

## Challenges of Apprenticeship Development and Youths Unemployment in Nigeria

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### Abstract

This study essentially seeks to understand the importance of apprenticeship training to development in Nigeria, factors responsible for decline in apprenticeship development and career implication for youth engaging in apprenticeship. The study engaged both Parson functional prerequisite postulate and Modernization theory in advancing understanding on the subject matter. The research work engages cross-sectional research approach, which combines Questionnaires and in-depth interview (IDIs) in sourcing for useful information from selected wards in Ife-east Local Government, Osun State. Cluster sampling technique was engaged in selecting 150 respondents for administration of questionnaire while purposive sampling was engaged in selecting 10 interviewees for in-depth interviews sessions. Data were analyzed using descriptive and content analysis. Findings from this study revealed Nigerian economy cannot develop until apprenticeship is encouraged among the youths and among other recommendations, strongly recommended that incentive should be implemented for youth who want to engage in skill acquisitions and apprenticeship should be encouraged among youth as career pathway for alleviating poverty.

**Keywords:** Apprenticeship; Development; Nigeria; Unemployment; Youths

### Introduction

One of the most frequented subjects of discourse in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa had always been development as the continent and its imbedded countries revel in the challenges of underdevelopment. Classical economists often posit that this is due to the consuming nature of African nations and a tilt away from manufacturing and agriculture. Such arguments reflect the situation of undermined relevance of skills acquisition in Nigeria. According to International Labour Organisation [1], Unemployment is among the biggest threats to social stability in many countries (including Nigeria), putting the global rate at 12.6%. When compared with her counterparts in the continent, Nigeria's unemployment crisis is more serious. Nigeria is believed to be one of the countries in the world with highest rate of unemployed youths in which her labour force are not adequately utilized, due to lack of employment skills and consequently, a very wide skills gap.

Essentially, apprenticeship is a common trend in the world in which youth and adolescent are empower in the country, the world changing realities of globalization, competitiveness and knowledge based economy, strongly underscore the importance of training and skills acquisition among workers [1]. According to Dike [2] the United States is not the only society that appreciates skills acquired through vocational and technical education. The Dutch school system is said to pay attention to provision of vocational education at ages 14-16 for a third of all pupils, and widespread vocational education at 16+. Secondary (high) schools in many other development-conscious nations have vocational centres that offer vocational training for lifelong trade together with general academic studies. For instance, India and the Asian Tigers could not have become what they are without massive investment in technical education. However, because of recent changes in world economy many vocational and technical schools have shifted emphasis to training on the computers and information technology [2].

Specifically, apprenticeship as a veritable vehicle which is one of the major functional prerequisites for employment generation and poverty reduction at low investment cost as well as improving the wellbeing of the individuals has not been adequately harnessed in

tackling the unemployment surge among youths in Nigeria. Thus, such magnitude of idleness among youths who are the supposed catalyst for development ordinarily translates to anything, but meaningful development in Nigeria. As such, reasonable attention which should have been focus on alternative empowerment schemes especially apprenticeship to activate the role of youths in development have been conspicuously neglected. Such skill acquisitions training within the confines of apprenticeship will have affords youths a means to be relevant along the line of a particular profession, such as fashion designing, furniture making and other related endeavors.

International Labor Organization ILO enunciated the importance of training in a fast changing world when it asserted that "The illiterate of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will not be those who cannot read or write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn. Thus most youths in Ile-Ife and Nigeria as a whole did not see apprenticeship as a career pathway towards career prospect rather than in academic training in the university or higher institution. Thus the prospects and productivity accrued to youths involvement in apprenticeship training is one that ordinarily adds to a nation's GDP and enhances standard of living of the people. These situations pose great challenges to the very existence of youths in most developing nations especially in Ile-ife Community and Nigeria which constitute the labour force and also struggling with the challenge of acquiring employability skill so as to function effectively in the society in which they live in. However, such initiatives (which appear grossly uninstituted) are conspicuously left in oblivion as a path to development in Nigeria have been discussed in the literature with

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focuses on entrepreneurship but with little consideration on how youth unemployment can be curbed courtesy of conspicuously apprenticeship development approach among youths in Nigeria.

## Literature Review

### Overview of skill acquisition and unemployment situation among youths in Nigeria

Unemployment has become a major problem for most countries across the world. In the USA for instance unemployment had increased from 5 percent in 2007 to 9 percent in 2011. That of Spain has risen from 8.6 percent to 21.52 percent as a result of the debt crisis in Europe; UK, from 5.3 to 8.1 percent while that of Greece rose from 8.07 to 18.4 percent during the same period [3]. The average unemployment rate within the African continent is generally high. South Africa, Africa's largest economy have 25 percent unemployment rate, Botswana at 17.5 percent, Angola at 25 percent and Kenya at 11.7 percent [4]. It must be noted that the population of these countries is lower than Nigeria's. An unemployment ratio of 23.9 percent of the total population will mean that over 38 million Nigerians are unemployed. Of the workforce, it means that 16 million are unemployed. Many of these youths lack vocational education and technical skills which make them casualties in an increasingly competitive economy [5].

