

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Skill is very important in the life of every human being. The reason why many technicians earn more than some university graduates is because the technicians acquire more practical skills than the theories, unlike the graduates who were fed with theoretical experiences while in the universities. It can take you to places you do not expect you will find yourself. Skill acquisition is the ability to be trained on a particular task or function and become expert in it. It is really unfortunate that there is a huge rate of unemployment in many parts of the world today especially in Nigeria. It is one of the causes of rapid growth in crime in many parts of the world. Today, there are many graduates in the country who are still unemployed. This is as a result of our long system of education that is more of theory and not much practical learning. It is evident that the continent of Africa has the highest rate of unemployed youths. The major cause of the unemployment among these vibrant youths in our society today is mainly due to the lack of skill to back up what they learnt from their institutions of learning. The time when all these graduates were in school, they did not learn at least a single skill like; graphic designing, hair dressing, carpentry, electrical maintenance among others. Assuming they learnt any skill, the rate of unemployment will reduce among them.

One of the major Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which Nigeria aimed to achieve in 2015 was the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger with the target of encouraging the proportion of people who earn less than a dollar a day to engage in skills acquisition. Skills acquisition is described as the tool for eradicating extreme poverty and hunger with the aim of paving way for employment and creating an avenue for jobs and wealth creation that may bring about self-sufficiency and reliance and contributing to the growth of the economy in the country (Isaac, 2011). Gumbari, a member of the House of Representatives expressed his opinion that skills acquisition is the password in fighting for the elimination of hunger and poverty and even reduction or elimination of joblessness and crime rate reduction in the society through effective engagement of youths.

Nigeria is rapidly expanding her roads network system to improve the movement of goods and services. This requires not only expert and dedicated workers, but skilled technicians that will be able to operate and service the equipment used in road construction. Modern industries are being established in all parts of the country and many of these industries require skilled and well-trained workers to ensure that goods manufactured in Nigeria are of good quality as those manufactured in developed and developing nations of the world. People need skills to operate and administered government and industrial operations. The increase in the public and private sectors in Nigeria requires more skilled workers in the areas of office management, accounting, typing and short-hand in order to ensure that accurate records are duly kept and that administrative efficiency is functionally maintained. Roads in Nigeria today, are full of all kinds of vehicles which assist in the economic development of the country by ensuring that goods and services are moved quickly and safely from one part of the country to another. All these vehicles require efficient operatives and skilled technicians that will ensure that their useful life is extended and that they are operated safely.

Skill acquisition is paramount in the education sector because its contribution to the development of the nation's human capital and employment cannot be undermined. Thus an educated man is expected to

produce a useful skill that will be beneficial to everyone in the society. This will as well aid his own development and increase his self esteem in the society. Productive capacity of any nation depends solely on the ability of that nation to recognize the ability of manpower. The development of ideas, science advancement, technological breakthrough, economic development, political stability, etc, is made possible by educational theories and practices. Skill, competencies, knowledge and understanding one acquires will aid the development of the individual and the nation in particular. One of the goals of education is the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as tool for the individual to live and contribute to the development of his society. In Nigeria today, there is a need for skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant. There is also the need for skilled people who can understand and adapt to changes in the increasing complexity of technology. People who can apply scientific knowledge to the improvement and as solution to environmental challenges for the use and conveniences of man are also needed.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The major problem confronting Nigeria Youths today is joblessness. These youths constitute greater fraction of Nigeria's economically active population. According to Awogbenle and Iwuamadi (2010), the statistics from federal bureau of statistics showed that Nigeria has a youth population of 80 million representing 60 percent of the total population of the country. Also, 64 million of them are unemployed, while 1.6 million are underemployed. This implies that a lot of energies that would have been used to generate revenues and improve the economy are being wasted. Youths, like other classes of the population have needs to meet (Nnabuife, 2009), but since 1980's the important roles of the youths have continued to suffer some set back as they can hardly engage themselves in meaningful work (Davies, 2006). The consequence is frustration expressed through various vices that constitute insecurity in the country.

The need for this study was to show different skills acquisitions by the youth can save them unemployment that they found themselves with of government intervention through making loan accessible to them. This study, therefore, sought to provide answers to some of the issues raised and proffer recommendations.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The following are some of the questions which this study intends to answer:

- i) what are the impacts of skill acquisitions on the economy in Nigeria?
- ii) what are the steps taken by the government to encourage skill acquisition among the youths for the development of the Nigerian economy?
- iii) what are the reasons for the encouragement of skill acquisition by the government in Nigeria?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to investigate the impacts of skill acquisitions on the Nigerian economy. However, the specific objectives are:

- i) to survey the impacts of skill acquisitions on the economy in Nigeria
- ii) to evaluate the steps taken by the government to encourage skill acquisition among the youths for the development of the Nigerian economy
- iii) to investigate the reasons for the encouragement of skill acquisition by the government in Nigeria

### **1.5 Research Hypothesis**

The research hypotheses to be tested include:

- i) skill acquisition has no significant contribution to the Nigerian economy

- ii) skill acquisition has significant relationship with the level of education
- iii) there is a significant relationship between unemployment and skill acquisition

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The significance of the study is to benefit the youth in Nigeria by making them to be aware of the importance of skill acquisition in their lives and how it will help them to become self employed and reliant. It will also show the government on how to include skill acquisition program in the curriculum activities of all schools in the country. In addition, the society will benefit immensely from the results of this study since incidences of unactualized potentials and low level of acquisition of technical skills are expected to be reduced.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

This will cover undergraduate, non-graduate and post graduate youths in Nigeria but Lagos state was used as our case study. Therefore, only the undergraduate, non-graduate and post graduate youths in selected local government area in Lagos were being interviewed

### **1.8 Limitation of the study**

The researcher was not faced with many challenges except for the challenge of finance that made researcher to print two hundred questionnaires instead of the proposed three hundred questionnaires.

### **1.9 Definitions of Terms**

The following terms were used in the course of this study:

**Skill acquisition:** This is the ability to be trained on a particular task or function and become expert in it. It is a pity that there is “huge” parading of unemployment in many parts of the world today especially in Nigeria.

**Economic growth:** This refers to as efforts that seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community by creating and/or retaining jobs and supporting or growing incomes and the tax base.

## **SKILL ACQUISITION PROGRAMS AS A TOOL FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH OF NIGERIA**

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