

The talent-Career trajectory (TCT) in education as a paradigm for resolving some aspects of the youth employment crisis in Nigeria

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Abstract

Ironically, Nigeria which is so rich both in terms of human and natural resources has not been able to translate these resources to achieve commensurate development outcomes due to shortfalls in theoretical and practical trajectories. One reason for the dislocation between resource potential and human achievement is a lack of articulation of talents as careers trajectory for the youth. This paper offers the talent-career trajectory (TCT) to a selected aspect of the youth employment crisis, namely; youth unemployment, youth underemployment, and youth employability. From an African perspective, talent is conceptualized as the basis for educating, and resolving some aspects of the youth employment crisis. The paper adopts a descriptive-analytical method and begins with an introduction. Second, with an empirical background of the ineffectiveness of SURE-P, N-Power, Amnesty, and NYIF programmes as palliatives. Third, the TCT is conceptualized from an African perspective. Fourth, I linked education to youth employment in traditional/pre-colonial Nigeria. The fifth section interfaces the TCT with two key debates in youth studies – nature vs. nurture, and structure vs. agency. Lastly, I conclude and suggest possible institutional strategies that go beyond palliative measures to a more enduring solution for the youth employment crisis in Nigeria.

Keywords: youth, employment crisis, talent, career, education, unemployment, employability, Nigeria.

Introduction

Although talent may have been overrated (Colvin, 2008: 17) but it should not be underrated, and the question of what talent a person possesses is particularly relevant to the question of the person's ability for productivity which in turn has a relation to the question of (youth) (un)employment. The question of youth employment and other issues related to it have been some of the most recurring issues in youth research (Furlong, 2013: 72, Cote, 2014: 99, Sparreboom and Staneva, 2014: iii). This is because having employment is one of the main markers of successful youth transitions to adulthood and failure to get employment may suggest a protracted or inadequate transition (Wyn and White, 1997: 94, World Youth Report, 2003: 61, Pieters, 2013: 7, Furlong, 2013: 73, Dedehouano et al, 2018: 2, Michael, 2020: 141) which can, in turn, have serious consequences for the older adult that the youth will become.

The question of youth employment is in itself a complex phenomenon, and it includes but not limited to youth unemployment, vulnerable employment, unpaid or low paid employment, underemployment, low female labour force caused by gender segregation or discrimination in the labour market, how to improve productivity and earnings, job satisfaction, occupational safety, securing decent work (Pieters, 2013: 3), and employability. In this paper, attention is especially given to three aspects of the ranges of the youth employment crisis; youth unemployment, youth employability, and underemployment of the youth. This is so because according to recent studies these three seem to constitute a bigger challenge in Nigeria than other aspects of the youth employment crisis (Price, 2019: 4-6, Nestle, 2020). Consequently, I argue that in the Nigerian context, these three aspects of the youth employment crisis are in part a shortfall in the country's education system which fails to be modelled along the talent-career trajectory (TCT) of the young. I also argue that the series of government intervention programmes that have been adopted over the decades to mitigate the youth employment crisis in Nigeria have not achieved much success because they were and still are merely palliatives rather than curative.

The search for an alternate approach to tackling Nigeria's youth employment crisis is more urgent than ever, as some of its spillover effects became particularly revealed, first, in the wake of the global rampaging 2020 COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in Nigeria. During this period, the economic hardship brought about by the lockdown led some organized youths into an armed robbery in the suburbs of Lagos and its neighbouring state. Known by names such as the "One million boys and Awawa gang, these youth cohorts created terrifying situations through their nefarious activities in these areas (Nnadozie, 2020: 9). Second, the recent October 2020 #ENDSARS nationwide protest by the youths also attest to the devastating situation of the country's youth employment crisis. For instance, protesters agitated for an end to youth unemployment among other things.

To achieve the desired goal, this paper adopts a descriptive-analytical method and begins with an introduction. Second, with an empirical background of the ineffectiveness of SURE-P, N-Power, Amnesty, and NYIF programmes as palliatives. Third, the TCT is conceptualized from an African perspective. Fourth, I linked education to youth employment in traditional/pre-colonial Nigeria. The fifth section interfaces the TCT with two key debates in youth studies – nature vs. nurture, and structure vs. agency. Lastly, I conclude and suggest possible institutional strategies

that go beyond palliative measures to a more enduring solution for the youth employment crisis in Nigeria.

