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**Apprenticeship and Youth Development in Nigeria: The Akwa Ibom State Experience.****Uwa, Kingsley Lazarus****Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Social and Management Sciences, Akwa Ibom State University, Obio-Akpa Campus, Akwa Ibom State.****Abstract**

This study appraised the perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development among youths in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Three research objectives, three research questions and three research hypotheses were formulated. The study made use of the descriptive survey design. The population of the study consisted of youths in the 31 local governments of Akwa Ibom State. Sample of 400 respondents were selected. Apprenticeship Perception Questionnaire (APQ) was used for data collection. Four hundred copies of the questionnaire were administered while only 389 copies were retrieved and found useable. Data obtained were analysed descriptively using means and standard deviation and inferentially, using independent t- test and ANOVA. The results of the analysis revealed majority of the youth have negative perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development among youths in Akwa Ibom State. Also, the result reveals that there is no significant difference in the perception of apprenticeship between male and female. However, their perception was significantly different based on their academic qualifications. Therefore, to tackle the challenges of mass unemployment among youths in Nigeria, the youth must be re-orientated on the relevance of apprenticeship as a veritable tool for manpower development. Also, governments at all level should provide incentives that will encourage youths to be actively involved in apprenticeship.

**Key words:** Apprenticeship, Youth development, Youths' orientation.

**Introduction**

Manpower development simply put is the development of human resource (Nongo, 2005). It is more than just knowledge or skills acquisition. The relevance of youth development to the socio-economic and political development of any nation cannot be over-emphasized. Youth development is needed by any nation who wants to harness its resources for achievement of the required growth that can bring about improvement in the living standard of the populace. Udom (1999) stressed this fact emphasizing that the first syllable in the concept of management is "man". To him, "man" in this context, otherwise referred to as worker, human resource, or labour, remains the most relevant and therefore should be given utmost priority attention.

Apprenticeship is defined by the Encyclopedia (1988) as 'training in art under a legal agreement defining the relationship between the master and the learner and the duration and conditions of the relationship'. The tradition of apprenticeship can be traced back to early 16th century when earliest artists usually acquired their skills mainly through various systems of apprenticeship (Encyclopedia, 2001). In apprenticeship, the apprentice learned a trade and practiced it under the instruction and supervision of a master. This system was enforced throughout most of the renaissance period. In the 17th century, the system changed so that an apprentice lived and studied in the house of a master for an indefinite period and was free to leave when he felt he had learned enough (Sanni and Alabi 2008).

Moreover, apprenticeship involves the acquisition of skills through extensive practice for over a period of time by the trainees (Nongo, 2005). It could be formal or informal. In the formal environments, the trainee is attached to the trainer, and he or she is expected to pay for an agreed period of apprenticeship. In the informal environment on the other hand, an employee of an organization could be placed under apprenticeship in the organization with pay. Apprenticeship equip youths with what they need in order to be effective in planning, managing and sustaining efforts, regulating emotional states, developing their skills for judgment, reflecting and self- correcting among other benefits (Larson, Hansen, and Walker, 2005).

**Statement of Problem**

Youths unemployment has become a major problem in Nigeria due to a lots of factors. Studies have shown that some youths especially the educated ones view apprenticeship as a form of punishment. In the light of this, Governments have attempted to pay attention on youth development by constantly encouraging manpower development through entrepreneurship. As a result, there has been increasing attention on the concept of apprenticeship and manpower development by researchers and practitioners.

However, while some previous studies have recorded poor government funding and policies as bases for youths unemployment (Fuller, 1996; Curtain, 2000), others did not support such assertion.

For instance, Unwin (2010); Raymond and Godwin (2004) studying apprenticeship and manpower development found youth orientation, interest and gender as factors affecting youth involvement in apprenticeship.

With so much research success recorded in the area of apprenticeship and youth development in the developed nations of Europe and North America, a review of some Business and Economic literatures have revealed that only anecdotal empirical research in this area has been focused in the developing countries of Asia, with scanty of such studies conducted in the developing economies of Africa like Nigeria. Furthermore, it would be foolhardy of Government to assumed that apprenticeship and youth development findings in one climate can be applied in other countries with different business and cultural context. The above conflicting views of scholars and the theoretical gap so created particularly, in the developing economy like Nigeria underpin the basis for this study.

