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EDITORIAL DESK

The Journal of Contemporary Issues in Nigerian Economy stands as a beacon of scholarly excellence, drawing upon a diverse spectrum of researchers hailing from the expansive West African region and beyond. This volume showcases 14 meticulously researched articles curated from contributors in Nigeria and the United States of America. The genesis of these scholarly endives can be traced back to the auspicious conference convened at the Lagos State University Makanjuola Lecture Hall, held in December, 2023.

These articles, characterized by their depth and precision, underwent rigorous scrutiny during the conference, with over 90 participants actively engaging in critique. Subsequent to this extensive quality assurance regimen and plagiarism checks, only 14 articles successfully met the standards set forth by the esteemed guild of the editorial team, in strict adherence to international best practices.

It is with great pleasure that the Board of Editors announces the second edition of the publication schedule of the journal. Our heartfelt congratulations extend to the authors whose papers demonstrated exceptional merit and successfully navigated the rigorous selection criteria. To future researchers, we extend our encouragement to strive for greater heights in their scholarly pursuits.

The Board of Editors appreciates the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Ibiyemi Ibilola Olatunji Bello, mni NPOM for providing the enabling environment for the conference and her directives to the editorial team for strong quality assurance measures. We believe in your leadership and concerted efforts at ensuring high standards for the journal publication.

Prof. M. O. B. Mohammed, FNAEAP
Editor in Chief

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THE LEEWAY OUT OF MODERN DAY SLAVERY: ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS AND STUDENT SELF-RELIANCE PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study explores the role of entrepreneurship skills and youths self-reliance programmes in combating modern day slavery in Nigeria. While the concept of modern day slavery is not new, current estimates suggest that Nigeria might be the destination for a large portion of the world's modern day slaves. The study focused on the dynamics of entrepreneurship and youth's self-reliance in Nigeria, and how these elements may offer potential solutions to the issue of modern day slavery in the Nigeria. In particular, the current status of entrepreneurship skills and self-reliance programmes in Nigeria bedeviled with poor implementation of youths entrepreneurship skill acquisition programmes and policies initiated to curb human trafficking, force labour, drug abuse, molestation and exploitation which manifested to modern day slavery in Nigeria. The current status of entrepreneurship skill, student self-reliance programmes in Nigeria, and the potential problems that may discourage the implementation of this initiatives in the fight against modern day slavery. Reviewing the literature, we may conclude that entrepreneurship skills and student self-reliance programmes influence modern day slavery in Nigeria, even though other factors may also be at play. The study concluded that the nature of modern-day slavery demands innovative and multifaceted approaches to eradicate the global scourge. Therefore, the study recommended amongst others that the current state of modern day slavery in Nigeria required government intervention toward improving entrepreneurship skills and fund student self-reliance programmes in Nigeria.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Leeway, Programmes, Self-Reliance and Skill

Introduction

Entrepreneurship is perceived differently by various authorities and experts based on their perspectives and interests. Entrepreneurship is the process in which individuals or a group employs organised effort to pursue possibilities by creating value and growing via invention and originality, regardless of available resources (Coulter, 2006). Agbiaonu (2008) agrees that entrepreneurship is a process focused on generating income to foster growth and development in the environment. To do this, entrepreneurship must transform abstract ideas into tangible realities. This technique requires components of uniqueness, creativity, and innovation. Undergraduate students may not fully reach these goals without thorough instruction and learning in this area. Novel educational approaches will necessitate innovative teaching resources. These need to be linked with innovative methods of assessment that will not only enhance powers of memory but also powers of comprehension, abilities for practical work, and creativity, which are the key components of self-reliance. Developing entrepreneurial skills and initiatives should become important issues of university education in order to enhance the employability of graduates, who will increasingly be called upon to become job creators. Universities are anticipated to provide students with the chance to develop their abilities while instilling a sense of social responsibility. This education aims to prepare students to actively engage in democratic society and advocate for changes that promote fairness and justice. Entrepreneurship has become increasingly significant due to its impact on societal and socioeconomic advancement. Economically, entrepreneurship revitalises and serves the purpose of offering new ways of