Empirical background: ineffectiveness of SURE-P, N-Power, Amnesty, and NYIF programmes as palliatives in the search for a sustained approach to tackling some aspects of the youth employment crisis in Nigeria

For over three decades now, successive governments in Nigeria have come up with various programmes to tackle the youth (un)employment crisis. These programmes range from the establishment of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE), National Economic Employment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), Open Apprenticeship Programme (OAP), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), Youth Enterprise and Innovation in Nigeria (YouWin), Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE-P), Youth Empowerment Programme (N-Power), Amnesty, and more recently, the Nigerian Youth Investment Fund (NYIF) (Bashir, John, and Mbag, 2017: 168-169) among others. As a social safety net measure, these programmes were established by the governments of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to cushion the ugly effects of the youth (un)employment scourge. This section focuses on the four most recent of these numerous programmes – SURE-P, N-Power, Amnesty, and NYIF programmes. The core aim of the SURE-P, N-Power, Amnesty, and NYIF, like the ones before them, is to serve as social investment and/or intervention programmes that aim at job 'creation' and empowerment through the acquisition and development of skills for the Nigerian youth. Central to these social investments and/or intervention programmes is the provision of stipends and opportunities for an internship to gain employment and/or employability skills (Tochukwu, 2019: 44).

The SURE-P, N-Power, Amnesty, and NYIF are, however, not without some fundamental and other shortcomings. On the one hand, the shortcoming of these programmes is seen in factors such as corruption, poor funding, weak monitoring and evaluation, poor coordination, non-sustainability/continuity of programme and frequent change in philosophy, and the political cum ethnic colouration that characterize the programmes. For instance, a 2020 report by SaharaReporters revealed the alleged use of the N-Power programme as patronage to politicians. According to the report, the minister in charge of the N-Power scheme gave 50, 000 slots to federal lawmakers and politicians across the country (Sahara Reporters, 2020). One also notices a re-intensification of the palliative programmes during election periods in the country. At other times, promises to provide participants of the programmes especially in the case of the N-Power, with electronic gadgets such as laptops and notepads for empowerment were either not kept at all or partly kept.

On the other hand, and at a more fundamental level, the shortcoming of the SURE-P, N-Power, Amnesty, and NYIF as palliatives may at best be described as scratching the youth employment crisis only on the surface without nipping the issue at the bud. While palliatives are good, the youth employment crisis in Nigeria deserves more than palliative measures because the outcomes of youth employment crisis have spillovers effect on the social and political (stability) order of the country (Pieters, 2013: 3, Sparreboom and Staneva, 2014: 1, Oduwole, 2015: 23, Ndamu, 2017: 67). Rather than palliatives, this paper proposes a focus on the talent-career trajectory of young people in the education system as a more permanent and sustained solution to the youth employment crisis in Nigeria. I argue, that drawing and implementing a theoretical and

practical educational curriculum on the assumption that each human being possesses something that other human beings do not possess and has a purpose that is different from other human beings can offer a durable solution to youth employment crisis. Put differently, the TCT can bridge the gap between finding and creating employment.

Thinking of employment as an expression of human nature has strong implications for employment creation and productivity. We see in the above examination and critique of the SURE-P and N-Power programmes as temporary palliatives, the tendency to help youth find rather than create employment. A viable strategy for tackling the youth employment crisis in Nigeria must be guided by the intention to train young people in building careers as well as in employment creation rather than employment finding. At this point, we must distinguish between finding and creating a thing whatsoever it may be. While we find with the outer sights, it takes in(ner)sight – soul or mind – to create because job creation or an employment or any other entity for that matter is a replication, an extension, and expression of one's self or being. Accordingly, Sharma (1996), argues that creation could be understood as an individual's self-extension (Ngara, 2008: 79). Work or employment is a fabrication that involves the actualization of a thing in the world that had previously existed in the mind of the designer (Walsh, 2011: 124). If we grant that every human being at birth come into the world with an inchoate capacity to produce an outcome and that job/employment is a creation of human (individuals or groups) capacity/gift or ingenuity, then we must grant that every human being is capable of creating employment given the right guidance and direction. Efforts at improving youth employment must be sustainable rather than temporary, ameliorating rather than worsening, consistent rather than inconsistent and it must be aimed at producing positive rather than negative effects. A good example of an effort that produced negative effects rather than positive ones in Nigeria is the amnesty programme.