**Objective of the Study**

The purpose of this study includes:

- (1) To examine youths perceptions of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development in Akwa Ibom State
- (2) To examine the influence of gender on youths perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development in Akwa Ibom State.
- (3) To examine the influence of academic qualification on youths perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development in Akwa Ibom State

**Research Questions**

To guide this study, the following research questions were developed:

- (1) How do the youths in Akwa Ibom State perceive apprenticeship as a form of manpower development?
- (2) Does gender influence youths perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development in Akwa Ibom State?
- (3) Does education qualification of youths in Akwa Ibom State influences their perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development.

**Research Hypotheses**

The following research hypotheses were formulated

- (1) There is no significant difference in youths perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development in Akwa Ibom State.
- (2) There is no significant influence of gender in youths perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development in Akwa Ibom State.
- (3) There is no significant difference in youths' perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development on the basis of their academic qualifications.

## Literature Review

### Concept of Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship involves four main elements- the apprentice as learner, the idea of trade or craft knowledge as fixed, the master as teacher and the idea that learning in workplaces is a context-bound understanding not conducive to transfer (Pratt, 1993). Moreover, in cognitive psychology theory, apprenticeship is portrayed as lacking an explicit theory of instruction and not dependent upon any formal teaching (Coy, 1989). Learning in the form of apprenticeship is seen as a natural process that occurs through observation, assimilation and emulation which happens over time with substantial interventions from more experienced others. Apprenticeship encompasses both formal and informal learning within structured on- and off-the job training provided by employers (Fuller, 1996). Moreover, the idea of apprenticeship creates the overriding impression that expertise is developed through the gradual accumulation of experience under the guidance of an established master (Dreyfuss, 1986). The model of knowledge within apprenticeship tends to be a combination of trade or craft knowledge handed down by the master and the implicit knowledge (Zuboff, 1988) that is part of every activity. The traditional concept of apprenticeship tends to be generalised unproblematically and applied to any craft, profession or process in which people acquire forms of expertise (Fuller, 1996). Such generalisation assumes that the process of learning is invariant and the same for all types of apprenticeship. However, in practice work contexts vary widely. In some cases they are relatively routine and require little explicit knowledge, whereas in others are highly knowledge-intensive. Also work contexts vary according to whether the knowledge involved is a 'traditional' craft or constantly developing body of 'theory' (Gott, 1995). As a consequence, theories of learning not only need to take account of differences in the degree of expertise needed within specific occupations, but also in differences in the content and quality of such expertise (Engestrom, 1997). Moreover, the nature of workplace practices and the demands they make on apprentice learners are likely to be quite different when different forms of knowledge or work are involved.

### Concept of youth

Generally, there is hardly any universally acceptable definition of youth. Youthfulness need not be exclusively determined by age. Other factors, like economic, cultural and environmental conditions may be equally important in defining youth. In many African countries, laws define 'adulthood' to start from age of 21, but of recent, there have been attempts to lower the age to 18 years (Curtain, 2000). Sociologically, 'youth' denotes an interface between 'childhood' and 'adulthood'. The United Nations Organization (UNO) has come up with a specification of age bracket 15-24 years as youth, while the Commonwealth uses the age category of 15-29 years.

But, for the purpose of this study, youth is defined as young women and men who fall within the age group of 15 and 35 years. It has been recognized over the world that youths constitute the most important human resource potential that can contribute significantly to the overall development of a nation. The youths constitute the driving force of society, the spirit of today and the hope for the future. In addition, youths constitute the largest segment, they are also the most socially active and productive sector. In terms of sheer numbers, youths represent a significant portion of the global community. Today, approximately 20 per cent of the world's population is in the 15 to 24 age group, and in many developing countries this group will soon constitute 50 per cent of the population. Youths represent a significant portion of the world's population: it is estimated that the global youth population in 1995 was over 1 billion and comprised 18 percent of the world's population, of whom 84 percent lived in developing countries (Tenibiaje, 2010). Those under the age of 30 could form about 55 per cent of the world's population by the year 2005. In the least-developed countries of the world, the figure is closer to 70 percent (Kenyon, 1998). Linked directly to these figures is the growing recognition of the importance of youth development at both the national, regional and international levels. Youths constitute a unique

group within the society. While they are often considered as one of the most vulnerable groups within the social fabric, they are also regarded as the greatest source of hope for the nation's future).