Unemployment is one of the fundamental developmental challenges facing Nigeria at the moment. Research has shown that unemployment was high in the 1980s, but the available reports from various local and international bodies, and the glaring evidence of joblessness in these decades are clear indications that there was no time in Nigeria's chequered history where unemployment is as serious as now. One cannot really conclude that the government at one level or the other has not done anything at one time or the other, to reduce unemployment in Nigeria. Youth unemployment has been increasing because most youth lack relevant marketable skills. The Federal government recently acknowledged that about 80 percent of Nigeria's youth are unemployed while 10 percent are underemployed [6]. According to the National Bureau of statistics [7] the national unemployment rates for Nigeria between 2000 and 2009 showed that unemployed persons constituted 31.1%, 13.6% in 2001, 12.6% in 2002, 13.4% in 2004, 13.7% in 2006, 14.9% in 2008, and 19.7% in 2009. With respect to age group, education and sex NBS [7] data showed that persons aged between 15 and 24 years had 41.6% unemployed. For persons between 25 and 44 years, 17% were unemployed. For persons with primary education 14.8% were unemployed while those with post-secondary education had 21.3% unemployed. As regards sex, data showed that males constituted 17% of the unemployed while females constituted 23.3 [7].

On the other hand, the creation of National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and its skills acquisition programmes, NAPEP, PAP, the SURE-P, YOUWIN, just to mention a few, are some of the various intervention mechanisms aimed at ensuring economic growth that is rich with job creation opportunities. Besides, the Federal Government over the years has been claiming strong real GDP growth rate measuring at 6% or 6.5% since 2005 till date [8,9]. This is apparently a paradox. A situation whereby, there is a decade of strong real GDP of 6.5% economic growth, and in the same period, unemployment rate continue to rise annually from 11.9% in 2005 to 19.7% in 2009, and over 37% in 2013 [8,9].

According to a 2009 World Bank Report, 40 million (28.57%) of the country's employable people are unemployed. The figure, according to

the same World Bank, rose to 50 million a year later [10]. What make the situation more worrisome are the controversies over whose figure is most correct or acceptable. It appears that the government is still at a cross-road about the actual percentage of her unemployed populace. For instance, in May 2013, the NBS put the figure of the unemployed in Nigeria at 23.9% [11]. While Dr. Okonjo-Iweala, former Minister of Finance and the Chairperson of the Economic Team in Nigeria puts the current figure at 37% [9]. Meanwhile, experts and critics have disagreed with the NBS and Minister's figure, arguing that research had shown that the current level of unemployment in Nigeria was above 40% and would rise to 50% at the end of this year [9]. For instance Akintunde Maberu, renowned financial analyst and stockbroker in Okorocha [12] study posited that government is yet to come up with conscientious and people-oriented policies targeted at getting millions of unemployed Nigerian youths actively and meaningfully engaged. He argued that reversing the trend of rising youth unemployment must start from the nation's education sector, which he said must be overhauled along the line of skills acquisition.

### Importance of the informal apprenticeship system to development

Skills training in Nigeria occur in the private and public sectors, the most significant institution that provides such training in the private sector is the informal apprenticeship scheme. This scheme is no doubt the most important method of skills transfer in the country's informal economy. This is because they offer a more cost effective and flexible means of skills transfer that absorbs a larger number of youths in Nigeria than their formal and publicly financed counterparts. Informal apprenticeship is very popular in most urban centres in Nigeria, they account for about 85% of skills training and transfer in most parts of the country. According to Ariyo [13], the informal economy is regarded as the powerhouse of developing economies of the world. Its importance is based on the fact that it accounts for more than 80% of agricultural employment and 95% of new jobs in these countries, including a vast number of unemployed youths and young people that enter the labour market annually. As a form of education and training, informal apprenticeship contributes significantly to youth employment and empowerment, thereby reducing youth restiveness, while ensuring productivity and better employment opportunities. Such apprenticeship training occurs exclusively in the private sector, where the owner of an informal enterprise takes on apprentices, usually for a fee, and provides training in traditional skills over a period of three or more years. Within the manufacturing sector, these skills are mainly in carpentry, sewing, and metal work. Particularly in West Africa, traditional apprenticeships are a far more important source of training than formal training and vocational education systems [14,15].