creating job prospects for young people and the population at large through the establishment of small and medium-scale firms. Andzayi and Ikwen published a paper in 2014. Entrepreneurship empowers citizens and transforms thinking (United Nations 2010). The notion of self-reliance rests on communal and individual feelings or the need for self-preservation through the indebted use of existing resources to meet a person and a group of needs (Ogundowole in Nwangwu, 2006).

Most universities in Nigeria have integrated entrepreneurial education into their curricula. It is a full-time diploma degree at some universities and a requirement for all students. However, entrepreneurship, with its emphasis on innovation, ingenuity, and autonomy, has the ability to not only generate economic opportunity but also empower individuals to resist exploitation. Furthermore, student self-reliance programmes, frequently incorporated in educational institutions, strive to provide young people with the skills and mindset necessary to navigate life freely. By addressing economic weaknesses and encouraging self-sufficiency, this programme may serve as a proactive approach to mitigating the conditions that lead to exploitation. More so, modern-day slavery, as defined by human trafficking, forced labour, and other types of exploitation, is a persistent and intensely ingrained global challenge. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that approximately 40 million people are victims of modern slavery, with women and children disproportionately affected. Despite significant international efforts to tackle this issue, the intricacy of its core causes needs innovative and diversified remedies. One significant element contributing to modern-day slavery is the lack of financial empowerment and self-sufficiency among individuals and the community. Many people find themselves exploited owing to inadequate access to education, joblessness, and economic despair. Knowing the importance of this nexus, it is needed to examine the potential of entrepreneurship skills and a student-reliant programme to fight against modern-day slavery.

Vulnerability for Modern-Day Slavery

Scholars have recognised articles and given details that shed light on the precise situations that placed people in danger of enslavement. The vulnerability variables emerge on a personal, national, and international level. Studies undertaken on a global scale have shown how climate change may heighten the possibility of human trafficking and exploitation. Research on this topic is being conducted by Katherine Brickell (submission 2), and Kevin Bales (submission 1) has published *Blood and Earth: Modern Slavery, Ecocide, and the Secret to Saving the World* (Bales 2016), which combines the ideas of how environmental degradation and human exploitation through modern slavery are closely related. Though there is room for academics to better understand the connections between these challenges, there is a growing body of study on the connections between climate change, environmental degradation, natural disasters, and the increased risk of exploitation and trafficking (see IOM 2015, for example).

Forms of Modern-Day Slavery

1. Forced Labour: The ILO Convention on Forced Employment, No. 29 of 1930, the Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention, No. 105 of 1957, and the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, No. 29 of 1930, provide the core of the worldwide framework surrounding forced or coerced employment. Although 175 States Parties to the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention have ratified it, the Forced Labour Convention has been ratified by 178 States, but its Protocol has only garnered 27 ratifications so far. Article 2.1 of the ILO Convention No. 29 concerning forced or compulsory labour defines forced or compulsory labour as "any work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which said person has not offered himself voluntarily." This concept was repeated in Article 1.3 of the 2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention. The 1930 Convention on Forced or Compulsory Labour (No. 29). As specified by the ILO, this term relates to all employment or service, and it has two criteria: one

having to do with the menace of penalty and the other pertaining to involuntariness. This denotes that "people are exposed to psychological or physical coercion (the threat or imposition of a penalty) to achieve some activity that they would not have accepted to execute in the prevailing conditions (the involuntariness)," that is, "forced labour happens when people are." The International Labour Organisation, Geneva (2005), argued that the minimum estimate of forced labour in the world through "penal sanctions and various forms of direct or indirect coercion, such as physical violence, psychological threats, or the non-payment of wages," are included in the definition of "threat of a penalty.