### **Gender and Apprenticeship Perception among Youths**

Apprenticeship involving both males and females has a long history in Nigeria. Gender disparity in apprenticeship still persists even in most advanced and industrialized countries (Tenibiaje, 2010). Gender inequality in apprenticeship perception is a major concern to researchers (Curtin, 2000). Curtin (2000) shares this concern by noting that females who miss out on high quality programmes are more likely to have poor perception towards apprenticeship. One of the major problems affecting female perception about apprenticeship includes stereotypes and lack of awareness. Even with the right education, relatively few women choose to consider and apply for apprenticeship that is male dominated (Tenibiaje, 2010). Some females do feel that getting involved in male dominated apprenticeship can expose them to sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination and that even after graduation; organizations may prefer male apprentice than female apprentice especially in male dominated areas. So the feeling that men are more favoured than women in terms of recruitment and career development tends to discourage the females in apprenticeship engagements (Fajana, 2000).

### **Educational Qualification and Perception of Apprenticeship among Youths**

Educational qualification of the youth has also been recognized to influence youth perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development. Evidence has shown that youths that have high academic qualification are more likely to have negative perception and attitude about apprenticeship (Kenyon, 1998; Curtin, 2000). Most educated youth would prefer to pursue the unavailable white Kola job. They may feel that since they are educated, government should employ them. They want to be the boss. They do not want to serve anybody and hence holds the view that apprenticeship is meant for uneducated youths (Tenibiaje, 2010). This perception has led to the creation of many myths in our society that if left uncontested, may further compound the problem of insecurity in Nigeria as this group of individuals is more likely to become instrument of social- vices (Fajana, 2000).

### **Conceptualizing Apprenticeship as a Social Theory of Learning**

A growing body of research on learning and cognition which focuses on the cultural context has introduced a new focus into the debates about the interrelationship between cognition, context and practice. Such studies have begun to draw attention to how the process of learning always involves changes in knowledge and action, and how such changes are central to learning and the development of new forms of practice (Engestrom, Chaiklin and Lave, Viorkkunen, Helle, Pihlaja&Poiketa, 1997). These studies have highlighted some of the weaknesses of the traditional understanding of apprenticeship (Engestrom et al., 1997). A number of examples illustrate this point. First, they stress the importance of how knowledge is socially constructed and how the new apprentice becomes part of a work-based 'community of practice' (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Second, they emphasis learning as a process of 'boundary crossing' mediated by access to different communities of practice (Lave 1993, Engestrom et al 1995).

Third, they show how learners increasingly need to relate scientific with everyday concepts in making sense of workplace practices or problems (Gott, 1995). Fourth, they point to how external resources to 'communities of practice' maybe needed to overcome internal contradictions (Engestrom et al 1997). Fifth, they indicate how 'learning' technologies can be seen as 'resources' for learning and that to do so involves the rethinking of assumptions about intelligence, learning and workplace activity (Pea 1993).

### **Review of Empirical Studies**

In 2003, the United Kingdom Unequal Opportunities Commission (UOC) investigated gender segregation about apprenticeship in England. This study focused on five sectors which are Construction, Engineering, Information Technology Services and Development, Information Technology and Telecom

Professional and Plumbing. Cross sectional survey design was used and the study sampled 2,568 youths in England. Data were analysed using frequencies and percentages. The study found that little progress has been made in changing stereotypical perception about apprenticeship. It was also found that plumbing indicated a slight increase in female share, but the proportion of females starting an Engineering apprenticeship remarkably decreased. According to this study, the percentage of females involved in apprenticeship under the period of the study was low. The study therefore concluded that the participation of the female in some apprenticeship like Engineering and Plumbing was low. Therefore, it was recommended that the females should be encouraged to be actively involved in male dominated apprenticeship.

Another study by Unwin (2010) examined differences in the perception of apprenticeship on the basis of academic qualification of the youths in Scotland. Questionnaire was used in data collection and survey design was adopted. Data were analyzed using One Way Analysis of Variance. The study found a disparity in perception of apprenticeship based on academic qualification of respondents with higher academic qualification reporting negative perception. Hence, the study concluded that the academic qualification of the youths influences their perception about apprenticeship. Based on this finding, the study recommends a re-orientation programme on the usefulness of apprenticeship for youths in Scotland.

Raymond and Godwin (2004) conducted a study on the perceived objectives of roadside mechanic apprenticeship programme in mid-western Nigeria. The study framed seven statements of objectives for the study and respondents were required to score each statement between '1 and 7' in their order of importance in respect to the objectives. The Roadside Mechanic Apprenticeship programme questionnaire was administered to 150 master craft trainers and 750 apprentices and the analysis was done using descriptive statistics. The study found that to acquire technical skills, to provide pre-employment opportunity for youths, to instill discipline among youth and to provide opportunity for interpersonal relationship, the major perception of the respondents was that a proper orientation programme should be conducted to sensitize the youth of the importance of apprenticeship.