In addition, understanding the age distribution in the informal apprenticeship scheme is crucial to understanding the distribution of population in the system. The age range from apprentices to masters in the informal apprenticeship training system is from 11 to 60 years of age in Nigeria and differs from enterprise to enterprise. It is in a bid to help young people find employment outside the formal system that informal apprenticeship admits applicants below the legally acceptable age. In some parts of the country children between the ages of 10 to 14 work, as apprentices and in some cases 49% of school age children are in the informal apprenticeship system in Nigeria [13]. Majority of these children if not in the informal apprenticeship end up on the streets hawking just to make ends meet. It is in recognition of this fact that the government allow for more and more young people to be apprentices in certain enterprises rather than wander the streets. According to

Breyer [16] apprentice on average have some level of educational attainment, only about 3% of apprentices do not have any form of educational qualification whatsoever. The informal apprenticeship training is embarked upon by apprentices as an alternative to formal education this is because most of them cannot afford secondary, higher or technical education. As such they result to apprenticeship schemes as a means of acquiring some skills that will make them employable in the society. It has been noticed that there is a disparity amongst the educational qualification attained by masters compared to apprentices. Masters tend to have attained a higher level of education compared to their apprentice counterparts, a reason for this is that masters are much older and have had the chance to go through technical/secondary/higher education at some point in time, although not in all cases.

### Factors responsible for decline in apprenticeship development

Adekola [17] and Anyadike et al. [18] posited that for a very long time, the pattern of decline in apprenticeship has evolved through socio-cultural process in the society. These patterns make it difficult for the master craftsmen and the apprentice to practice effectively in a conducive atmosphere. According to Adekola [17] one major problem of apprenticeship system is that, it is generally believed to be meant for people who cannot do well in the formal education system or those whose parents cannot afford to sponsor their education. This particular problem makes it difficult to attract young graduates and youths of school age into the system. It is assumed that people undergoing apprenticeship are 'never do well' people and they are not given deserved respect like their counterparts in the formal school system. The attitude of the masters in most cases constitutes a hindrance to the practice of apprenticeship. This is caused by the fact that they are not trained in the act of teaching. Most masters are difficult and have little skill to sustain the interest of the apprentice on the job. This makes the rate of drop-out and non-completers to be high.

Anyadike et al. [18] posited that funding contributes to the problem facing the practice of apprenticeship in developing countries. The economic condition of most parents of the apprentice and the apprentice themselves in most cases made it difficult for them to sponsor the training for the agreed period. The master craftsmen themselves are not spared of the problem of poverty. In most cases, they find it difficult to equip their workshop with necessary equipment that can improve efficiency and make them meet up with contemporary technological needs. They explained further that general Nigerian value system which appears to have cultivated a new value system just like the larger society in their quest for making fast money as well as generally living on the fast lane. For example, apprenticeship system of the olden days is fast disappearing. Gone are the days when a master auto-mechanic would have about three to five apprentices under his tutelage. While many youths would sign up to learn a trade, a great majority of them quit apprenticeship and opt for motorcycle riding or taxi driving business to start making money while some who remain to learn the trade do not stay long enough to acquire the necessary skills. One implication is that in few years' times Nigeria will begin to experience an acute shortage of artisans [18].

In addition, choosing of wrong career by the apprentice constituted a constraint to the development of apprenticeship system. Due to lack of exposure, limited knowledge of psychology and career counseling, apprentice often make wrong career choice. In most cases, career are forced on would be apprentice by the parents or guardians without due consideration for the interest, ability and capability of the apprentice.

This has often resulted into non-completion of the apprentice period due to inability of the apprentice to cope with the physical and intellectual requirements of the career [17]. The problem of outdated and unimplemented policy is also a major problem confronting the practice of apprenticeship system in Nigeria. As practiced today, there seems not to be any guiding principle from government as regulatory agency for apprenticeship system. The haphazard nature makes it less attractive to youths and graduates. Consequently, the society lacks competent bricklayers, carpenters, printers, auto mechanics, laboratory and pharmacy technicians, vocational nurses etc. [18].

Corruption, which has permeated the entire social structure of Nigeria, has robbed the country of developing a vibrant economic base. Funds meant for development projects have been misappropriated, diverted, or embezzled and stashed away in foreign banks, while some incompetent and corrupt bureaucrats and administrators in the public enterprises and parastatals have liquidated these organizations [19]. The point being made is that the collaboration of the political elites, local and foreign contractors in the inflation of contract fees have robbed Nigeria of the chances of using more than \$500 billion estimated revenue from the oil sale in the last 50 years to develop apprenticeship skills acquisition that would have created jobs for the youths in various sectors of the economy [20]. Thus crippling the economy and engendering and exacerbating unemployment which creates abject poverty, hunger and frustration; killing the zeal and means for apprenticeship development in the Nigerian youths.