To manage the security situation that emanated in part as a result of the youth employment crisis in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria, the federal government of Nigeria on 25th June 2009, declared amnesty for its agitated unemployed and aggrieved youth. The amnesty programme is in the form of a presidential pardon, skill acquisition, and training and the award of monthly salaries to those who have committed crimes capable of jeopardizing the exploration of oil in the region but have accepted to surrendered their ammunitions and embrace peace. Although, the main reason for the agitations in this region includes claims of marginalization, unjust resource distribution, environmental degradation emanating from oil exploration among others, the employment question is also a direct as well as an indirect factor (Omonkhoa & Ikelegbe, 2016: 62-63, Ajibola, 2015: 1, Nwabueze & Inokoba, 2017: 23-24). Hence, the amnesty programme is intended to be a double-edged sword for tackling violent agitations on the one hand and youth employment on the other hand. Today, however, Nigerians cannot say in honesty that the amnesty programme has yielded the expected results as youth-related violent agitations and insecurity continue to ravage the Niger-Delta region. We attribute the failure of the amnesty programme in Nigeria to some of the factors also responsible for the failure of the SURE-P, N-Power, and a host of other palliative measures for addressing the youth employment question in Nigeria. For instance, the federal government of Nigeria has not been able to sustain the payment of 'salaries' and training for ex-agitators; leading to further violent agitations.

In July 2020, another 'youth empowerment' programme tagged the Nigerian Youth Investment Fund (NYIF) was established and launched as an attempt to tackle the country's youth employment crisis and promote the well-being of its youth through the financial support of

viable business ideas and skills (Choji, 2020: 3). Prima facie, this new programme looks attractive, however, the NYIF like the other youth empowerment programmes before it seems to be lacking in the fundamental idea for employment creation and promotion. To be sure, a viable employment creation strategy is one that goes beyond giving people money as capital for investment rather, it focuses on the non-monetary aspect of human development which is human capital development. Focusing on monetary support rather than human capital support understood as building capacity of the young defeats the sustainable development goal because human beings, not money per se, are the real drivers of development. In other words, this effort seems misguided. So, it may fail like others before it. It is therefore not too difficult to see the failure of the SURE-P, N-Power, and Amnesty as well as the impending failure of the NYIF programmes through the lens of the TCT offers.

That the condition of young people concerning employment in Nigeria is constantly deteriorating despite several attempts to salvage the situation is enough evidence to show that above-discussed government youth employment intervention programmes have achieved very little success. One may attribute this very low success rate of some of the attempts to tackle the youth employment crisis in Nigeria to the importation and adoption as well as the inconsistent application of foreign solutions and strategies to the youth employment question without proper regard to the vital role of the human nature in context. For instance, the formal and informal sectors in Nigeria pursue education and training in skill acquisition to address mismatches between young people's skills and the (changing) structure of employment without first taking into account how a person's nature or natural ability or talent matches or otherwise with a certain productive activity, employment or career.

While education and training of the young have been strongly suggested as ways of developing skills in the youth and ameliorating youth employment situation (World Youth Report, 2003: 66), this paper argues that education and training in skills (in their current pattern of providing general academic background to the majority of the youth) will continue to yield very little results in resolving some crucial aspects of the youth employment crisis in Nigeria if education and training are not channelled towards the development of human innate capacities – talents. Hence, this paper proposes the TCT in the education and training of the young as a more viable solution to some crucial aspects of the youth employment problem in Nigeria.

The TCT is a construct traceable to Western ancient and modern philosophical thoughts as well as traditional African thought and practice. The focus is on the individual's 'basic capabilities' or natural ability in the education and training processes for employment and employability of the young. The question of underemployment is also tackled by the TCT. The strength of this perspective lies in the deep conceptualization of the notion of employment (labour) as an expression of the human nature and its relation to the human talent in shaping a person's career and chances of securing employment.

Conceptualising the TCT: an African perspective

The concept of talent poses a daunting attempt, given its etymology, usage over time, and evolution. This attempt is however important if we are to work out the link between talent and its relation to the aspects of the employment discourse highlighted above. The earliest use of the term 'talent' refers to weight or power and then to a monetary unit or capital from whence came

'human capital' to inclination/disposition, innate or genetic quality, mental endowment or (special) natural ability or aptitude embodied in a person to do something well and the defining and distinctive feature of a person's individuality (Tansley, 2011: 267-268). As a working definition, the emphasis is here laid on innate abilities originating from genetically transmitted structures (Howe et al. 1998: 399) and/or that can be explained in supernatural terms.

