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ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND REDUCTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTHS IN CALABAR METROPOLIS, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between entrepreneurship education and reduction of unemployment among youths in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve this purpose, three forms of skills acquisition (fashion designing, catering and hairdressing/haircut) were considered; and three hypotheses generated to direct the study. A survey research design with a correlational approach was adopted and a sample of three hundred and seventy-six (376) trainee youths were purposively selected for the study from their clusters or centres of skills acquisition numbering 238 in the Metropolis. The questionnaire tagged "Skills Acquisition and Reduction of Unemployment Questionnaire SARUQ" was the main instrument used for data collection and this was triangulated with a structured group interaction by way of observation, discussion and interview. The instrument was subjected to face validation by the experts in measurement and evaluation in the Faculty of Education, University of Calabar. The reliability estimate of SARUQ was established through split-half reliability method to yield an estimate which ranged from 0.76 to 0.82. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis was the statistical analysis technique adopted to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. However, the qualitative data yielded by the observational interview were descriptively treated. The results of the analysis revealed that, fashion designing, catering and hairdressing/haircut skills acquisition significantly relate to reduction of unemployment. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that government should establish more skills acquisition centres to encourage more youths to have relevant skills for job creation. Also, need for proper certification of the programme of skills acquisition for easy trainee identification and pool into various planned openings where they can fit in after training, and greater financial commitment by stakeholders to engage the people meaningfully and productively, are among other recommendations made in order to get this programme to accomplish the purpose of reducing unemployment and poverty among youths for sustainable development.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, unemployment reduction, youths, skills acquisition, Calabar Metropolis, Nigeria.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Education has been described as the bedrock of human understanding and an empowering tool for knowledge, skills and orientation for individuals and national development. It is the greatest agent of change a nation can invest in her human resource, as it determines the success of other strategies geared towards sustainable national development (Biao, 2004). This is why education, as defined by nation's national development and educational system plan, as in NPE (2004) is provided in a formal and non-formal system, each serving a particular class of the society and are both meaningful and effective in bringing about the sustained transformation we need.

Skills acquisition is a vital component of entrepreneurship education which has been identified as a very significant factor in unemployment reduction and poverty alleviation (IBN/World Bank, 2001; Idika & Dada, 2015). It seeks to provide participants with the capability and motivation to encourage entrepreneurial success in a variety of settings. The Nigerian government acknowledges the utility value of this type of education by putting in place some active labour policies to promote wage employment through subsidized placement, employment assistance and vocational trainings, as well as other measures to encourage self-employment including training and facilitating access to credits/grants and other business requirements.

The entrepreneurship education was conceived to be a means of realizing the national goal of acquiring appropriate skills for the development of mental, physical and social abilities which an individual needs to live and contribute maximally to the development of the society. The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (2004) emerged with a document that clearly explained its support for this laudable objective. Hence, the NEEDs' target of self-reliance and development through diversification, wealth creation, poverty reduction and value re-orientation can only be reached and sustained through an education system which can efficiently impact the relevant skills, knowledge, orientation, abilities, attitudes and values.

In the event of the global economic downturn, many nations of the world are driven towards deepening entrepreneurship skills in the citizens who are believably seen as the vehicle for achieving the needed self-dependence, poverty reduction and economic empowerment. In Nigeria, the situation is not different. The few government jobs for potential graduates and the large number of unemployed youths have become a strong force acting on government to get all citizens economically empowered through the programmes of entrepreneurship. Government has also found backing for this action in the World Declaration on Education for All which maintains that every person shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic needs. The realities of the global economy which have translated to our national economy and felt strongly in our communities today therefore, call for entrepreneurship training to be intensified by all stakeholders of education, and seen as a realistic way to proffering solutions to the alarming challenges of unemployment and the hopelessness that accompany the social ill.