Anyadike et al. [18] acknowledge that the general Nigerian value system, which appears to have cultivated a new value system just like the larger society in their quest for making fast money as well as generally living on the fast lane. For example, the apprenticeship system of the olden days is fast disappearing. Gone are the days when a master automechanic would have about three to five apprentices under his tutelage. While many youths would sign up to learn a trade, a great majority of them quit apprenticeship and opt for motorcycle taxi business (popularly called Okada) to start making money while some who remain to learn the trade don't stay long enough to acquire the necessary skill. One implication is that in a few years' time Nigeria will begin to experience an acute shortage of artisans. Youths are not motivated to choose vocational and technical education. This may be why it is common to find many legislators donate motorcycles to youths in their constituencies under the name of "youth empowerment" [18].

Politically, lack of Political Will on the side of our political leaders have been a more hindrance to entrepreneurship development and reduction of unemployment in Nigeria [21]. The neglect of vocational/technical education has been robbing the nation of the potential contributions of its graduates to national growth and economic development. Consequently, the society lacks competent bricklayers, carpenters, printers, auto mechanics, laboratory and pharmacy technicians, vocational nurses etc.

However, Eneh [22] pointed out in his findings that, artisans not only accepted that there was a serious decline in the rate of apprenticeship and available technical service, but decried the situation and were frightened by the perceived impact on the society in future. Most artisans (98%) attributed the decline to increasing quest for formal education, 81% to get-rich-quick mentality, 68% to unconducive business environment, 48% to indolence, 19% to lack of respect for artisans and technicians in the society and 8% to lack of patronage. Respondents submitted that the government education programmes, such as the UPE of 1976 and UBE of 1999, which made going to school mandatory for school-age children, had drastically trimmed down the

number of children going for technical apprenticeship. it was further pointed out by Eneh [23] that indolence and get-rich-quick mentality of the citizens had resulted in increasing rate of school drop-out and demand for buying and selling for quick profit with limited stress, especially as there was poor respect for artisans, but high respect for wealth, no matter how ill-gotten. Poor business environment had forced many technical workshops to close down, since they lacked electric power supply, had to pay multiple taxations, had little or no incentives from government and were shunned by banks from which they requested for capital. These issues agreed with earlier reports on problems of small and medium enterprises in Southeast Nigeria [23].

### Career implication for youths engaging in apprenticeship training

Haywood and Teal [24] posited that Nigeria is now the largest economy in sub-Saharan Africa, by population and economic size. The employment opportunities for its young people are a central topic in policy debates in the country. It is believed that apprenticeships are an important occupational outcome for young people in Nigeria, where almost all apprenticeships are in the private traditional small-scale sector. Essentially, skill training in Nigeria occurs in the private and public sectors, the most significant institution that provides such training in the private sector is the informal apprenticeship scheme. This scheme is no doubt the most important method of skills transfer in the country's informal economy. This is because they offer a more cost effective and flexible means of skills transfer that absorbs a larger number of youths in Nigeria than their formal and publicly financed counterparts. Informal apprenticeship is very popular in most urban centers in Nigeria, they account for about 85% of skills training and transfer in most parts of the country. It is a major source of livelihood, means of being employed and actively engaging in economically worthwhile ventures. There are different enterprises that engage in apprenticeship schemes, which include; welding, auto-mechanics, auto-electricians, tailoring, generator repairing, mobile phone repairing, carpentry, furniture making, catering, manicure/pedicure, and plumbing. These trades of the informal apprenticeship scheme are recognized as a means of absorbing and training unemployed youths through manpower development and economic empowerment [13]. Thus, according to Atuwokiki [25] youths engage in apprentice training in Nigeria as a means of skills development and employment.

Comparative studies of apprenticeship in sub-Saharan Africa find it to be most common in West Africa. This may be due to the higher incomes and greater degree of urbanization in the region, creating demand for manufactures that small-scale enterprises are well equipped to meet. As in Ghana, most such enterprises in Nigeria will be run by people who have graduated from apprenticeships and who themselves employ apprentices. With wage opportunities declining rapidly for the young in Nigeria and with continuing growth in demand within the informal sector, apprenticeship will become increasingly attractive. The high rates of joblessness in Nigeria may be due to the low returns for many in the informal sector (those with other means of support do not wish to enter the sector) and to the existence of credit constraints that prevent young adults from being able to pay the costs of undertaking an apprenticeship [26]. Thus, in contrast to educational systems with parallel academic and vocational educational streams, in sub-Saharan countries vocational training through apprenticeships may be an enforced choice for young people when further progress in the formal academic educational system is blocked, either by financial constraints or by their academic performance. Further, most apprenticeships are not a route into formal wage employment in large enterprises or