Talent is not merely a learned (technical) skill, training, or expertise, although these may help to improve or refine talent. It is a quality that makes human beings distinct one from another. If we grant that human beings are distinct one from another by their plurality (Arendt, 1958: 8) and that talent is a major feature of this distinction or uniqueness, then, we may conclude that no human being is without a talent. That human beings, according to Nussbaum, come into the world with a variety of inchoate capacities/abilities/talents is, therefore, a fact of human nature (Nussbaum, 2011: 563). Accordingly, thinkers across historical epochs and cultures have strongly suggested that efforts at the human, and especially youth development should be modelled along with a person's natural talent. That is, a person's talent should be nurtured into his/her career trajectory. This view is especially central to Plato's *Republic* and is also seen in Aristotle, Rousseau and Kant. According to these Western thinkers, nurturing or educating the young for work and other social roles in the society should be in line with his/her natural abilities, capabilities, germ or taste (Cahn, 1997: 59-201). This mode of thinking is, however, not peculiar to the West as there is a historical tradition of the TCT in African traditional system.

From an African perspective, the TCT constitutes a fundamental system of social and economic order and development in the traditional African setting. It is this African perspective of TCT and how it promotes some aspects of the youth employment question in Nigeria, the most populous country in African that is of particular interest to this paper. Traditional African thought, although oral, furnishes us with an alternate and useful conception of talent as the basis of a person's identity, personality, or career trajectory. In the African world-view, as expressed in African traditional religion (ATR), the term talent is the equivalent of 'blessing' from the ancestral deities or Supreme Being (Ngara, 2007: 10). In other words, talent as natural ability is embodied in a person as a blessing by a supernatural being. Different households in Africa is believed to have its deity. The ancestral deity of a household or clan is believed to endow its members with specific human talent(s) or gift(s) for which the members of the clan are known, and with which they negotiate, navigate and survival the social and economic order.

Human talents are also gifts from the gods for the benefits of other clans or groups who are without that specific talents. This can happen in two ways. One, in traditional African culture, a newborn baby is usually taken to an African religious priest who will make incantations and see into the future of the newborn, tell what power(s) or talent(s) the child possesses and what his/her role will be in the society. This is for example, what the Yoruba and Ibo people of Nigeria call *ako se jaye* or *ka da ra*, and *aka la ka* respectively. Thereafter, the child's growth is monitored by the parents and community who then create an atmosphere of apprenticeship that allows the child to master that which s/he has been destined to be/do. Two, based on one above, a child whose life has been pre-destined to be, for example, a hunter may also become an ancestor in the future. As an ancestor, his/her family sometimes become known for hunting because it is believed that their fore-fathers were gifted or talented hunters. Accordingly, children from that household are then trained in the hunting of animals and perhaps, the security of the community.

Talents as gifts from the gods can manifest in various forms. They include craftsmanship in the production of local guns, farming, and household tools as well as services such as traditional medical care, music, security to mention just a few. One may even argue that traditional African societies are organized along the lines of clan or family giftedness or talents; a trend that is still seen in contemporary Africa. For instance, it is common to see apprenticeship practices in contemporary Nigeria mostly facilitated along with family and ethnic/tribal lines. That is, specific talents for production, services or trade are associated and identifiable with specific ethnic groups in Nigeria. The bronze making people of Igun in Edo State, Nigeria is a good example of the conception of talent as the basis of a person's/people's identity/personality or career trajectory. The Igun people are known for their creative artworks of bronze. In traditional as well as in contemporary Nigeria, there is a belief that the gods specially bestowed this talent on the Igun people of Edo State. It is also believed that this talent stays within the people. As a result, a non-Igun person is not allowed to learn the skill. The Igun people are only one example, other examples include guns-smiting making by the Awka people in Anambra state and parts of Benue State in Northcentral Nigeria. These beliefs and practices helped to establish a functional education system in traditional or pre-colonial Nigeria.

Linking education to youth employment in traditional/pre-colonial Nigeria

It was observed from the above, that traditional Africans and specifically, Nigerians saw employment as something that is created through the talents given by the gods. Consequently, they also believed that it is not enough to be gifted or talented but that these talents or gifts should be nurtured/developed through a traditional system of education known as an apprenticeship. In other words, the recognition of innate ability (talent) to be nurtured through apprenticeship under a talented master constitutes a significant aspect of education in traditional/pre-colonial Nigeria.