Entrepreneurship education has been variously defined by different authors. Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education (2004) defines it as education that seeks to prepare people especially the youths to be responsible enterprising individuals, who become entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial thinkers and contribute to economic development and sustained communities. According to Jalbert (2000), the term entrepreneur applies to someone who creates value by offering a product or service. Entrepreneurs often have a strong belief about a market opportunity and accordingly organize their resources effectively to accomplish outcomes that change existing interactions. Some observers see them as being willing to accept a high level of personal professional or financial risk to pursue that opportunity. However, the emerging evidence indicates that entrepreneurs are more passionate experts than gamblers.

It is in consideration of the importance of entrepreneurship education in encouraging skills

acquisition in human capacity building, and particularly as a potent tool for the reduction of chronic unemployment and poverty that the National Universities Commission, NUC (2004) recommended that Nigerian universities, polytechnics and colleges of education integrate skills acquisition through this education as an integral part of the curriculum. It has since been made a compulsory course for all undergraduates in different areas of specialization. The NUC states that the overall objective of entrepreneurship education is to continuously foster the culture of entrepreneurship among students and faculty with a view of not only educating them but to also support graduates of the system towards establishing and maintaining sustainable business venture, including but not limited to those arising from research. The skills enhanced or acquired through entrepreneurship education will empower individuals to engage in vocations with the ability to lead new creation, exhibit creative mind, be self-reliant, innovative, take risk, initiatives, knowledgeable, resourceful, people oriented; others include team spirit, financial control, self-confidence, versatility, originality, dynamic thinking, optimum disposition, flexibility in decision, energy for hard work, responses to suggestions and criticisms, driven by need achievement, profit oriented, persistent and preserving, adjustment to challenges and future looking for the purpose of leading self-reliant lives (Anho, 2011; Idika, Ovat, Achigbe & Udumo, 2015).

In furtherance of encouraging self-employment, government has also established the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) as an employment agency to develop four major programmes for skills acquisition namely; vocational skills development, small-scale enterprises, rural employment promoters and special public works. Youths exposed to these entrepreneurial programmes are therefore, expected to acquire relevant skills for setting up their own businesses and effectively managing them. Like in the United States where government sees the entrepreneur as one who starts his own new and small business, and therefore, sets relevant entrepreneurship courses in popular business schools, entrepreneurial

courses are now run in some business departments of our institutions in addition to those designed for general attendance of students. This is to enable would-be entrepreneurs to function in their roles as agents of economic revolution and source of rural and urban transformation and wealth creation (Izedonmi, 2007). There have also been notable encouragements in the area of collaborations among individuals, governmental and nongovernmental organizations; it is for this reason that the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) and others have gone into partnership with many small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) for more empowerment of individuals. The Cross River State Government's recent investment in Garment Factory in Calabar was an effort to tackle the issue of poverty through skills and employment creation for citizens of the state. In most cases, government carries out empowerment programme through encouragement of NGOs, the reason for the existence of numerous NGOs in CRS.

At the levels of Federal and International Governments, jingles are being made on entrepreneurship education to promote self-reliance. To support this, the Federal Government of Nigeria through various youth development initiatives (such as N-Power Initiative (NPI), Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and NEEDS earlier talked about) is making concerted efforts to ensure that the youths lead productive and self-reliant lives in order to counter the effects of the evidently shrinking labour market system.

Skills acquisitions are associated with programmes which may need to combat illiteracy such as community development, agricultural extension, family planning, vocational training, small scale industries, industrial training and human resource management. Non-formal education has through its various skills development involvement been recognized largely as a primary tool for salvaging people from poverty especially in the settings. Through vocational and technical skills development, beneficiaries get empowered and become self-

employed, thereby reducing unemployment and improving their wellbeing. To a large extent therefore, it is a catalyst for reduction of unemployment in developing nations and in Nigeria.

