

ALLEVIATING POVERTY USING THE VISUAL ARTS TEMPLATE IN 21ST CENTURY NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

The benefits of Visual Arts in national development cannot be fully realized as long as it is treated as an unimportant aspect of Nigeria's educational program. The effect of this neglect is the inability to harness young people to develop local human and material resources for the Nigeria of the 21st century that we envision. Even though poverty alleviation occupies center stage in global recognition, any government genuinely interested in meaningful development is focused on accelerated technological advancement, as advocated by the United Nations Organization. This is why Vocational and Technical Education, of which Visual Arts is a pivotal aspect, is listed as one of the cardinal goals to achieve the comprehensive technological development that the United Nations advocates. Hence, it is evident that only a few countries have made significant progress through the Visual Arts. Unlike many countries in Africa, where every parent desires their children to study glamorous courses like medicine and law, this mindset drives these nations deeper into poverty, affecting the lives of younger generations. This paper aims to highlight the benefits of Visual Arts and how it can alleviate poverty for the 21st-century Nigeria of our dreams. Therefore, the paper emphasizes the advantages of Vocational and Technical Education in alleviating poverty through the effective utilization of Visual Arts for sustainable, comprehensive development and technological advancement of Nigeria among developed nations' committees.

Keywords: *Visual Arts, Alleviation of Poverty, Potentials, 21st Century Nigeria.*

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, the role of Visual Art in national development has not been fully appreciated. Visual Art has long been treated as an insignificant aspect of the country's educational development. It is well known that education plays an important role in national development. Visual Art is one of the subjects in the curriculum that includes many skills-oriented components such as pottery, drawing, graphics, painting, textile design, sculpture, and craft. Visual Art can therefore be defined as a discipline that trains individuals to organize shape, color, and space to achieve certain emotional and visual effects. According to Adeyemo

(1986), this allows individuals to reason alongside their exposure to training in the Visual Arts to solve the problems of poverty. Since any serious nation desires to provide a life of abundance for its citizenry, the Visual Arts could serve as a major platform to alleviate the poverty of the people. This means that with Visual Arts, people learn to grow up as useful members of society. Just as Ogunmola (2006) described, Visual Art is a form of human expression, and it is of great importance in education as it helps individuals fit into society. Additionally, Ajayi (1985) emphasized that Visual Art plays a meaningful role in the development of a child who becomes increasingly aware of himself and his environment. According to Gage, as cited in Ajayi (1985), Visual Arts can be termed an aspect of education that encourages freedom of expression, emotional and spiritual values, and integrates togetherness in all human capacities. Hence, one can conclude that every child's development benefits from being skillful and creative, resulting in self-discovery and experimentation with a series of art materials found within their environment.

Nigeria, being a vastly rich country with abundant human and natural resources that have not been fully utilized, can achieve this through the Visual Arts. This means all-around development for the people. In turn, this will ensure social and economic development for Nigeria among the committee of developing nations. Although poverty in Nigeria remains very high despite all efforts aimed at ensuring economic growth, Visual Arts, which focuses heavily on skills acquisition and usage, will significantly contribute to Nigeria's growth in all aspects. With Geoffrey Parker's (2001) assertion that Nigeria has one of the world's highest economic growth rates in the last decade, one can conclude that by engaging youths trained in their skills through Visual Arts, Nigeria can ensure a well-developed economy. This also guarantees the full utilization of natural resources, such as oil. Consequently, this will help reduce poverty, which remains at a high level, allowing it to become outdated in the life of Nigeria as a nation. This implies that the Visual Arts are fundamental to the efforts aimed at reducing poverty. This can be deduced from the conclusion of Sanusi (2020) that "the essence of any work of art is the link such work had with the mindset person who produced it and its usefulness to the society where it emerged from. " Even though Nigeria is rich in natural resources, the poverty rate has reached an alarming level where the majority (about 90%) of its population lives below the poverty line. This is evident from the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) report since 1980, which indicates that the majority of Nigerians fall within the core poverty bracket. Despite the aforementioned FOS report obtained from its website, which categorized Nigeria as the 20th poorest nation, poverty can still be overcome if Visual Arts, which focus on training based on individuals' natural skills and their utilization according to individual aptitudes and competencies, are given adequate consideration in the nation's educational policy.