2. Child Slavery: A frequent and exceedingly disturbing sort of contemporary exploitation, child trafficking is a gross violation of basic human rights. Despite international efforts to prohibit these practices, millions of children worldwide are still trapped in various sorts of slavery in the twenty-first century, exposed to horrible conditions that rob them of their childhood, education, and possibilities for the future. This essay analyses the numerous dimensions of child slavery, looking at its fundamental causes, common manifestations, effects, and the urgent need for coordinated worldwide action to eradicate this horrific practice (Bales, 1999).

3. Debt Bondage: Debt bondage is a contemporary sort of slavery in which people frequently from disadvantaged backgrounds are forced to work as exploitative labourers in order to pay off debts. When victims are compelled to take out debts with terms they can't satisfy, they wind up being legally obliged to their creditors or employers. Their earnings hardly ever reach the obligation, pushing them to labour in horrific conditions and establishing a vicious loop of servitude. Debt bondage infringes upon fundamental human rights by entangling people in a cycle of financial reliance, frequently with no way out. In order to address this sort of exploitation, considerable efforts must be made to destroy the structures that sustain and maintain indebted servitude. Kara, (2012).

4. The Exploitation of Migrant Workers: Migration is a complicated process that is shaped by social, political, and economic variables on a worldwide scale. While migration gives prospects for a better life, it also puts vulnerable people at risk of exploitation; migrant workers are often the objects of institutional abuse and disrespect for their rights. This essay analyses the pervasive problem of migrant worker exploitation, looking at the underlying reasons, prevalent types of exploitation, and pressing need for all-encompassing remedies to defend the wellbeing and dignity of individuals who move overseas in pursuit of a better life. Anderson & Shutes (Eds.) (2014).

Leeway on Modern-Day Slavery via Entrepreneurship and Self-Reliance Programmes

Due to the continued global issue of modern-day slavery, creative ways of tackling its causes and strengthening underprivileged people are required. This essay investigates the possibilities of self-reliance and entrepreneurial activities, especially for students, as a game-changing technique to halt the cycle of exploitation, enhance economic independence, and help put an end to modern slavery.

A. Entrepreneurship as a Catalyst for Change:

1. Economic Empowerment: Through entrepreneurship, people can become economically empowered and learn the skills essential to create their own firms and bring in steady revenue. This economic independence increases resilience in the face of economic difficulties and decreases susceptibility to exploitation. Blundell & Costa Dias (2000).

2. Skill Development: Entrepreneurship programmes empower students with a varied set of skills, including business management, financial literacy, and problem-solving. These abilities

not only boost students employability but also lay the groundwork for creating and sustaining their own ventures. Shane & Venkataraman (2000).

3. Innovation and Creativity: Entrepreneurship develops innovation and creativity, helping students recognise and capitalise on potential. This perspective shift encourages individuals to think beyond typical career opportunities, developing a sense of flexibility and adaptability. Kuratko & Audretsch (2013).

B. Self-Reliance Programmes for Holistic Development:

1. Education and Awareness: Programmes aimed at building self-reliance may include training on human rights, moral business conduct, and the repercussions of contemporary slavery. Raising awareness provides children with the opportunity to reject exploitation and make responsible decisions. Moon & O'Reilly (2006).

2. Financial Literacy: Self-reliance demands financial literacy teaching. Financially educated students are better equipped to handle their resources sensibly, make good financial judgements, and keep out of debt traps that could be exploitative. Lusardi & Tufano (2009).

3. Community Building: Self-reliance programmes can help students create a feeling of camaraderie and support for one another. Cooperative ventures are one example of a collaborative effort that allows students to pool resources, share information, and work together to address economic difficulties. Putnam, (2000).

C. Implementation Strategies

1. Incorporating Entrepreneurship in Education:

At numerous school levels, incorporate entrepreneurship lessons into formal curricula. This guarantees early exposure of learners to entrepreneurial ideas, abilities, and chances. Fayolle, Gailly, & Lassas-Clerc (2006).

