect, the Nigeria Bank of Industry, the Central Bank of Nigeria amongst other corporate organisations across the country partners with the NYSC management team to help Corp

members to develop relevant skills that can improve their potentials of becoming employers of labour. Through the NYSC initiative, the Bank of Industry has recently made available some loans to enable Corp members to start-up businesses to create employment (Okpala, 2017).

Challenges with the NYSC Model of Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training

While the NYSC's SAED programme maintains that it has trained over 600,000 corps members since its establishment as at 2016, only a little over 1,600 of the half a million trained have gone on to become full-time entrepreneurs (Umeh, 2015). This represents a 0.32 per cent success rate, which is lower compare to its ambitious mandate. In 2019, there were calls from some quarters, mostly among some serving Corps members to end the programme (Adenekan, 2019). This can be attributed in part to the conflict of ideology SAED programme creates (Umeh, 2015, para. 3). The primary objective of SAED is wealth creation through various vocational pieces of training that are expected to turn corps members into entrepreneurs. The major goal of the department is to teach graduates how to generate wealth in a nation that is riddled with unemployment. At the heart of this irony is that a good number of the graduates had gone to the university to increase their prospects of getting white-collar jobs only to be told that their various orientation camps that what they did not need a degree for was what they might spend the rest of their lives earning from. Some in university communities also feel uneasy by the NYSC's SAED programme, which looks upon their products as potential bead makers, cobblers, bakers, and makeup artists (Umeh, 2015, para.11).

Similarly, the NYSC vocational and entrepreneurship programmes may possess a lot of value, but the challenge, like other policies in the country, is with its implementation. Reported in the Premium Times article of May 23rd 2019, Chukwuyem Divine, a corps member in Abuja, described NYSC SAED as a great initiative with poor implementation:

The idea of the NYSC SAED programme is great but the implementation is poor...I will not blame my fellow corps members who called the initiative a scam due to so many irregularities I can attest to. I boycotted the training not because I am certain of a white-collar job after my youth service, but because of the clear exploitation, lack of professionalism of the trainers and the wrong timing. Most of our SAED lectures usually hold for three hours or more after intense morning parade when corps members must have been tired." (Chukwuyem Divine as cited in Adenekan, 2019, para. 6-9)

Also, the programme lacks a long term plan for participants and the necessary linkages needed to ensure that most of the corps members who pass through the training have enough support to help them stand on their feet after their service year. This strategy will ensure that the NYSC carryout regular impact assessment of the programmes on corps members to determine success, or failure rates. This may help answer some pertinent questions, one of which may include the argument that if the programme is as effective as the Youth Scheme appraised, why is the unemployment rate among graduates still rising?

Furthermore, the SAED scheme seems to be focused on specific skills that may not have great potentials for good profitability in the market. This is owing to either product oversaturation, or

low demand for such services. Good examples are liquid soap making, makeup artistry, Beautification, Food Processing and Preservation, amongst others. Some Vital programmes like ICT may require more than the time available during the orientation camp to achieve a meaningful level of proficiency. What is often noticed in orientation camps is that the officials of SAED often make do with the skill-set of facilitators often drawn from the community of the camping corps members. Similarly, Zite and Deebom (2017) concluded that the key challenges of the NYSC-SAED and its vocational training are; lack of qualified training instructors and lack of training facilities.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the growing challenges of unemployment amongst graduates and the need to scale up vocational and entrepreneurship education in the country with reference to the NYSC vocational and entrepreneurship training programme under the NYSC Skill Acquisition and Entrepreneurship Development (SAED). The paper took a cursory look at the history of vocational training in Nigeria and concludes by recommending amongst other things, that Vocational and Entrepreneurship education must begin at the grass root levels of the educational system preferably at the primary level. It also assessed some of the challenges affecting the SAED, especially the duration given to the programme, which is not enough for the corps members to master the craft of their choice.

Recommendation

1. Vocational and Entrepreneurship education must be prioritized at the grassroots of the education system preferably at the primary level.
2. Education is designed to meet the needs of society and not as a routine that must be maintained ritualistically. Therefore, the government should deemphasize and where necessary, stop the admission of students into humanities and some social science-based courses where there are already hundreds of thousands of graduates without jobs and increase the numbers of relevant vocational and science-based subjects that are relevant to the nation's economy in today's complex and digitalized world.
3. The SAED programme should be adequately funded and granted facilities across the nation to help in the efficient mentoring of graduate-trainees.
4. Vocational and Entrepreneurship training in tertiary institutions must deviate from theoretical-based practices to practical real-life-experiences and training that is targeted at problem-solving.
5. Tertiary institutions should create courses that are tailored along preparing graduates for a lifetime of experience in particular vocations and entrepreneurship endeavours.
6. The government should also consider opening mono-technics that are solely focused on offering definitive vocational and entrepreneurial careers to help young people make vocational choices at the post-secondary school levels.

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