Fashion designing has been identified as one of the major skill acquisition programmes among unemployed youths. Apart from individuals getting involved to acquire the knowledge, most skill acquisition programmes by the government and non-governmental agencies include sewing. It is the acquired skill which lives with the individual unto ages and can generate income when applied into commercial use (Osaje, 2004). It is so significant that it requires little or no level of formal education for an individual to be trained, or influence his or her ability to understand and acquire the skill. Thus, Osaje added that learning to sew bridges the gap between the literate and illiterate in terms of qualification to be trained.

A study conducted by Nsifon (2004) in Akwa Ibom State to examine poverty alleviation strategies in Eket local government area, shows that sewing was one of the identified programmes embarked upon by many and which policy planners involved in the project planning identified as a major form of human capital development. They further argued that it is less capital intensive in terms of facilities needed for the training and again, for the individual trained, with an ability to buy a sewing machine and an iron, such can embark on self-fending, thus, reducing dependence and poverty. In like vein, Skapa (2005) opined that the aim of sewing project is to reduce unemployment and to combat poverty among any group of persons.

In terms of catering skills acquisition and reduction of unemployment, Sokari (2004) perceived that the main aim of catering institution is to provide diplomats with sound theoretical and practical knowledge to carry out a number of activities in the field of catering and hotel management; to train and lead students to the acquisition of effective technical skills and work competence as well as to equip students with skills for employment in diverse fields of human endeavours including being self-employed after graduation; to provide a technical level manpower that can effectively perform a range of functions in the field of catering, and hotel

management. The essence of acquiring entrepreneurial skills is to engage people meaningfully and enable them make a living out of the work they do. Idemudia, a onetime anchor of a Sunday Programme called "Hotel De-Jordan" which ran on Bendel Television in the 1990s often said that "it is the work you learn that will feed you in your lifetime". Similarly, the concept of human capital suggests that education and training raise the productivity of workers, and increase their lifetime earning capacity; the benefit such investment produces touches not only the individual but also the society at large (Ihimekpen, 2012). In the same vein, Osaje (2004) perceives that the main aim of cooking and baking project/course is to train unemployed people in bread baking and cookery skills thus, contributing towards job creation and poverty alleviation giving way to a better quality of life.

Education can be considered as the bane of success in any form of business. When education is particularly entrepreneurial with its characteristic skills and innovative approach, it tends to situate citizens in the context of needs of the society. In a bid to satisfy needs, many people, educated or not in our communities today, have come to embrace one skill training or the other. Nsifon (2004) noted that for success in any trade particularly catering, the entrepreneur must be motivated with great recipes and cookery skills and must exhibit lots of energy and enthusiasm for both cooking or baking and managing the business.

The impact of this skill on individual empowerment and reduction of unemployment cannot be undermined. Apart from setting up personal eateries or restaurants to provide services and generate income, caterers are among the first set of relevant employees in Hotels, Government Houses and Institutions. Whatever the nature of their job, Nsifon argued that, workers eat food as it is a basic source of energy to perform organizational tasks. Therefore, venturing into this trade would be financially rewarding for the entrepreneur or youth. There could be no better way to describe the importance of skill acquisition in reducing poverty than borrowing the words of Ering (2004:56), "...reduction of unemployment is best achieved when individuals' skills are improved, capacities are improved such that they assume the position

of independence to generate income and further accumulate savings”.

The above position agrees with the position of Ravallion and Bidani (1994) that poverty is the lack of command over basic consumption, and therefore, one with catering skills could provide his or her basic needs for food, clothing and shelter and possibly attain minimum standard of living.

Hairdressing is another major skill that has transformed many, especially the female class from poverty to wealth. The men are not left out; theirs is popularly haircuts otherwise known as barbing saloon. Acquisition of these skills could become viable instrument of human empowerment and reduction of unemployment. Nussbaum (2000) opines that skill development creates reduction of unemployment through income generating projects like hairdressing and baking. Nsifon (2004) also identified CAFDA, an NGO that showed interest in youth empowerment, training them not only on acquiring various skills including braiding and hairdressing but encouraged them to take the lead in empowering themselves to be productively independent, and seek effective ways of building up clientele and provide credits as start-up capital to members. This notwithstanding stakeholders need to put in place a system of financial assistance for any individual in an organized training institution who successfully completes training and is perceived to have the potential to grow in it. It is possible that many youths will leverage on this magnanimity and pursue self-employment.

