

# Entrepreneurial Education and Unemployment reduction among Nigerian Graduates

By

<sup>1</sup>Bako, Yusuf A., <sup>1</sup>Taiwo, Akeem A. & <sup>3</sup>Mohammed, Samuel R.

<sup>1</sup>Department of Business Administration and management, The Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, Ogun State Nigeria.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Accountancy, The Federal Polytechnic Ilaro, Ogun State, Nigeria  
[yusuf.bako@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng](mailto:yusuf.bako@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng)  
+2348033127809.

**Abstract:** *This study examines the role of entrepreneurial education in reduction of unemployment among Nigerian graduates. Convenience sampling technique was adopted to select (141) graduates in Abeokuta South Local Government, Ogun State. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study which metamorphosed into research hypotheses. The hypotheses formulated were tested using correlation and regression analysis. A correlation coefficient shows a positive relationship between creativity and unemployment reduction with the value of 0.862. This suggest that an increase in creativity will reduce unemployment, also correlation coefficient of 0.851 suggest that there is strong positive significant relationship between entrepreneurial skills and unemployment reduction. Based on the findings, the study concluded that creativity and skills acquisition are veritable tools for unemployment reduction in Nigeria. Therefore, the study recommends that curriculums should be reviewed to captured skills acquisitions right from the secondary school, also talent development through creativity should be given priority so that talent can now become a source of employment for self reliance and sustainability.*

**Keyword:** Entrepreneur, Entrepreneurial Education, Reduction, Role and Unemployment

## 1.0 Introduction

In Nigeria today, education and training is beginning to take a new dimension as many people are diving, driving and embracing education in its totality. This singular act of being educated has resulted to massive number of graduates from various universities, polytechnics, colleges of education etc. The perceptions of earning a living with university (tertiary institutions) certificate after graduation has endangered Nigerian system of education and have also generate an increase in the number of unemployed graduates. In fact, unemployment is an epidemic economic issue whose social implications affect almost every country of the world and her citizens either directly or indirectly.

Olubukola (2013) asserted that unemployment is a global phenomenon where eligible workforce of a nation is disengaged in the service of the nation while World Bank (2009) defines unemployment as the share of the labour force that is without work but available for and seeking employment. In order to reduce the rate of unemployment among Nigerian number of graduates roaming about on the street with certificate qualification without having a meaningful source of livelihood, the concept of entrepreneurial education (training) was introduce into tertiary education

in Nigeria. The aim of entrepreneurial education was for knowledge acquisition by students to enable them setting up and floating a business with other skills needed for its survival and also to become successful entrepreneurs. Maina (2013) sees entrepreneurial education as part of the total educational system that involves the acquisition of skills, ideas and management abilities necessary for job creation.

As Emaikwu (2011) succinctly put it that entrepreneurial education focuses on developing understanding and capacity for pursuit of entrepreneurial skills and attributes. It enhances all-round development of body; mind and spirit. Entrepreneurial education involves opportunity recognition, commitment of resources and creation of a business of value to deliver goods and services.

In the same vein, Lekoko, Rankhumise and Ras (2012) posited that entrepreneurial education is aimed at equipping learners to be able to establish their own businesses as soon as they complete their studies. The objectives is promising towards reducing unemployment and boosting the economy of the nation. Although, Uzoagulu (2012) argued that in practice, some universities simply design one or two entrepreneurial courses, taught by some lecturers who have no practical experience of entrepreneurial while students take such courses as a requisite for graduation.