2. Mentorship and networking:

Create mentorship initiatives that match professionals and business entrepreneurs with students. Students who want to pursue their entrepreneurial ambitions could greatly benefit from the guidance, information, and inspiration that networking opportunities can give Jack & Anderson (2002).

3. Access to Funding: Provide financial support and funding access for student-led initiatives. Work closely with financial institutions, governmental authorities, and philanthropic associations to create funds expressly geared to aid student-run enterprises. Block, Fisch, & Hahn (2015).

4. Partnerships with Industry: Form connections with firms and industries that are prepared to mentor students, grant internships, and impart practical expertise. These relationships provide a link between theoretical knowledge and real-world business experience. Miozzo & Soete (2001).

5. Promotion of Social Entrepreneurship: Promote social entrepreneurship ventures that deal with societal challenges. Students can build socially aware enterprises that benefit the community and offer them real-world entrepreneurial experience. Bornstein, (2007).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the complicated and insidious character of modern-day slavery necessitates inventive and diversified measures to abolish this worldwide evil. This conceptual research has

looked into the possibility of entrepreneurship skills development and student self-reliance programmes as strategic tools in the battle against modern-day slavery. As we reflect on the findings and recommendations, it becomes obvious that promoting economic empowerment, resilience, and independence is crucial to breaking the shackles of exploitation. Entrepreneurship education emerges as a light of hope, offering individuals the skills and mindset necessary to not only create economic opportunities but also to reject compulsion and exploitation. The inclusion of entrepreneurship in educational curricula gives a visible method for instilling autonomy and self-sufficiency in the face of vulnerability. Simultaneously, the emphasis on inclusive economic opportunities and partnerships between educational institutions and enterprises develops a holistic approach to empower diverse groups, lowering the risk of exploitation.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, the study proposed the following:

- 1. Integration of Entrepreneurship Education in Curricula:** Advocate for the integration of entrepreneurship education at various educational levels to provide students with the skills needed to develop and manage their own firms. This education can develop resilience and self-sufficiency, lowering vulnerability to exploitation.
- 2. Promotion of Inclusive Economic Chances:** Encourage the creation of inclusive economic policies that give equitable chances to marginalised populations. Entrepreneurship programmes should focus on developing accessible avenues for women, minorities, and economically disadvantaged individuals, lowering the danger of exploitation.
- 3. Collaborations between Educational Institutions and Businesses:** Facilitate collaborations between educational institutions and businesses to offer practical, real-world experiences for students. Internships, mentorship programmes, and collaboration with local firms can strengthen students' entrepreneurial abilities and create useful networks for future pursuits.
- 4. Life Skills and Self-Reliance Training:** Integrate life skills and self-reliance training into the education system, stressing critical thinking, problem-solving, and emotional intelligence. These skills help students make educated judgements and navigate problems autonomously, lowering their susceptibility to manipulation.
- 5. Awareness Campaigns and Community Engagement:** Conduct awareness efforts among communities and educational institutions to educate people about the risks of modern-day slavery. Engage in community discussions to develop a common commitment to eradicating exploitation and promoting a culture of self-reliance.
- 6. Legal Protections and Support Services:** Advocate for and expand legal protections against modern slavery, ensuring that victims have access to justice and support services. This involves creating hotlines, counselling services, and legal aid for people at risk or affected by exploitation.
- 7. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities:** Encourage firms to adopt CSR activities that focus on ethical labour practices and support anti-slavery efforts. Collaboration between businesses, educational institutions, and NGOs can provide a more comprehensive strategy for solving modern slavery in supply chains.
- 8. Government Policies Supporting Entrepreneurship:** Lobby for government policies that assist entrepreneurship, such as grants, low-interest loans, and tax advantages. These policies can promote a supportive climate for the development of small enterprises and startups, supporting economic independence.

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