public sector enterprises. Rather, traditional apprenticeships are a route to self-employment or employment in small, informal sector jobs [14]. The idea, Maberu explained, in Okorochoa [12] is that with adequate skills and hands-on experience in various vocations, Nigerian graduates would be self-employed after leaving school while those in school would find something doing even before completing their education. He said that this would save Nigerian youths the stress and trauma of endless and fruitless search for paid employments in a highly saturated labour market. The approach, according to him, has become even more necessary considering the fact that many Nigerian graduates are unemployable [12].

Onyenenkwa in his findings, pointed out that, about 31% of the artisans were able to finance their relations' primary education and 58% their marriage rites. About 3% of them afforded to build a residential house in the village and only 3% in the city. About 7% of them were able to finance their wife's post-secondary education and 5% could train selves in post-secondary education. About 61% of them could finance their children's primary, 60% the secondary and 22% the tertiary education. Only 1% of the artisans owned a private car, while 2% owned a commercial bus. It was stated further that these were some of the parameters for measuring people's arrival or success in life in typical Nigerian society. Nigerians respect someone who has the love for education, the heart and means to train his relations in the African extended family network, children, wife and self in school; show affluence in society marriage rites; build a house in the village and in the city and own a private car as well as a commercial vehicle. The younger ones looked up to such a person and would like to be like him. Found that an average of 25.6% of the artisans was able to meet the societal expectations. This poor general score could account for desertion of apprenticeship and technical trades by up-coming generations. No young person would like to take after the career of a person considered to be a failure in the society. They prefer to toe the line of those considered to have arrived (made it or succeeded in life) in the society.

### Theoretical discourse

Parson functional requisite postulate affirmed that informal vocational training (apprenticeship) has been serving as an indispensable complement since enormous demands have been placed on it. The theory believed that large number of youths migrated often to urban centre in search of job opportunities believed to exist in urban centre, but such unrealistic beliefs came to light as there are no opportunities for the migrant to tap into. Hence, the young migrant soon find it convenient to attach themselves to apprenticeship workshops to acquire skill to be able to be relevant and functional in the society. Moreover, Modernization theory categorically affirmed that a simple and relatively straightforward process of socio-economic development and social adaptation in a given country can be attained through promotion of apprenticeship system. Modernization theory affirmed that societies that are facing hunger, unemployment and poverty to experience modern ways of life through job opportunities provided which are not in abundance can be alleviated through keying into apprenticeship programmes.

### Theoretical hybridization

This theoretical synthesis entails the integration of the two applied theories. The result is therefore a hybrid theory with enhanced efficacy. While the Parson functional requisite postulate provides a succinct explanation of the functional imperative of apprenticeship to socio-economic development of Nigeria, the modernization theory has

categorically affirmed that apprenticeship has continue to provide standardized alternative occupational qualification and a context for socialization in Nigerian societies.

## Methodology

The study was carried out in Ile-Ife town in Osun State, South western Nigeria. The study employed mixed-method research design. Primary sources of data collection were engaged. Primary data were collected through the administration of semi-structure questionnaire in which the researcher fill in the response of the respondents since majority are semi illiterate and conduct of in-depth interview (IDI) sessions through tape recording and note taking. Ife east was randomly selected from the existing 2 L.G.A within ile-ife town because of prevalent rate of unemployment among the youth in the communities. Due to the absence of a sampling frame, the respondents were selected through cluster sampling technique as a result of problem of gathering information from the population that is wide in profession and dispersed. The respondents were selected based on their occupations (transportation, building and clothing), out of which 150 respondents were selected randomly from two wards Okerewe I and modakeke II) within the L.G.A. Each group consisted of Transportation: Mechanics, panel beater, Rewires, Vulcanizers and Car-sprayers; Building: Bricklayers, Carpenters, plumbers, Electricians, welders and Air-conditional repairer; Clothing: Tailors, Shoe makers, barbers and Hair-dressers. In each group 30 master-craftsmen and 20 apprentices were randomly selected. Fewer numbers of apprentices were selected due to the fact that there is a lack of interest of youths in the informal training which was obtained through pilot study. For the IDI session 5 interviewees (youths: who are not in apprenticeship programmes and Parents: who or does not have their child (ren) in apprenticeship training) each were purposively selected based on their knowledge and experiences on the issues relating to apprenticeship giving overall of 10 interviewees. Questionnaire and in-depth interviews data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and content analysis.