Adeola and Bolarinwa (2010) sees entrepreneurial education as a collection of formalized teaching that informs, trains and educate anyone interested in business creation or small business development while Uzo-Okonkwo (2013) opined that entrepreneurial education is the process of providing individuals with the ability to recognize commercial opportunities and the insight, self-esteem, knowledge and skills to act on them. In diagnosing the importance of promoting entrepreneurial education in tertiary institution, Ademiluyi (2007) affirm that it addresses some socio-psychological problems and delinquency that arise from joblessness among graduates of tertiary institutions. Osalor (2013) opined that entrepreneurial education will lead to opportunities for individuals and collective development of latent potentialities for self-fulfilment and actualization of set goals as entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurial education cannot be undermined. This is because Nigeria educational system that turns out graduates from about 150 Universities and 50 Polytechnics and Monotechnics have not trained the graduates to be self-reliant, but to depend solely on white collar jobs that are rarely available for sustenance. As a result, there are several graduates from Nigerian tertiary institutions today who are not gainfully employed. Maina (2013) observed among Nigerian graduates that apart from the book knowledge that is gained, there are no requisite skills to make them self-dependent. In this paper, entrepreneurial education is define as a type of training (formal or informal) acquired by students which will make them create jobs as entrepreneur rather than job hunters upon graduation. The rate of unemployment among Nigerian graduates is a threat to the nation's economy as tertiary institutions produces graduates yearly without commensurate job opportunities.

Ekpo (2017 succinctly stated that a study carried out by the Federal Ministry of Education from 2005- 2010 showed that seventy one percent (71%) of graduate students from Nigerian Universities and other forms of tertiary institutions are yet to get job. In similar development, Nwachukwu (2012) reported that Economic Survey in 2011 doted unemployment rate in Nigeria at 23.9%. In other words, over 38 million Nigerians are unemployed. Lack of entrepreneurial skills is no doubt a major contributing factor to the problem of unemployment of graduates in Nigeria (Adebisi and Oni, 2012). Again, in spite of federal government efforts to create 2 million jobs every year, most Nigerian university graduates fail to get employed (Babalola, 2007). This is evident as many graduates stay 3-4 or more years after graduation before getting a job or no job at

all. Based on these pathetic situations, it interests the researchers' to investigate the effect of entrepreneurial education, entrepreneur skills, creativity and attitudes as tools for reducing unemployment in Nigeria. Against this backdrop, the study seeks to determine the impact of creativity on unemployment reduction and to identify the extent to which entrepreneurial skills contribute to reduction in unemployment.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 An Overview of the Concept of Employment and Unemployment**

According to National Bureau of Statistics(NBS, 2015), a person is considered employed if he or she is engaged in the production of goods and services, thereby contributing to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in legitimate manner, which is a component of the national account and receives any form or amount of money for that activity. The Bureau goes further to state that for a person to be considered employed, he or she must work full time, i.e. at least, 40 hours, on average, a week.

As cited by Amupitan (2011), unemployment refers to a state where able-bodied, qualified men and women are available for and willing to work but get no job to do. Also cited by Amupitan (2011) that unemployment occurs when people are looking for jobs but cannot find one. In the words of Njoku and Okezie (2011) unemployment in Nigeria is defined as the proportion of the labour force that was available for work but did not work in the week preceding the survey period by, at least, 39 hours. In line with this, the International Labour Organization (ILO) defined the unemployed as numbers of the economically active population who are without work but are available for and seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs and those who have voluntarily left work (Aiyedogbon & Ohwofasa, 2012).

The NBS (2015) defines unemployment as the proportion of those in the labour force (not in the entire economic active population nor the entire Nigerian population) who were actively looking for work but could not find work for at least 20 hours during the reference period to the total currently active (labour force) population. This means that one is unemployed if he or she did absolutely nothing at all or did something but not for up to 20 hours in a week. In an economy, the unemployment rate is the number of persons unemployed expressed as the percentage of the total labour force. The total labour force is the number of people employed plus the number of people unemployed within the ages of 18- 60 years (Idada et al, 2014).

Unemployment occurs when people are without jobs and they have actively sought for jobs within the past four weeks (Okafor, 2011). Unemployment refers to a situation where people who are willing and capable of working are unable to find suitable paid employment (Fajana, 2010).unemployment is a situation in which people who are willing to work at a prevailing wage rate are unable to find jobs. It is one of the macro economic problems which every responsible government is expected to monitor and regulate. The higher the unemployment rate in an economy the higher would be the poverty level and associated challenges. Unemployment is one of the developmental problems that face every developing economy in the 21st century (Patterson, 2006) and Nigeria is not an exception. Its effect is felt more by the youths leading to youth unemployment and restiveness. The nation's unemployment record, especially among youth, is alarming. A National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) report in 2018 shows that, out of the 85million labour force in Nigeria, 34million are unemployed and underemployed youths, with 25million largely uneducated.