### Methodology

**Research Design:** This study adopted descriptive research design. The descriptive survey design investigates what is the current situation. The design is descriptive because of the objective of this study which is to examine the perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development among the youths in Nigeria.

**Population of the Study:** The population of this study comprised all the youths in Akwa Ibom State. The population of Akwa Ibom State is put at 4612067 with youths accounting for 60% of the total population (2006 population census). Hence, based on these statistics, the population of youths in Akwa Ibom State was estimated as 60% of 4612067 which is 2767240.

**Sample and sampling technique:** The sample size of 400 youths were estimated using Taro Yamane formula as follows

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where: n is the sample size to be determined, N = the population size, e = error margin, N = 2767240, e = 0.05.

$$n = \frac{2767240}{1 + 2767240(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{2767240}{1 + 2767240(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{2767240}{1 + 6918.1}$$

$$n = \frac{2767240}{6919.1}$$

$$n = 399.94, n = 400$$

Also, to select samples, multi stage sampling technique was used in selecting samples of youths, two local governments were randomly selected from each of the senatorial districts in Akwa Ibom State by simple random sampling. Then, random sample of youths were selected from the selected six local governments by stratified sampling. The distribution of the population and sample are as shown below:

Table 1: Population and distribution of the sample

Senatorial districts	LGA selected	Population	Sample selected
Uyo	Uyo	185744	125
	Ibesikpo	82261	55
Ikot Ekpene	Ikot Ekpene	85846	58
	Abak	83454	57
Eket	Eket	103534	69
	Oron	52477	36
Total		593316	400

Source: 2006 population census

**Instrumentation:** The instrument used in data collection is Apprenticeship Perception Questionnaire (APQ) developed by the researcher. The instrument was divided into two sections, section A comprised personal data of the respondents which include their sex, academic qualification while section B measured the youths' perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development. Section B is made of ten items were scored on four point likert scale of strongly agree (4 points), agree (3 points), disagree (2 points), strongly disagree (1 point).

**Methods of Data Analysis:** Data were analysed using means and standard deviation. The independent t test and ANOVA were used to test the research hypotheses. Hypotheses No. 1 and 2 were tested using t test while the third hypothesis was tested using one way Analysis of Variance.

**Analysis and Results****Personal data of the respondents**

Table2: Personal data of the respondents

Personal data	No. of Respondents	Percentage
<u>Sex</u>		
Male	199	51.2
Female	190	48.8
Total	389	100.0
<u>Academic qualification</u>		
SSCE	107	27.5
NCE/OND	116	29.8
HND/B.Sc	157	40.4
Postgraduates	9	2.3
Total	389	100.0

Result in Table 2 shows that 199 respondents representing 51.2 percent were male and 190 respondents (48.8 percent) were female. In terms of their academic qualification, 107 respondents (27.5 percent), 116 respondents (29.8 percent), 157 respondents (40.4 percent) and 9 respondents (2.3 percent) were SSCE, NCE/OND, HND/B.Sc and postgraduates degree holders.

**Research Question No. 1**

How do the youths in Akwa Ibom state perceive apprenticeship as a form of manpower development?

**Table 3:** Perception of Apprenticeship as a form of manpower development among youths in Akwa Ibom State

Perception of Apprenticeship	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	SD	Remark
1. It provides pre- employment training for manpower development	3.16	0.83	Agree
2. It helps in acquiring basic knowledge for further advancement for manpower development	1.88	1.00	Disagree
3. It helps in acquiring technical skills for manpower development	2.59	0.69	Agree
4. It provides opportunity for upgrading knowledge and skills for manpower development	2.54	0.79	Agree
5. It gives opportunity for youths to acquire professional attitude needed for manpower development	2.52	0.79	Agree
6. Apprenticeship makes one to be self employed	2.31	1.09	Disagree
7. Apprenticeship can make one to live a fulfill life	2.34	1.00	Disagree
8. Apprenticeship is a way out of youths unemployment	2.28	1.02	Disagree
9. No matter my academic qualification, I can still be an apprentice	2.17	0.85	Disagree
10. Apprenticeship makes one to be an employer of labour	2.22	0.91	Disagree
Overall	2.40	0.90	Disagree

Source: Field Survey, 2014

The result as summarized in Table 3 reveals an overall mean score of 2.40 for the youth's perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development. It therefore means that on the average, the youths disagree which means that the youths have a negative perception towards apprenticeship as a form of manpower development of Akwa Ibom State.