## Results and Discussion of the Study

This section focuses on the results and discussions of data obtain from the field research. The first section duel on socio-demographic of respondent while the subsequent sections focus on substantive objectives of the study.

### Socio demographic characteristic of respondents

In Table 1 showed that large number of the respondents who are apprentices, 61.7 percent had their secondary school not completed,

where less number of respondents, 5 percent had their primary school not completed. In addition majority of the respondents who are master craftsmen, 66.7 percent had their secondary school completed where lower number of respondents, 1.1 percent had their primary school not completed within the study area. This show that master craftsmen had higher education than their apprentices in the study area. For the age distribution, higher number of respondents who are apprentices, 43.3 percent ranged between 13 and 18 years of age in which less number 11.7 percent of the respondents ranged between 25 years of age and above. In addition higher number of the respondents who are master craftsmen, 56.7 percent ranged between 30-39 years of age where fewer numbers 7.8 percent of the respondents ranged between 50 years of age and above.

However, the study showed that majority of the youths is not actively involving in apprenticeship training. The finding also showed that the master craftsmen had higher education than the apprentices in the study area. This corroborated with the findings of Breyer [16] that apprentice on average have some level educational attainment, only about 3% of apprentices do not have any form of educational qualification whatsoever. He stated that there is a disparity amongst the educational qualification attained by masters compared to apprentices. Masters tend to have attained a higher level of education compared to their apprentice counterparts.

### Importance of apprenticeship Training

In Table 2, majority of the respondents 70 percent reported that the relevance of apprenticeship training to Nigeria economy is very important with less number of respondents 5.6 percent reported that it is not important. Lastly, the findings revealed that master craftsmen evaluation of their apprentices to basic training was after three months (82.2 percent) and used 2 years in evaluating their apprentices to basic knowledge of skill acquisition (33.3 percent) within the study area.

However, the findings showed that the relevance of apprenticeship training to Nigeria development is very important. The findings also showed that skill acquisitions were introduced to the apprentices after three months to the workplace and it take the apprentices 2-3 years to grasp the basic knowledge of skill acquisition. This is corroborated by Adams et al. [14] and Brooks et al. [15] findings that the owner of an informal enterprise takes on apprentices, usually for a fee, and provides training in traditional skills over a period of three or more years. In tandem with the frequency summation, it was deduced from the interviews that apprenticeship training are the brainbox of any developed economy and the economy cannot develop until we try as

Apprentices by level of education			Master-craftsmen by level of education		
Variable	N	%	Variable	N	%
Primary school not completed	3	5	Primary school not completed	1	1.1
Primary school completed	7	11.7	Primary school completed	9	10
Secondary school not completed	37	61.7	Secondary school not completed	18	20
Secondary school completed	13	21.6	Secondary school completed	60	66.7
Total	60	100	Post-secondary	2	2.2
-	-	-	Total	90	100
Apprentices by Age			Master-craftsmen by Age		
Below 12 years	14	23.3	Below 29 years	22	24.4
13- 18 years	26	43.3	30-39 years	51	56.7
19- 24 years	13	21.7	40-49 years	10	11.1
25 years above	7	11.7	50 years and above	7	7.8
Total	60	100	Total	90	100

Table 1: Socio demographic characteristic of respondents.

Master-craftsmen opinion on relevance of apprentice to Nigeria economy		
Variable	Frequency	%
Very important	63	70
Important	22	24.4
Not important	5	5.6
Total	90	100
Master craftsmen evaluation of their apprentices to basic training		
Immediately on resumption	10	11.1
After three months	74	82.2
1-2 years	6	6.7
Total	90	100
Years/months master-craftsmen use in evaluating their apprentices to basic training		
1 year	21	23.3
2 years	30	33.3
3 years	22	24.4
4 years	14	15.6
5 years	3	3.3
Total	90	100

Table 2: Importance of apprenticeship training.

far as possible to encourage apprenticeship in the society. This is in tandem with Ariyo [13], that the informal economy is regarded as the powerhouse of developing economies of the world. Its importance is based on the fact that it accounts for more than 80% of agricultural employment and 95% of new jobs in these countries, including a vast number of unemployed youths and young people that enter the labour market annually. This was revealed further from the excerpts thus:

*They are extremely important. We cannot value it. For economy of this country to develop we need a small scale enterprise and this small scale enterprise constitute major of those craftsmen/artisans. The economy cannot develop until we try as far as possible to encourage apprenticeship* (IDI, Female, 22years, Nursery school attendant, Lagere, Ife-East LGA).

*They are the brainbox of any economy and we cannot do without the craftsmen and our economy is growing today based on the effort of these craftsmen are putting in and they are the major key player in the economy. Their services are very important* (IDI, Male, 35years, Businessman, Ilesha road, Ife-East LGA).