## **2.2 The Concept of Entrepreneurship**

Entrepreneurship has been defined by various authors to mean many things since the middle age (Igbo, 2006). The entrepreneur has been seen as an actor, innovator or a developer of technology. However, the summary of what entrepreneurship means will reflect the individual definer's point of view. For Inegbebor (1987), in Akanwa and Akpanabia (2012), entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities, establish and run an Enterprise successfully. It is also the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas and copying them with management and organizational skill in order to combine people, money and resources to meet an identified need and thereby creating wealth.

Shepherd and Douglas, (1997) in Akanwa and Akpanabia, (2012) Observe that entrepreneurship development is the ability to envision and chart a course for a new business venture by combining information from the functional disciplines and from the external environment in the context of the extraordinary uncertainty and ambiguity which faces a new business venture. However, it has to be noted that only business that have been able to adopt and actually practice the principles of creativity and innovation are positively impacting the economy and add value to the life of the people. The only thing that is constant in this world is change. So, if one want to meet his or her steps with the rest of the world then in this scenario it is imperative for him or her to adopt new phenomenon, new methodologies and new technology. In this regard, the phenomenon of innovation and creativity is very important. Nowadays, businesses, entrepreneurs and individuals, are adopting the concepts of innovation and creativity. These concepts of innovation and creativity are becoming the central part of the strategies of the business and individuals (Uru and Yozgat 2009).

## **2.3 Concept of Entrepreneur Skills**

Entrepreneurial skills can encompass a broad range of various skill sets like technical skills, leadership and business management skills and creative thinking. Because entrepreneurial skills can be applied to many different job roles and industries, developing your entrepreneurial skills can mean developing several types of skill sets. For instance, to be a successful business owner, you may need to develop your business management skills. To build and maintain successful project teams you might need to improve your leadership and communication skills.

Developing the following skill sets can also help you develop your entrepreneurial skills: Business management skills, Teamwork and leadership skills, Communication and listening skills, Customer service skills, financial skills, Analytical and problem-solving skills, Critical thinking skills, Strategic thinking and planning skills, Technical skills, Time management and organizational skills, Branding, marketing and networking skills.

## **2.4 Concept of Creativity**

Creativity is the act of turning new and imaginative ideas into reality. Creativity is characterised by the ability to perceive the world in new ways, to find hidden patterns, to make connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena, and to generate solutions. Creativity involves two processes: thinking, then producing.

Creativity begins with a foundation of knowledge, learning a discipline, and mastering a way of thinking. You can learn to be creative by experimenting, exploring, questioning assumptions, using imagination and synthesizing information. Learning to be creative is akin to learning a sport. It requires practice to develop the right muscles and a supportive environment in which to flourish.

## **2.5 Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria: Role of Universities & Polytechnics**

In a patriotic resolve at making the Nigeria's education creative, innovative and meeting the needs of the industries, the National Universities Commission, National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) were mandated by the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) to introduce entrepreneurship education into the curricula of Nigerian tertiary institutions. This became expedient in order to offers a realistic approach to solving the endemic problem of unemployment facing the nation. It has since been made a compulsory course for all undergraduate students in the three levels of tertiary education irrespective of students' areas of specialization (Yahya, 2011).

According to Oyelola (2010) the policy thrust of entrepreneurship education in the polytechnic system is the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills by students, so as to be self-reliant and self-employed after graduation. Complementing the view above, Yahya (2011) asserts that: The overall objective (of entrepreneurship education in the university system) is to continuously foster entrepreneurship culture amongst students and faculty with a view of not only educating them but to also support graduates of the system towards establishing and also maintaining sustainable business ventures, including but not limited to those arising from research.