Visual Arts as a means of Skills Acquisition to alleviate Poverty

Just as Visual Arts is all about skills acquisition, so is skills acquisition the practice of

training people in the basic aptitudes needed for various vocations. It is a program designed to meet the individual needs of a person based on their natural talents. It can be acquired through formal education or not at all. It includes those who need to sustain their individually endowed talents for survival and development. Hence, skills acquisition depends on a structured program based on these skills, as provided for in Visual Arts, to meet the needs of every individual, enabling them to fit into society and contribute to its overall development. This means that the skills acquisition for which Visual Arts is essential is very important for the development of any serious-minded society. It can be deduced that it is a pivotal means of overcoming poverty, unemployment, and, above all, ensuring massive job creation for younger generations. According to Abubakar, Abdulkadir, and Sanjo (2010), an estimated 600,000 graduates come out of Nigerian institutions yearly, looking for white-collar jobs that are not available. Therefore, for these youths to be productively engaged, the need to incorporate Visual Arts into educational policy can no longer be ignored to cater to these graduating youths. This will strengthen skills acquisition based on individual aptitudes and, in turn, reduce poverty as well as ensure job creation for every graduating youth. It will engage the younger generation meaningfully along their individual skills. This will lower the level of unemployment and, in turn, poverty among the citizenry to its barest level. As opined by Uko-Akpulu (2009), at this time when the world is recovering from a global recession, the acquisition of skills is the only fundamental antidote for alleviating poverty and a means of increasing the number of jobs for every youth within the Nigerian nation.

According to this scholar, the structure of the Nigerian education system, which places significant emphasis on university degrees, needs to be overhauled to include Visual Arts if the country aims to achieve its goals of alleviating poverty and creating employment for the younger generation. In any society where the younger generation is prepared to develop their natural skills, a comfortable life is expected, one well-nourished by a sound economic base. This is the type of society where the acquisition of skills associated with the Visual Arts can be realized. Skills acquisition, represented by Visual Arts programs, holds great potential for alleviating poverty through occupational preparedness. As the present world trends toward globalized technological advancement, it is necessary for developing nations like Nigeria to reform their educational policies to incorporate Visual Arts into their curricula. This will equip the nation to face the challenges of providing for its younger generation as they leave school. Since creativity and innovation are integral to skills acquisition, entrepreneurship based on these skills is both relevant and sustainable. The ability of citizens to create wealth, generate employment for others, and achieve self-reliance through innovative application of ideas based on skills ultimately determines their standard of living, making them valuable members of society. As opined by Tijjani and Aliyu (2008), this frees such individuals from poverty of all forms and types.

In this regard, skills acquisition, represented by Visual Arts, is the most viable means of equipping the youth with the techniques needed to develop their potential. This, in turn, creates a conducive environment where every individual can strive to keep up with current world development patterns. Hence, in the present democratic dispensation, it is expected that all efforts will be geared towards poverty reduction through skills acquisition, which is what Visual Arts is all about. In the opinion of these scholars, this will foster a self-reliant attitude in every individual, as well as their ability to develop their own technology in relation to economic, socio-cultural, and environmental factors. These scholars further opined that aptitudinal competencies can be learned through skills acquisition, as this provides the potential for developing manpower that will promote both social and economic growth, as well as all-around development. Just as Nwigwe (1998) emphasized, all skills provide meaningful preparation for any occupational and entrepreneurial activities.

Poverty in the Nigerian Nation

Poverty is the state of having insufficient resources. It is a lack of basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, and access to essential amenities like water and healthcare services. Nigeria, despite being recognized for its oil riches, has a larger percentage of poor people suffering from poverty. The reality of this situation is that corruption, joblessness among graduating youths, and inequalities in the distribution of basic amenities have destroyed the nation's economic prospects, leading to widespread poverty among the citizenry. Among the major causes of poverty are the following:

Corruption is a fundamental factor contributing to the high levels of poverty in Nigeria. The majority of scholars agree that it is the greatest impediment preventing Nigeria from prospering. This issue manifests in the lives of citizens every day and extends across businesses and government at all levels.

Joblessness among youths: The increasing level of joblessness among the youth has also worsened the extreme poverty afflicting the country. Only about a third of young people are gainfully employed. The country also suffers from various issues stemming from mismanagement and embezzlement, which in turn hinders the development and progress of its economy.

Inequality: In Nigeria, many resources are primarily reserved for the wealthy and affluent who can afford them. Additionally, corruption within the government exacerbates the inequalities between the political elite and those living in poverty.

According to the World Poverty Clock report, more than 13 million people in Nigeria are currently experiencing poverty. This situation pushes the estimated number of Nigerians living in extreme poverty to over 105 million, which represents more than half of the 205 million population.