Essentially, the interviews showed that relevance of skills acquisitions depends mainly on what each individual learn and how they could translate grasps of skills into practical usefulness in the society. It is affirmed that government laxity is not helping the development of youths despite the fact of contributing to the country economic development. This is conspicuously stated in the excerpts below:

*It depends on what each people learn and how they understand it. It is very important to the Nigeria economy in the person understand craft very well* (IDI, Male, 45years, Teacher, Okerewe, Ife-East LGA).

*It is very important to the Nigeria economy government is not encourage the sector. I think it is art of one's putting in his/her mentality and cannot develop until we try as far as possible to encouraged apprenticeship* (IDI, Male, 19years, Recharge-cards Seller, Modakeke, Ife-East LGA).

### Factors responsible for decline in apprenticeship development in Nigeria

As shown from Table 3, larger number of respondents , 48.3

Factor responsible for decline in apprenticeship development in Nigeria		
Variable	Frequency	%
Lack of family support	7	11.7
Low incentives	29	48.3
Non-implementation of self-employment policy by Government	16	26.7
Interest in daily earning jobs and laziness	8	13.3
Total	60	100
Personal consideration of apprentices about training		
By chance	9	15
Family influence	4	6.7
Economic situation	25	41.6
To earn money and combine with schooling	18	30
Total	60	100

Table 3: Factors responsible for decline in apprenticeship development in Nigeria.

percent of Master craftsmen revealed that low incentives is the major factor responsible for decline interest in apprenticeship development in Nigeria with fewer number of respondents 11.7 percent revealed that lack of family support is the reason for decline interest in apprenticeship development within the study area. In addition, higher number of the respondents 41.6 percent revealed that personal consideration of apprentices about training is determine by economic situation, with fewer number of respondents 6.7 percent reported that it is determined by family influence.

However, it was revealed by the findings that low incentives is the major reason for decline interest in apprenticeship development in Nigeria, but other reasons like non-implementation of self-employment policy by Government and Interest in daily earning jobs and laziness also contributed to the decline in apprenticeship. It also showed that personal consideration about apprenticeship training was being determined by economic situation in Nigeria. In tandem with the frequency summation, it was revealed from the interviews that daily incentives which most youth got from okada riding and social value that is attached to apprenticeship in the society are some of the reasons for the decline interest in apprenticeship development in Nigeria. This in line with the findings of Anyadike et al. [18] that gone are the days when a master auto-mechanic would have about three to five apprentices under his tutelage. He stated further that while many youths would sign up to learn a trade, a great majority of them quit apprenticeship and opt for motorcycle taxi business to start making money while some who remain to learn the trade do not stay long enough to acquire the necessary skills. This could be further understood from the excerpts that:

*It is because those that are riding okada are too many and they want daily incentives which they think apprenticeship cannot offer them* (IDI, female, 71years, trader, modakeke ,Ife-East LGA).

Similarly, another interviewee accentuated more that:

*Basically, the problems arise from the social values attached to apprenticeship in the country. People that engaged in apprenticeship in the country are not recognized, people looked down on them and there is no encouragement for them and secondly the economic factor, people want to have a better life and they believed that the only way to get to the inner caucus, is to go to school* (IDI, male, 22 years, students, lagere, Ife-east LGA).

Specifically, the interviewees affirmed that decline of economy

situation in Nigeria have shape the decision of most youths by shifting attention away from craftwork and skills knowledge. Quest for quick money among the youths which is influence by poverty rate have further compound the decline in apprenticeship among youths. This is supported by Anyadike et al. [18] findings that general Nigerian value system which appears to have cultivated a new value system just like the lager society in their quest for making fast money as well as generally living on the fast lane. This can be understood from the excerpts below:

*The present economy situation of Nigeria does not encourage people to learn craftwork, also quest for education and physical appearance of people for a craft (IDI, Female 55years, Trader, Ojojin, Ife-East LGA).*

*It is because recently there is a shift in concentration from trade like tailor, mechanic, etc. And there is more concentration on education. Even those that are not educated, what they want now is quick money. So in summary it is because of the recent quest for education and because of the fact that that poverty level is higher in Nigeria and people want to earn money quickly which apprenticeship could not give them (IDI, Male, 23years, bank cashier, Okereewe, Ife-East LGA).*

### **Career implication for youth engaging in apprenticeship in the study area**

Majority of the interviewees revealed that career implication for youth engaging in apprenticeship in Nigeria despite the decline will make such an individual be self-dependent without lack in means of livelihood and due to the persistent unemployment problem in Nigeria, individuals with crafts skill will determine the future and what happen in the country because it is a career with prospect. The is supported by Adams et al. [14] that most apprenticeships are not a route into formal wage employment in large enterprises or public sector enterprises. Rather, traditional apprenticeships are a route to self-employment or employment in small, informal sector jobs. This was revealed from the excerpts thus:

*There is a career prospect for youths that learn apprenticeship...if he/she knows the crafts, he will not lack anything or depend on anybody (IDI, Female, 48years, Teacher, Lagere, Ife-East LGA).*

*It is a major career prospect in the nearest future for any visionary, the rate of unemployment is growing at alarming speed and those that learn any crafts would determine what happen in Nigeria in near future( IDI, Male, 35years, Self-employed, Oke-Ola, Ife-East LGA).*

Specifically, it was revealed from the interviews that with apprenticeship training, rate of armed robbery in the country would be reduced as majority with the skills acquisition will be able to fend for themselves and would have edge over job security within the economy of the country. This was in line with Okorochoa [12] that with adequate skills and hands-on experience in various vocations, Nigerian graduates would be self-employed after leaving school while those in school would find something doing even before completing their education. He said that this would save Nigerian youths the stress and trauma of endless and fruitless search for paid employments in a highly saturated labour market. The interviewees accentuated further thus:

*There is a career prospect for youths in apprenticeship.....It would make them to be financially independent and it would reduce the rate of armed robbery in Nigeria and they would be able to cater for themself esandtheirfamily(IDI,Male,21years,phonecallattendant,lagere, Ife-East LGA).*

*There is a career prospect for the youths in apprenticeship.....Even*

*for those that go to school, there is no available job on ground and those that involve in apprenticeship have their jobs and they have edge over job security within the economy of the country (IDI, Female, 22years, Nursery school attendant, iremo, Ife-East LGA).*

In contrast to the previous findings, it was affirmed from the interviewees that career prospect for youth in apprenticeship with the present situation in the country is not bright but affirmed that globally there is possibility of encountering success in the profession.

*Talking about this present country, I did not think there is a career prospect for youth in apprenticeship (IDI, Female, 45 years, trader, Olohunshogo, Ife-East LGA).*

*On the global level, the apprentices have a career prospect for youths but over here in Nigeria. I did not see apprenticeship as a career prospect for the youths. Even those who are in the school, the so call universities, the government is not planning for them, let alone the apprentices (IDI, Male, 22years, student, Okereewe, Ife-East LGA).*

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

The Services rendered by Artisans to the Nigerian economy are extremely important and Nigerian economy cannot develop until apprenticeship which is the bedrock of skills acquisition is encouraged among youths. Engaging in Apprenticeship to acquire skills is more of mental and creative skills development which is capable of breeding a large number of self-employed youths, who will in turn employ others and also train them as well. It is worth noting that career prospects in apprenticeship is possible for youths, which will empower them financially, make them self-dependent, contribute to the nation's GDP and reduce the rate of idleness, youth restiveness, crime, drug addiction, unskilled population, etcetera, among the youths in Nigeria.

Furthermore, against the backdrop of Nigeria's ailing economy which may slide into recession if appropriate policy measures are not implemented to cushion the effects of dwindling oil revenue, skills acquisition via apprenticeship is an important area the government can channel resources to towards increasing the skills strength of its population. This will also act as a buffer to complement the efforts of the government to diversify the economy as skilled population is vital to diversification and economic growth. In the light of the aforesaid, financial assistance and working equipment should be provided or subsidized by governments and Non-governmental organizations for Master-craftsmen who engage more apprentices for skill training in their workplace and youths who engage and completed skill acquisitions training so as to make the scheme more important and attractive to the youths. Soft loans and other means of assisting apprentices should also be made available to ensure that successful apprentices are gainfully established. Government should also embark on a campaign to sensitize the youths to engage more in apprenticeship.

Lastly government at all levels should engage the various stakeholders in this regard to address the issue of unemployment situation among youths and discuss ways of harnessing apprenticeship scheme to curb the rising rate of unemployment among youths courtesy of appropriate pragmatic skill acquisition policies towards creating more employment for the youths and also adding to the country's GDP. This will also place the country on the right pedestal to actualize 'Poverty Eradication', which is one of the prime targets of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Campaigns and other concerted efforts should be launched by the concerned stakeholders to ensure that the attitude of the people

is changed so that apprentices are no longer used as providers of ridiculously cheap labour, they should be well coordinated as skilled labour providers and adequately appreciated in terms of remuneration. This will without doubt, encourage more youths to take up apprenticeship to acquire skills. Also, apprenticeship in indigenous occupations should be designed by governments at all levels as a way to provide adequate indigenous technological orientation and preparation for career development and alleviating poverty among youths.

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