The role assigned to the universities, polytechnics and colleges of education through their Respective highest supervisory agencies is essentially the tasks of transmitting and implementing government's policy on entrepreneurship education in Nigeria. The expected outcomes from the assigned role include: a) establishing entrepreneurship study in all higher institutions, b) establishing the curriculum for the course,) the development of teachers guide, instructional manual and students' handbook for sale as well as capacity building for at least ten lecturers in each university, d) establishment of entrepreneurship resource and knowledge centers in the NUC, and e) Capacity-building for at least ten teachers in all universities and development of Masters and Ph.D programmes in some selected universities (Yahya, 2011).

It is believed within the policy circles that from 2006 to 2010 (the first three years of establishing entrepreneurship programme in Nigeria) that at least 50,000 graduates would have gone through entrepreneurship education with sufficient entrepreneurial skills. Out of the projected 50,000 trainees, it is presumed that at least 10,000 graduates would be self-employed and self-reliant by establishing their own business ventures.

## **2.6 Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigeria**

The Nigerian economy, historically, has depended significantly on oil revenues. However, in the recent years, the country has been trying to diversify away from dependence on oil by setting an ambitious goal. The country wants to increasingly globalize education through information and communication technology, and entrepreneurship. This is why the former President, Obasanjo, mandated that all students in Nigeria, regardless of their major, will need to study entrepreneurship.

Different meanings are ascribed to entrepreneurship education in different tertiary institutions in the country. Some of these programmes commonly present entrepreneurship education programmes in the context of vocational and technical education rather than developing the spirit of entrepreneurship, which is the stimulation of entrepreneurship activities and performance in various disciplines.

## **2.7 Unemployment in Nigeria**

Unemployment and Poverty remains key developmental challenges in Nigeria over a very long time (Akwara et al, 2013). According to Udu and Agu (2005), unemployment is "a situation in which persons capable and willing to work are unable to find suitable paid employment". According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2007), unemployed workers are those

who are currently not working but are willing and able to work for pay, currently available to work and have actively searched for work. Hornby (2010) defines unemployment as “the facts of a number of people not having a job; the number of people without a job; the state of not having a job”.

According to Chukwubuikem, (2008) and Salami, (2011) despite the abundant human and natural resources notwithstanding, Nigeria is still one of the poorest countries in the world and has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in sub-Saharan Africa, despite of its alleged strong economic growth. Going by the study of unemployment in Nigeria, Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010) have recognized some leading causes of youth unemployment in Nigeria; the first to be identified is the rapidly growing urban labour force arising from rural urban migration. The factor is aggravated and provoked in Nigeria by the lack of infrastructural facilities, which makes the rural life unattractive. Youths move to urban areas with the probability of getting lucrative and productive employment in the industries. In addition, there is the focus of social amenities in the urban centres. This implies that the rural areas are neglected in the allocation of social and economic opportunities.

Another factor is the rapid population growth. Going by Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics of 2012, the total population of citizens in Nigeria was around 166.2 million people, and projections for the future indicate that the population could be over 180 million by the year 2020, given the Annual growth rate of 3.2 percent (National Population Commission and ICF Macro, 2009). With this population, Nigeria is the most populous nation in Africa and the high population growth rate has resulted in the rapid growth of the labour force, which is far exceeding the supply of jobs.

Corruption, which has pervaded the entire social structure of Nigeria, has raided 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 ineffectual and corrupt bureaucrats cum administrators in the public parastatals have discharged these establishments (Okafor, 2011). The ruling (political) class failed since they traded the vision, policy, and strategy, that should be the thrust of every leadership with dealings (contract award and other mundane money- related activities), as each successive government patiently took turns to target on the nation's wealth, by using public power, resources, good will, utilities, instrument of abuse, and personal gains (Okafor, 2008 as cited in Anyadike, Emeh, & Ukah, 2012).

As such, this cripples the economy and intensifies unemployment that generates abject poverty, hunger and frustration which is killing the zeal and means for entrepreneurship development in the Nigerian youths. Adeniyi (2013) stated that statistics have shown that with the current drive, on the average, labour force in Nigeria will be around 65.7 million a year between 2011 and 2020, and around 78.2 million a year between 2021 and 2030, *ceteris paribus* (if there is no war, no natural disaster, no disease outbreak, etc.). This projection may be realistic because it will take at least 20 years before any policy aimed at reducing population can be effective in Nigeria.