However, a major challenge facing the nation today remains getting the youths to be gainfully employed. Unemployment can generate poverty, youth restiveness, violence, suicide, etc. During the recent amnesty policy of the Federal Government, it was revealed that many of the youths do not have any skill needed to be engaged in employment because most of them did not go to school while others had dropped out of school. This is an indicator to the common problem of unemployment among youths in Nigeria particularly in Calabar.

To reduce poverty among most illiterate youths, the need to intensify non-formal education by the various agents becomes paramount to equip them with skills that would

make them employable or self-reliant. The drive for skills acquisition among Nigerians particularly in the cities has observably become fierce especially in the face of the prevailing economic situation with its damaging consequence of downsizing in most sectors and subsectors of the economy. Meeting human needs in the cities is obviously becoming difficult. One would expect that the increasing wave of skills sponsorship and learning activities ongoing at both individuals', organizations' and governments' levels will help to reduce the level of unemployment and poverty among citizens of this country. It is in the light of these that this study is embarked upon to ascertain the extent to which the existing skills acquisitions in Calabar, have reduced the level of poverty among youths in the study area.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between entrepreneurship education and reduction of unemployment among youths in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the relationship between fashion designing skill acquisition, catering skill acquisition and hairdressing/hair cut skill acquisition each, and reduction of unemployment among youths in Calabar Metropolis.

Research questions: the following research questions were raised to guide the study

1. How does fashion designing skill acquisition relate with the reduction of unemployment?
2. To what extent does catering skill acquisition relate with the reduction of unemployment?
3. How does hairdressing/haircut skill acquisition relate with the reduction of unemployment?

Hypotheses for the study

1. There is no significant relationship between fashion designing skill acquisition and reduction of unemployment
2. There is no significant relationship between catering skill acquisition and reduction of unemployment
3. There is no significant relationship between hairdressing/haircut skill acquisition and reduction of unemployment.

2.0 Research and Methods

This study was carried out in Calabar Metropolis of Cross River State, Nigeria, made up of Calabar Municipality and Calabar South Local Government Area. It has a landmass of 141.355km². It is located between latitude 8° 25' East and 8° 45' West and on longitude 5° 06' N and 8° 06' S. It is bounded in the North by Odukpani Local Government Area, East by Kwa River and Akpabuyo, West by Calabar River and Odukpani and in the South by Calabar River and Great Kwa River.

The area is populated by two major indigenous communities namely, the Efik and the Efut. There exists also some Quas and other non-indigenous inhabitants. The major occupation of the people ranges from fishing, farming, trading, craft works, civil to public service. Of recent many skills acquisition centers such as baking, photography, computing, tie and dye, fashion designing, bead making, hat making, hairdressing and barbing, soap, detergent and perfume making among many others have been found to be concentrated in the metropolis hence, the choice of this study area.

The people are known for their rich cultural heritage, hospitality, rich food and colourful attires. Various institutions of learning are cited in Calabar Metropolis including University of Calabar, Cross River University of Technology, School of Health Technology, public and private schools, large and small scale enterprises, commercial and other banks, markets and a lot more. Calabar Metropolis has of recent become a tourist centre and this comes to its peak during their year-end carnival displays. This coupled with their rich natural resources and appropriate skills could boost investment potentials and reduce poverty in the state.