In pre-colonial Nigeria, young people received education and training in skills through interaction with the environment (Mosweunyane, 2013: 52). Learning through interaction with the environment, especially one's local environment, helps to understand one's local problem and what is needed to solve it. It also helps to domesticate solutions for solving the problems. This is in contrast to Western education that is now prevalent in Nigeria. The prevalent education system and specifically, the existing education curriculum in Nigeria is not only foreign, it also does allow interaction between students and their immediate environment. First, there seems to be a disconnection between the learner's personality and the education provided. Second, learners seem to get foreign knowledge that has no relationship with local applications. Third, learning is mostly theoretical rather than practical.

Furthermore, learning through interaction with one's immediate environment (where environment refers to the man himself, and other physical and abstract realities) seems to align with the conception of education as that which brings out the positive values within an individual. Consequently, education is defined as all the processes through which a young person especially develops his/her latent talents/abilities that are of positive value to the society in which he lives. This is the goal of traditional African or Nigerian system of education. The educational system in pre-colonial Nigeria was functional in assigning roles to those (the young) who were being educated. As a result of being an interaction with the environment, education of the young in pre-colonial Nigeria was also practical. Young people could easily connect to what was being

taught. For instance, the fishery was not taught in the classroom. The fishery was learnt by either going to the river to fish with one's parents or groups of fishermen.

Ironically, however, contemporary Nigerian system has shifted significantly away from that system of functional education. The idea of classroom lectures with mostly abstract knowledge that young learners can neither relate to their world nor connect to their talent/natural ability makes education in contemporary Nigeria less efficient in tackling the country's youth employment crisis. This became prevalent with the introduction of Western indoctrination of the white-collar job. For example, the so-called white-collar jobs made the *agbe ko ya's* (those who are traditionally farmers in Yoruba speaking part of Nigeria) to abandon farming. The youths in the Niger-Delta region who are culturally talented in fishing no longer have an interest in fishing but in oil company jobs.

The white-collar job syndrome has led to a mass chase of the so-called 'lucrative' courses in tertiary institutions. In today's Nigeria, adolescents and youths seeking admissions into tertiary institutions disregard their natural abilities, talents or what they are passionate about when applying to study in higher institutions. For instance, some people have natural abilities to give care, others to speak articulately and fluently, some others to construct and build. The recognition of these facts should guide one's choice of study. However, this is largely not the case in Nigeria today, as evidence shows that the majority of university applicants choose courses in the Medical Sciences, Engineering, Law, and Accountancy. Their choices are mostly based on the belief that these courses are more lucrative than others. Societal, parental and peer pressure also influence the choices young people make on the career direction to follow. To that extent, it is useful to consider how two important debates in youth studies interface with the TCT.

The TCT and its interface with nature-nurture and structure-agency debates in Nigeria as a model

Focusing on the talent of an individual as a solution to some aspects of the youth employment question – youth unemployment, youth underemployment, and youth employability is further explained using two key debates in youth studies. These are the nature vs. nurture, and structure vs. agency debates. On the one hand, nature vs. nurture dispute revolves around the question of whether it is the genetic/biological makeup of a person that determines that person's life-course or whether it is the person's environment. On the other hand, the structure vs. agency controversy involves how social, cultural, and political structures stand in the ways of a person's free will and choice (Cote, 2014: 56-59). Let us take each debate and see how they interface or with or relate to the TCT for youth employment and employability.

The most influential point in the nature debate as spear-headed by Hall's 'storm and stress' theory of 1904 is that the negative behaviour of young people is a result of genetic disorder inherent in the youth period. This view is rather one-sided because young people should not be thought of only merely as a problem to be solved. It might also be instructive to think of young people as

being naturally gifted. In other words, to see youth as a resource. Thinking of the youth as a naturally gifted category for a solution can help nurture them to actualize their potential or direct it for employment creation and development. This point seems to strike a bridge or compatibility rather than a divide between the nature-nurture disputes because, if we agreed young people are gifted, then we will see the need to nurture their gifts. Again, it appears quite direct to link talents to the nature side of the debate since talent is a natural ability. Indeed, the stakes are high politically if we saw in the youth talents to nurture and develop towards work life. The government would then have to take responsibility for youth development and direction regarding their talents. Specifically, the Nigerian government would have to re-structure the education system towards the recognition and development of latent talent in the young.

