

## The Role of Visual Art in Melting Down Youths' Unemployment

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### Abstract

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For any society to have any meaningful development, its youths had to be adequately planned for. Thus, there is the need for holistic empowerment program for its teeming youths. The wellbeing of its youth can therefore run into crisis if their creative and skills are not properly utilised. This is what Visual Art sets to achieve. Visual Arts can lead to poverty reduction if properly applied due to its creative and skill related nature. Hence, youths trained in the field of study can earn livelihoods, contribute to and benefit from the economic growth and development. Since youths form the most important segment of the populace by virtue of their size. It is obvious that youths are the future leaders. This paper x-rays the benefits of visual Arts as a strategic tool for youth unemployment reduction thereby ensuring total economic development in Nigeria. It also shows the importance of visual Arts as a dependable means of reducing poverty if properly applied. In other words, if Visual Arts is properly harnessed, due to its creative and skill related nature, a total reduction and elimination of unemployment amongst Nigerian youths is sure the paper also explained that graduates of Visual Arts can earn livelihoods, live an independent life, and above all be employers of labour.

**Keywords:** *Role, Visual Art, Melting down, Youths' Unemployment*

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### **Background to the Study**

Nigeria is endowed with abundant resources both human and material. It is unfortunate that these resources have not been adequately utilised to bring about maximum economic benefits. Nigeria has therefore been bedeviled with unemployment and poverty. Economic development which is expected to be a solution to the problems of youth unemployment with quality certificates in our country. Somavia (2004) believed that that majority of unemployed youths roaming the street looking for jobs in Nigeria are school leavers.

According to Miller (2005), this means that unemployment among youths encourages poverty facing Nigeria. Hence, to overcome this, the use of Visual Arts is necessary. It is evidently clear that youth unemployment has encouraged gangsterism. Many youths now engage in criminal enterprises, which in term encourage violence, armed robbery, drug trafficking, illegal fuel sale, oil pipeline vandalization and illegal importation of arms. Okoro (1993) opined that individuals who are not able to secure legitimate employment set to get their own share of the nation's wealth through illegal and criminal means. He concluded that the level of employment opportunities in a given country is directly proportional to the level of economic development. Since the government cannot handle the unemployment and poverty problems facing Nigeria presently, a more sure way to solving these problems is through introduction of Visual Arts. Visual Arts encouraging youth empowerment through productive utilization of creative skills.

### **Visual Arts as a Vehicle of Economic Development**

Visual Arts as a skilled vocation have great potentials in the economic development of Nigeria empowerment of the youths. For all the efforts on economic empowerment and poverty reduction in Nigeria to be effective, it must be directed towards skilled or specialized subjects. This will make them creative and direct their thoughts towards self- dependent. It is necessary to begin to develop each other by studying vocational education courses such as visual Arts.

Okolie and Nwuzo (2013), observed that youth empowerment means developing competences needed in becoming successful contributing members of the communities. Empowerment which is Visual Arts stand for one of the most effective strategies for providing youth with opportunities to develop saleable skills. This in turn will not only be for the employment but also to bring about the much industrial and technical developments in Nigeria. According to Fajimi (2005), Nigerian youths today are unemployed. This probably could be that majority possess no saleable skills due to lack of proper guidance and counseling on the right form of career choice to make. Hence of these unemployed youths are encouraged to pass through visual Arts, probably things will become better for the nation.

Visual Arts could be rightly regarded as education for work empowerment which brings economic growth and national development. In acquiring marketable skills, the individual discovers what he needed to know, what he needs to be able to do and how well he must be able to do it. Training in the visual Arts empowers individuals with skills and develop eventually constructive mental.

Visual art is the answer to empower teaming youths that roam about without doing any meaningful work in the society. From the above analysis and explanations, one can deduce that visual Arts can achieve following benefits:

1. Develop their skill in the use of materials through experimentation, manipulation and practice.
2. Art is a way to become flexible and confident person through the presentation of ideas in visual language.
3. Assist individuals to clarify and fix ideas in the mind through visual reiteration, strengthening what has been learnt about something.
4. Visual Arts that can provide opportunities for youth unemployment reduction and improve economic and development in Nigeria are as follows:

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Using the explanation above, Visual Arts could be used as a strategic instrument for poverty reduction in Nigeria, a strategic tool for economic development. It also noted that if visual Arts is given the attention it deserves. Youths in Nigeria (graduates) will become self-employed, employers of labour, capable of contributing to the economic growth and development of a country like Nigeria. It is therefore that the subject be introduced in primary and secondary schools. Since any child development cannot be overlooked, parents, teachers and educational planners should be well informed as stake holders. This understanding and knowledge will create awareness that Visual Arts is for failures and a dumping ground for the never do well. Stakeholders in educational sector should take advantages of abundant resourcefulness of visual art education if they want youth unemployment to be reduced and as well improve economic growth and development in Nigeria.

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