### Research Question No. 2

Is there any difference in gender perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development of youths in Akwa Ibom State?

Table 4: Perception of apprenticeship as form of manpower development by male and female youths in Akwa Ibom State

Items	Male(n =199)		Female (n=190),	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1. It provides pre- employment training for manpower development	3.20	0.79	3.12	0.86
2. It helps in acquiring basic knowledge for further advancement for manpower development	1.87	1.03	1.90	0.98
3. It helps in acquiring technical skills for manpower development	2.52	0.62	2.49	0.55
4. It provides opportunity for upgrading knowledge and skills for manpower development	2.34	0.66	2.62	0.71
5. It gives opportunity for youths to acquire professional attitude needed for manpower development		0.62	2.48	0.88
6. Apprenticeship makes one to be self employed	2.31	1.13	2.24	1.04
7. Apprenticeship can make one to live a fulfill life	2.34	1.00	2.30	1.01
8. Apprenticeship is a way out of youths unemployment	2.28	1.07	2.22	1.03
9. No matter my academic qualification, I can still be an apprentice	2.17	0.83	02.19	0.87
10. Apprenticeship makes one to be an employer of labour	2.22	0.90	02.21	0.90
Overall	2.40	0.86	2.37	0.89

Source: Field Survey, 2014, SD = standard deviation

As shown in Table 4, the overall perception of apprenticeship mean score of 2.40 and 2.37 were obtained for male and female youths respectively. These mean scores showed that both the male and female youths disagree that apprenticeship is a form of manpower development. Therefore, it can be concluded that, there is no difference in the perception of apprenticeship as form of manpower development between male and female youths in Akwa Ibom State.

### Research Question No. 3

Does the education qualification of youths in Akwa Ibom State influences their perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development in Akwa Ibom State.



**Table 5:** Perception of apprenticeship as form of manpower development based on the academic qualification of the youths

Items	SSCE (n =107) Mean	NCE/OND ( n = 116)	HND (n=157), Mean	Postgraduate ( n = 9)
1. Apprenticeship provides pre- employment training for manpower development	3.07	3.32	3.09	3.22
2. Apprenticeship helps in acquiring basic knowledge for further advancement for manpower development	2.00	2.05	1.69	1.78
3. It helps in acquiring technical skills for manpower development	2.49	2.32	2.15	2.03
4. It provides opportunity for upgrading knowledge and skills for manpower development	2.50	2.40	2.42	2.45
5. It gives opportunity for youths to acquire professional attitude needed for manpower development	2.52	2.42	2.49	2.46
6. Apprenticeship makes one to be self employed	2.54	2.21	2.22	2.67
7. Apprenticeship can make one to live a fulfill life	2.50	2.28	2.29	2.33
8. Apprenticeship is a way out of youths unemployment	2.47	2.20	2.21	2.11
9. No matter my academic qualification, I can still be an apprentice	2.11	2.02	2.01	2.00
10. Apprenticeship makes one to be an employer of labour	2.17	2.24	2.17	2.33
Overall	2.62	2.35	2.27	2.34

The result presented in Table 5 reveals that on the average, the youth's perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development differs on the basis of their academic qualifications. Those with SSCE perceive apprenticeship as a form of manpower development while youths with other academic qualifications do not perceive apprenticeship as form of manpower development. Hence, there is a difference in the youths' perception of apprenticeship as form of manpower development based on their academic qualification.

### Hypotheses Testing

#### Hypothesis No. 1

There is no significant difference in the perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development among youths in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 5: t test analysis of the differences in the perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development among youths in Akwa Ibom State

Variable	Mean score	SD	Weighted mean	Hypothesized mean	t calculated
Apprenticeship as form of manpower development	26.33	3.70	2.40	2.50	2.00

**t critical = 1.96, N= 389, degrees of freedom = 387, significant at 0.05 level of significance.**

Analysis of the differences in the perception of apprenticeship among youths reveals that their weighted means perception of apprenticeship is less than expected weighted means of 2.50 on a four point Likert scale. The calculated value of t (2.00) is greater than critical t (1.96). Hence, the null hypothesis No. 1 is rejected and the conclusion is that the perception of apprenticeship as form of manpower development among youths in Akwa Ibom State is below expected mean score of 2.5.