At the structure-agency level and its relation to the talent-career trajectory and youth employment, the focus is on how societal structure (including parental and peer-pressure) and education attempts to stereotype young people and thereby preventing their *agentic* flow/expression of talent and enterprise on the one hand. On the other hand, the structure-agency dispute can also manifest in how cultural elements such as communalism, anachronism, and authoritarianism restrict and stunt the expression of human development (Michael, 2020: 41) of talents and enterprise in young people. We find, for instance, cases where the community's will to follow certain career paths overshadows the individual's will and interest to follow her/his natural flair. We also find in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular, how an unwillingness to jettison a system or ways of doing things that no longer fit into or meet current needs. Further, we equally find overt intolerance younger people by older people. These all constitute structural obstacles. The effects of these structural obstacles are real in repressing talents in the youth and consequently manifesting in their inability to be creative, innovative, and adventurous in issues related to employment, employability, and maybe underemployment.

To further illustrate how structural obstacles the development of natural talent in young people in Nigeria, we only need to examine how employment and/or career choices and decisions are made and influenced. In Nigeria, young people are not usually given the freedom to decide their employment or career path. It is rather forced on them especially when it is not a 'so-called' lucrative or professional path Medical Sciences, Engineering, Law, and Accountancy to mention just a few. This is done without the consideration of the suitability of the person to the course or career which could create problems of getting a job, fitting well into a job, job satisfaction, and low or poor productivity among others. This societal expectation explains the high number of candidates applying for some of the 'so-called' professional courses in Nigerian universities. The consequence of having a majority of the youth category applying for the 'so-called lucrative' courses which are themselves few is that other areas of knowledge and need are then neglected or seen and treated as inferior. This also has implications for the perception of those who did not study the 'so-called' lucrative courses or are not engaged in the 'so-called' lucrative jobs (Michael, 2012: 45).

Meanwhile, the ideal is for the society to create the right environment to allow free expression, development, and nurturing of young people's natural abilities; bearing in mind that each of us has at least, one thing we are most suitable at performing. And, that given the right training, we will be the best at that one and/or two thing(s). This perspective is fundamental, and other approaches to tackle the youth employment crisis in Nigeria such as the series of government intervention programmes started over two decades ago might as well be and remain palliatives.

In what follows, I attempt an exploration of perceived inconsistency in the strategies – SURE-P, N-Power, Amnesty, and NYIF programmes – adopted by successive governments in Nigeria from 2012 to 2015 and from 2015 till date for tackling the youth employment crisis.

Conclusion

Talking of fitting a square peg in a round hole, Nigeria, in particular, seems to have an entrenched practice of working against the natural course of events which also explains why it has not been very successful in its education, training, and other attempts towards youth employment. An example of the point at issue, that is, the entrenched practice of not allowing people to do what they have natural and educational training in, is seen in the various ministerial appointments of the current government, where the minister of labour and productivity is a medical doctor. The ministries of education and youth development are headed by a journalist and an engineer respectively. Nothing good can come out of the paradox of having three interrelated ministries headed and led by non-experts whose training, education, and most probably their natural talents/abilities contrast the offices they are appointed into.

In the final analysis, this paper has explored the importance of TCT in resolving some aspects of the youth employment crisis such as unemployment, underemployment, and employability in Nigeria. This paper began with the assertion that although talent may have been overrated it should not be underrated. Thus, in fashioning a viable solution to the problems under study in Nigeria, this paper has explored an in-depth philosophical analysis of the inextricable link between employment creation, career and the human nature with regards to talent. It advanced the argument that the TCT, unlike other strategies that are merely palliative and temporary, is a more sustained system of responding to youth employment creation in Nigeria.

I advance two suggestions to achieve the vision of the TCT. First, there should be an acknowledgement and recognition of, and the belief in the central role of the human natural ability/talent, particularly in creating and finding employment as well as in building and developing a career. Second, consequent on the above, we must rethink especially, basic and post-basic education by modifying parts of the curriculum in Nigeria to direct it towards the discovery and development of the talents of young people. Our defense of the TCT is based on the assumption that there is no labour market need in particular or human need in general that does not have a corresponding potential or actual solution in the human capacity or talent. In other words, human talent even in its raw state is potentially equipped to meet human needs at every level – primitive and advanced such as modern technological needs. However, human raw talents need to be refined, improved upon, cultivated, and developed through education and training that connects and channels human talents to reality.

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