The choice of the variables (Fashion designing, hairdressing/haircut and catering) of this study was informed by both literature and personal observations of the researchers about government programmes on youth and women development in the area of skills acquisition particularly in Cross River State. The researchers found that these particular ventures are more attractive and common than other skills. The attraction is to both gender, educated or non-educated and easily accessible in terms of

materials and teachers/facilitators to help establish shops. Also, the start-up capital is affordable and the need for the skills to succeed in these vocations appears to be fundamental not only to males and females but also basic to all classes of people. From literature, so much has been studied and documented as observed by the present and other researchers on soft skills such as creativity, innovation, teamwork, interpersonal or relational skills (Obanya, 2012; Idika, et al, 2015) but not much has been discovered on these three basic variables in relation to poverty reduction; the three of which should constitute the foundation need of humans. It is believed that investigation carried out in this area will be an eye opener to all stakeholders and help to create further awareness to all seeking employment, the underemployed and the large number of idle and restive youths who may seize the empowerment opportunity created by the enlightened stakeholders to transform their lives and that of the society.

The study adopted a survey design with a correlational approach. The population of the study consisted of all the youths undergoing skills acquisition programme in registered centres belonging to government and nongovernmental agencies as well as individually sponsored centres numbering 238 in Calabar Metropolis. Cluster and purposive sampling techniques were used to draw a sample of 376 youth trainees (171 male and 205 female) from the population. Different categories of persons were met at the skills acquisition centres and the difficulty of randomization in the centres made urgent the use of purposive sampling to draw from the clusters.

A 21-item questionnaire tagged "Skills Acquisition and Reduction of Unemployment Questionnaire" (SARUQ) was the main instrument used for data collection. The SARUQ was triangulated with a structured group interaction by way of observation, discussion and interview by the researchers and involving about 200 respondents drawn randomly from the sample. Four (4) items were also selected from the 18 items that formed the skills acquisition part of the questionnaire; these were items shared by over 50% of the respondents which were observably modified and used for the discussion interview with the respondents by the researchers. Responses of the interviewees were

grouped into two categories 'yes' for those who responded positively and 'no' for those participants who responded negatively on issues of skills acquisition.

The collection of data was done through the help of the heads of the centres to enhance cooperation and full compliance by the trainee respondents with respect to paying full attendance to the instrument for data analysis. The instruments used for data collection were face validated and this was done by using experts in Research, Measurement and Evaluation Unit of Faculty of Education, University of Calabar. The SARUQ was developed by the researchers. The instrument has two sections; section A sought information about respondents' background while section B comprised of 3 sub-sections on skills acquisition which contained 18 items. The response format adopted for the B section of SARUQ was the Likert type scale with four options ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree". This instrument was trial tested on 50 students drawn from the

population area but different from the sample. Split-half method of reliability was used to determine the reliability of the instruments' sub-sections. The reliability coefficients after correction with Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula were 0.76, 0.78 and 0.82 which were high enough to qualify SARUQ for use in the study.

The questionnaire was administered personally by the researchers with the support of four (4) research assistants who were Postgraduate Research/Statistics students, already familiar with the process of carrying out research. The youth trainees' responses on the items were coded using the SPSS software which was also used for analyzing the data. The statistical analyses followed both descriptive and inferential and the procedures used included frequency counts, percentages, mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis. Statistical decisions on the 3 hypotheses were based on .05 level of significance.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the interview are presented

Table1: Result of Interview

S/No	Structured items	No. of respondents with positive response 'Yes'	No. of respondents with negative response 'No'
1	Can you say you can now show some kind of self-confidence in what you are doing now? That is, can you now do some things boldly which you were not able to do before you took up this training?	37 (74%)	13 (26%)
2	Can you now do any of these: bake cake, make dress and or cut hair on your own without paying anybody since you started this training?	40 (80%)	10 (20%)
3	Can you say that the opportunity this training has provided can help you become self-employed?	36 (72%)	14 (28%)
4	Do you still need government to provide you with a job after you have been trained to start your own business?	22 (44%)	28 (56%)

The result in the Table 1 above reveals the responses of the participants of the study. The result showed that for question 1 which was based on the experience and confidence gained by trainees since they took up the training option, 37 respondents representing 74% responded positively while 13 respondents representing 26% responded negatively. For question 2, which was on benefit derived since they started the training, 40 respondents (80%) responded positively while 10 respondents representing 20% responded negatively. For question 3, which was on whether the training provided can help them get employed, 36 respondents (72%) said 'Yes' while 14 respondents (28%) said 'No'. For item 4 which was on whether they need government paid jobs, 22 respondents (44%) said 'Yes' while 28 respondents (56%) said 'No'.