### Hypothesis No. 2

There is no significant difference in the perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development between male and female youths in Akwa Ibom State.

Table 6: t test analysis of the differences in the perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development between male and female youths in Akwa Ibom State

Variable	Mean	SD	t calculated	t critical
Male	26.64	3.97	1.63	1.96
Female	26.02	3.54		

**N = 389, degrees of freedom = 387, t critical = 1.96, not significant at 0.05 level of significance.**

The result in Table 6 shows that the calculated value of t (1.63) is not greater than the critical value of t (1.96). Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected. The conclusion is that there is no significant difference between male and female in their perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development of Akwa Ibom State.

### Hypothesis No. 3

Table 6: Analysis of Variance analysis showing differences in the perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development based on the youths' academic qualification

Source of variation	Mean	df	MS	F
Between group	154.56	3	51.52	3.70
Within group	5360.65	385	13.92	
Total	5515.21	388		

**F critical = 2.60, significant at 0.05n level of significance.**

The result of one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) as presented in Table 6 reveals that the calculated F (3.70) is greater than the critical F (2.60). The null hypothesis No. 3 which states that there is no significance difference in the perception of apprenticeship as a form of manpower development is therefore rejected. The conclusion is that there is a significant difference in the perceptions of apprenticeship as form of manpower development among youths of Akwa Ibom State based on their academic qualification.

**Discussion of Findings**

This study found perception of apprenticeship to be negative among youths in Akwa Ibom state. The perception was not significantly different between males and females but significantly different on the basis of their academic qualification. Youths who were Senior School Certificate holders had a better perception of apprenticeship as form of manpower development than their counterparts with higher academic degrees. Majority of the respondents disagree that apprenticeship helps in acquiring basic knowledge for further advancement. They also disagree to the statement that apprenticeship makes one to be self employed. In fact, Majority of them fail to recognize apprenticeship as a way out of youth unemployment. These really point out to the fact why the youths of the country do not want to be involved in apprenticeship. Hence, there is an urgent need for re-orientation of the youths most especially the educated ones. This result is so because the youths of today do not want to engage in any work which they feel will not command respect in the public. Rather, they want to be employed in a place that appear very fancy and conducive irrespective of their take home pay.

The educated ones for instance, may have the feelings that apprenticeship is primarily designed for those who could not secure either lower or higher degrees (Unwin, 2010; Greenhalgh, 2002). Therefore, having acquired formal education; they cannot do any job that will reduce them to the level of uneducated ones. They feel apprenticeship skill is not befitting for their caliber of persons after all they have passed through higher institutions of learning. This finding corroborates that of Unwin (2010) who found that youth with higher certificates in Scotland tends to have a negative perception towards apprenticeship as compared with those with lower degrees. Unwin (2010) also found that the educated youths in Scotland are not found in some apprenticeship probably because of their ego and unnecessary feeling of self esteem.

Moreover, this finding also agrees with that of Tenibiaje (2010) and Onyemerekaya (2010). Tenibiaje (2010) observed that most of the Nigerian youths do not want to acquire apprenticeship but rather they waste their time chasing riches above all things. This is also supported by Onyemerekaya (2010) who added that most of these youths want to amerce wealth through the back door. They do not want to put their two hands into works. Hence, the crime rate and social vices in Nigeria has been so alarming.

**Conclusion**

The findings of this study have shown that the youths in Akwa Ibom state had a negative perception towards apprenticeship as a form of manpower development. Therefore, it becomes imperative to educate the youths on the need to perceive apprenticeship as form of manpower development. If this is done, this will be one of the way-out of the youth restiveness and other forms of social vices perpetrated by youths.

**Recommendations**

In view of the findings, the following were recommended

- (a) There is a need for the government and other non- governmental organization to re- orientate the youths on the need for them to embrace apprenticeship regardless of their sex and academics qualification .
- (b) Government should formulate policies that will encourage youth participation in apprenticeship.
- (c) There is a need for government to be persuasive in making organizations embrace well designed policies aimed at improving development of manpower in Nigeria through apprenticeship.
- (d) Soft loans should be made available for the youths involved in apprenticeship so as to encourage them start their own enterprise.
- (e) Entrepreneurship training through apprenticeship should also be part of the syllabus of secondary school education and the programmes should be practically inclined

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