Adeniyi (2013) further explain however that, with the present trend, employment will only be, on the average, 55.8 million a year between 2011 and 2020 and 65.7 million a year between 2021 and 2030 in Nigeria. This projection will cause unemployment in Nigeria to be around 9.9 million (15.07% rate) and 12.45 million (15.93% rate) on average between 2011 and 2020, and 2021 and 2030, respectively (Adeniyi 2013).

## **2.8 Human Capital Theory (HCT)**

The human capital theory advocates education as a tool for improving human capital, stimulating labour productivity and boosting the levels of technology across the globe (Robert, 1991). Human capital theorists encourage spending on nation's workforce (people working with public and private sector organisations) because expenditure on training and development is a productive investment like investment on physical assets (Olaniyan & Okemakinde, 2008). Besides, human capital enhancement through quality education is a critical factor that propels economic growth and sustainable development in East Africa, Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan (Ibid).

Schumpeter (1934) views entrepreneurship training as responsible for creative destruction, that is, education act as an impetus for creating new ideas, improved techniques, new technologies and new products. In addition, Van-Den-Berg (2001) establishes a correlation between the level of education and new product development in knowledge-based economies that invested massively in education, technology and related growth elements.

## **2.9 Empirical Review**

Prior studies on entrepreneurial development among scholars presented varied perspectives and findings. Taiwo (2014) carried out an empirical research on impact of entrepreneurship development on job creation in Nigeria. He found out that in any giving economy, entrepreneurship development always give birth to job creation which will force people to do something that will better their lives and the country at large. He evaluated the relationship between job creation and entrepreneurship development in Nigeria. It was clear from his observation that job creation or employment opportunity in an economy can be traceable to entrepreneurship training and development.

Eme (2014) carried out research on unemployment rate in Nigeria: Agenda for Government. He found out that statistically speaking in the last couple of years, Nigeria's economy is one of the fastest-growing in the world while its people are the most impoverished in real terms. Nigeria in recent past experienced an event where millions of people scammed for about 4500 jobs vacancies advertised by the Nigeria Immigration Service leading to the death of about eighteen of them in an unwarranted stampede betray the idiosyncrasy of the Nation's nominal growth without corresponding development. With global unemployment projected to reach over 215 million by 2018, experts fear that Africa, particularly Nigeria's share of the global scourge might increase disproportionately, with attendant unsavoury consequences unless the country immediately adopts pro-active and holistic approach to halt the rising youth unemployment.

Mtormabari (2017) examined the role of entrepreneurial education in the reduction of unemployment among Nigerian Graduates. The work relies mostly on secondary data from scholars/ authors in the field. They concluded that, government and its agencies should deliberately encourage entrepreneurial culture and skill in Nigeria in order to attack and eventually reduce the high level of unemployment situation in the country so that the nation will boost its economic development.

Nurudeen (2020), carried out a research on reducing poverty and unemployment: Entrepreneurship education to the rescue. He said that unemployment in Nigeria is a time bomb waiting to explode if effective interventions are not put in place to mitigate the unsavoury impact of high youth unemployment. His work establishes a link between entrepreneurship and youth unemployment if adequate attentions are focused on the creation of enabling socio-economic and political environment that can galvanize a culture where the youths think job creation away from the mindset of job seekers.

Bandal (2015), carried out empirical study on leveraging the relationship between entrepreneurship and job creation. He found out that individual talent, attitude, skills and knowledge along with several contextual variables such as social capital, access to credit, role of government technology and infrastructure, access to information and access to markets work together to drive entrepreneurial activity.

### 3.0 Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design to examine Entrepreneurial education and reduction of unemployment among Nigerian graduates. The population of the study are the selected graduate that resides at Abeokuta South Local government area of Ogun state. Convenience sampling technique was used to select 150 respondents due to the infinite nature population. The Structured questionnaire was used to collect the data. However, 114 copies of questionnaire were retrieved and usable. The data were analyzed through the use of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), while multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses formulated whether significant relationship exist between entrepreneurial education and unemployment reduction in Nigeria with much attention on Abeokuta, south Local Government Ogun state Nigeria.