On a general assessment, responses of the trainees showed that entrepreneurship education through the acquisition of various skills have helped in unemployment reduction.

Hypothesis one

There is no significant relationship between fashion designing skills acquisition and reduction of unemployment. The independent variable in this hypothesis is fashion designing skills acquisition while the dependent variable is reduction of unemployment. To test this hypothesis, the respondents' responses from the questionnaire item measuring fashion designing skills acquisition was correlated with that of reduction of unemployment using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between fashion designing skills acquisition and reduction of unemployment (N=376)

Variable	X	SD	r-value
Fashion designing skills acquisition	19.99	2.25	0.27
Reduction of unemployment	21.23	1.85	

* Significant at .05, critical r = .062, df = 374

The result of the analysis as presented in Table 2 revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.27 is higher than the critical r-value of .062 at .05 level of significance with 374 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between fashion designing skills acquisition and reduction of unemployment was rejected. This result implies that, Fashion designing skills acquisition has a significant positive relationship with the reduction of unemployment. The positive r implies that the more the acquisition of the fashion designing skills tends to be, the higher the reduction of unemployment. On the other hand, the less they acquisition of the skills, the lower the reduction of unemployment. This in essence could mean that acquisition and effectively utilizing this skill could help to reduce

unemployment and poverty in Calabar Metropolis.

The finding of this hypothesis is in line with the view of Osaje (2004) who opined that skill acquired is what lives with a man for meaningful livelihood. This observation is further confirmed by the testimonies the interviewees shared with the researchers on the benefits so far derived from undergoing training in the various vocations. They were full of expectations for a better future of self-reliance; this could be easily observed from the manifest high self-esteem and self-efficacy. Examination of the responses from the structured interview as revealed from the question that addressed their confidence in handling tasks which they were not able to do boldly before taking up the training, 74%

answered in the affirmative that manifested high self-esteem and high hope of a brighter future of employment and sustainability. In fact, some of them expressed high optimism to create a better world of the little they are exposed to now, though many of them asked that they needed financial assistance immediately in order to set up their shops.

Hypothesis two

There is no significant relationship between catering skills acquisition and reduction of

unemployment. The independent variable in this hypothesis is catering skills acquisition while the dependent variable is reduction of unemployment. To test this hypothesis, the respondents' responses from the questionnaire item measuring catering skills acquisition was correlated with that of reduction of unemployment using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between catering skills acquisition and reduction of unemployment (N=376)

Variables	\bar{X}	SD	r-value
catering skills acquisition	20.47	2.19	0.62*
Reduction of unemployment	21.23	1.85	

* Significant at .05, critical r = .062, df = 374

The result of the analysis as presented in Table 3 revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.62 is higher than the critical r-value of .062 at .05 level of significance with 374 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant positive relationship between catering skills acquisition and reduction of unemployment was rejected. This result implied that, catering skills acquisition has a significant relationship with reduction of unemployment. The positive r implies that the more the acquisition of the catering skills tends to be, the higher the reduction of unemployment. On the other hand, the less they acquire the skills, the lower the rate of unemployment reduction among youths.

This implies that the more the youths strive to acquire this skill whether in structured or informal settings, the more they become productively self-reliant and the better their quality of life. This is the basis of economic development; it ought to manifest in increased standard of living for the citizens. The finding of this hypothesis is in agreement with the view of Sokari (2004) that skills in catering could find one employment in the field of

catering and hotel management. This result further agrees with Ihimekpen, (2012) in the observation that investment in education and training raises the productivity of workers, and increases their lifetime earning capacity. Therefore, trainings in these areas could produce benefits both to the individual and the society at large.

The finding is also supported by the enthusiasm expressed by the interviewees about their future empowerment in these vocations as they would be able to access employment to cater for their needs and also be in a position to contribute to job creation and national development. This further confirms the response to the question on "can you say that the training provided you here can help you become self-employed?" As high as 72 percent of the respondents answered in the affirmative. This further goes to support the enthusiasm expressed by most of the interviewees of a brighter future. In fact, one of the interviewees expressed joy for the timely intervention of the opportunity to acquire this skill for the present fruitful livelihood and interaction with other people enjoyed; that before now, he had contemplated suicide due to lack and inability to

help himself.

Hypothesis three

There is no significant relationship between hairdressing/haircut skills acquisition and reduction of unemployment. The independent variable in this hypothesis is hairdressing/haircut skills acquisition while the dependent variable is

reduction of unemployment. To test this hypothesis, the respondents' responses from the questionnaire item measuring hairdressing/haircut skills acquisition was correlated with the reduction of unemployment using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4: Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between hairdressing/haircut skills acquisition and reduction of unemployment (N=376)

Variable		X	SD	r-value
Hairdressing/haircut skills acquisition	skills	21.53	1.58	0.15*
Reduction of unemployment		21.23	1.85	

* Significant at .05, critical r = .062, df = 374

The result of the analysis as presented in Table 4 revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.15 is higher than the critical r-value of .062 at .05 level of significance with 374 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between hairdressing/haircut skills acquisition and reduction of unemployment was rejected. This result implies that, hairdressing/haircut skills acquisition has a significant positive relationship with reduction of unemployment. The positive r implies that the more the acquisition of the hairdressing/haircut skills, the higher the reduction of unemployment. On the other hand, the less the acquisition, the lower the reduction of unemployment.

The finding of this hypothesis is in agreement with Nussbaum (2000) and Nsifon (2004) who opined that skill development for the unemployed empowers them to create income through income generating projects like hairdressing and baking. This further implies that enhancement in efforts that entail job creation and improve quality of the life of the average Nigerian at this time of economic recession can be achieved

through more investment in education and training; returns on such investment come by way of a skilled work force that will enable global competitiveness, economic growth, more established and better career paths, increased earning and further improved quality of life (Ihimekpen, 2012). From the findings of the interview with respondents, on the question "Do you still need government provision of job after this training?" As high as 44 percent answered in the affirmative though a relatively higher percentage of about 56 percent answered in the negative. The high positive response still shows the extent to which our youths have been tied mentally to white collar jobs. This further supports the claims of Nussbaum (2000) and Nsifon which perhaps may have directed the suggestion by Ihimekpen (2012) that a nation that trains its manpower obviously must reap enhanced labour efficiency. This is also in addition to having a potential and able workforce in the like of the trainees who have acquired vocational/enlightenment skills for job creation, poverty reduction and sustainable development.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that fashion designing skills acquisition, catering skills acquisition and hairdressing/haircut skills acquisition each has a significant relationship with reduction of unemployment. The interview results have no doubt exposed a more enthusiastic state of our youth skills trainees in Calabar Metropolis. On the basis of this conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Government and other agencies should establish more skills acquisition centres to encourage more youths to have relevant skills for job creation.
- ii. More diversification of skill training especially into areas of more basic needs, which are yet to receive much attention. For instance adequate training should be focused on fishing, hunting, veterinary and science (animal care and rearing)
- iii. Catering and Fashion designing businesses are very central and expedient for acquisition of skills, abilities, values, attitudes and competencies essential for purposes of improving employment situation and therefore, should receive more encouragement among the youths.
- iv. To get maximum benefit of entrepreneurship education to reduce unemployment and poverty, well- time modern courses linked to both local and global demand should be taught at all levels in tertiary institutions.
- vi. Need for more linkages and collaborations/partnership among individuals, governmental and nongovernmental organizations for enhancement in skills acquisition programmes.

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