### 4.0 Data Analysis

#### Test of Hypotheses

In order to test the relevant hypotheses formulated for the study, the researcher employ, correlation and regression analysis.

#### Hypothesis 1

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between creativity and unemployment reduction

		Creativity	Unemployment
Creativity	Pearson Correlation	1	.862**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	114	114
Unemployment	Pearson Correlation	.862**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	114	114

The results from the above table shows there exist strong negative relationship between creativity and unemployment with correlation coefficient of 0.862 and the p-value which is less than 5% significance level. This indicates that as there is increase in creativity there is reduction in Unemployment rate. Hence, the alternative hypothesis is accepted and we conclude that, there is significant relationship between creativity and unemployment.

#### Hypothesis 2

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between entrepreneurial skills and unemployment reduction

Table 7: Responses on skills **Correlations**

		Unemployment	Skill
Unemployment	Pearson Correlation	1	.851**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	114	114
Skill	Pearson Correlation	.851**	1



Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
N	114	114

Similarly, as presented in table above, there is a very strong negative relationship between unemployment and entrepreneurial skills with correlation coefficient of 0.851 and the p-value < 5% significance level (p-value = 0.000). This is an indication that the test is significant and hence, we accept the alternative hypothesis and conclude that there is significant relationship between entrepreneurial skills and unemployment in Nigeria. This result suggests that as the entrepreneurial skills increase there tends to be reduction in unemployment.

**Table 8: Model Summary for entrepreneurship training and growth of youth business**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.874 <sup>a</sup>	.764	.762	.291

a. Predictors: (Constant), Training May 2021

The result presented in table 8 indicates that there is a strong positive relationship between entrepreneurship training and growth of youth business with about 76.4% growth in youth business can be accounted for by such training.

#### 4.1 Discussion of Findings

The research was carried out among 114 participants of Abeokuta South Local Government with majority of the respondents been male and these participants are mostly middle age people with majority of them been married. In addition, most of the participants have first degree in their respective areas of specializations and majority of them have work experienced that span over five years. These respondents were carefully guided on how to fill the questionnaire and the questionnaires were retrieved from them.

Furthermore, majority of these respondents affirmed that skill acquisition, creativity and training are most important for any youth business to grow and survive in the present Nigeria business environment. It was established that there exist strong positive relationship between creativity and unemployment with correlation coefficient of 0.862 which implies that as creativity increases there tends to be reduction in unemployment. Similar negative relationship was obtained for the relationship between entrepreneurial skill and unemployment with correlation coefficient of 0.851. The direct implication of this result is that as entrepreneurial skill increases, unemployment reduces drastically. Lastly, it was confirmed that about 18.7% growth will be recorded by the youth business with the help of good and adequate training and hence, there is positive influence of training on entrepreneurship.

#### 5.0 Conclusion

Unemployment among Nigerian graduates has weakened the national economy as individuals are unable to contribute to the economy. Nigeria has a history of economic stagnation that has led to decline in white collar jobs. The inclusion of creativity in all disciplines will to a great extent, assist in solving this problems of high unemployment and underemployment. Creation of jobs for self-employment, stimulation of rural, economic and industrial development, provision of job opportunities to rural dwellers and development of indigenous entrepreneurs are benefits of entrepreneurial education to Nigerian graduates.

Lack of entrepreneurial skill was found to be one of the major factors contributing to the high of rate of unemployment among Nigerian graduates. Entrepreneurial basic training in this research has been recognized as a catalyst to speed up the employment opportunities as this will exposed and encouraged graduates to start up businesses and improve business potentials

among graduates. An effective strategy to develop the indigenous private sector and reduce unemployment among Nigerian graduates is through entrepreneurial education.

## 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Our educational curriculums should be reviewed to capture more skills acquisitions right from the secondary school rather than the theory alone .
2. Also talent development through creativity should be given a priority so that their talent can now become the sources of employment for self reliance and sustainability.

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