Alleviation of Poverty by Various Levels of Government in Nigeria

There were various steps taken by the Government at different levels to reduce the level of poverty amongst the citizenry. However, amongst the major holistic measures taken so far are the following-

1. **Increased efforts towards intense skill development:** One of the major steps in reducing poverty in Nigeria is through the reintroduction of Vocational and Technical Education. Governments at all levels now embark on enlightenment programs to encourage interest in skill-oriented forms of education like Visual Arts. Every government now believes that an education like Visual Arts can provide a lasting solution to poverty in Nigeria. Omoniyi (2013) reveals that quality education that depends on skills can improve economic efficiency. By expanding the labor force, this encourages more value for work and efficiency in jobs, thereby subsequently moving people out of poverty.
2. **Intense fight against corruption:** Just as education reduces poverty in the long run, so too can the fight against corruption lead to a decrease in poverty levels in any serious-minded nation. Therefore, the need to combat corruption will naturally result in a complete alleviation of poverty, something that can easily be achieved through Visual Arts, an aspect of education that revolves around the full use of naturally endowed talents and gifted skills. Similarly, the absence of a system in place for punishing corrupt public office holders, which has allowed for the diversion of funds meant for infrastructural development, has significantly aggravated the escalating level of widespread poverty affecting the lives of younger Nigerians. With a properly institutionalized system in place to hold offending public officers accountable for their wrongdoings, the issue of poverty can be effectively addressed and eliminated by productively engaging the younger generation through the Visual Arts.
3. **Diversification of the Economy:** Just as the oil discovery assisted the country, it has also significantly impacted the nation. This reliance on oil as the sole source of revenue has become a major cause of poverty in Nigeria. This situation exposes the Nigerian economy to fragility. Therefore, there is a need to diversify the economy to create more opportunities for younger Nigerians to be productively engaged, both individually and collectively. This will ensure the full utilization of local technologies, relying on their naturally endowed talents and skills. This approach will create job opportunities for every citizen, ultimately alleviating poverty and influencing the overall stability of the economy. Thus, the diversification of the Nigerian economy will enhance and add value to other sectors that can help relieve poverty among younger generations. Just as Abu et al. (2016) opined that the lack of encouragement in the production of agricultural products in Nigeria has led to lower returns for practicing farmers.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) (2018), over 50% of farm produce in Nigeria is produced in rural areas, resulting in these products having little or no commercial value.

4. **Redistribution of Income Sources:** It is also important to emphasize the need to redistribute all sources of income within the Nigerian nation. This means that reducing wages and allowances for the political class is necessary to ensure that incomes are widely spread, benefiting every sector and positively impacting every member of the Nigerian nation. This approach paves the way for a more balanced distribution of income. In other words, increasing wages and allowances for low- and middle-income earners will automatically redistribute income to benefit the majority of the younger generation, who make up more than two-thirds of the Nigerian population. This, therefore, fosters widespread productivity. As a result, it leads to increased job opportunities for youths through skill-dependent employment. By facilitating the productive engagement of younger generations in careers aligned with their aptitudes, every individual can secure employment, earn a living, and access the necessities of life. Thus, this will contribute to a complete reduction in poverty and manifest as accelerated economic development for a developing nation like Nigeria in the 21st century, which everyone aspires to achieve or dreams of.

Alleviating Poverty in Nigeria Nation of the 21st Century

To overcome the ravaging scourge of joblessness, which has led to widespread poverty among the younger generation, the following steps are not negotiable. Among these notable steps are as follows:-

- Implementation of a skill-oriented form of education. The absence of this aspect of education within the Nigerian Curriculum has been the fundamental cause of joblessness, which in turn has resulted in the poverty currently ravaging the landscape of 21st-century Nigeria. According to Adekoya, Ewubare, and Mark (2018), the inability of Nigeria to function as a 21st-century nation stems from the lack of knowledge based on naturally endowed skills. This situation has led these scholars to conclude that it has directed Nigeria towards acute poverty. Based on the empirical studies carried out by these scholars in 2018, it was revealed that the underdevelopment of human resources is a result of the under-utilization of younger generations. This is due to a misplaced priority in Nigeria's educational policies, which have regarded fanciful professions like medicine and law as means of taking Nigeria to a promised land. Unlike other nations that have prioritized skill-oriented forms of education in their curriculum, this is undoubtedly what has actually led Nigeria into the depths of acute poverty that it (the Nigerian nation) currently finds itself in.

- Corruption caused by the monetization of political offices is a major factor contributing to the high level of poverty in Nigeria. According to Transparency International (2018), Nigeria is currently placed 144th among the 180 least corrupt nations in the world, which highlights the extent of corruption in 21st-century Nigeria. Undoubtedly, corruption discourages youths from using their God-given talents to positively develop the country, instead encouraging them to seek quick wealth through the misuse of such skills. This, in turn, threatens the socio-economic development of the Nigerian nation and its prospects for prosperity in the 21st century. It also impedes all-around employment opportunities, which automatically translates into diminished investment prospects for the nation. As opined by Ajisafe (2016), corruption diverts government spending away from social values and accepted norms, making the provision of goods and services, such as access to basic amenities like education and health, elusive for the younger generations. This situation contributes to the current level of poverty in 21st-century Nigeria.
- Restlessness among younger generations arising from joblessness. This is another root cause of poverty in 21st-century Nigeria. As a result of this phenomenon, the economic prosperity of the nation has been gravely affected in many ways. Among these ways is the misuse of God-given talents by many of the younger generations. A good example is the crises in Northern Nigeria caused by Boko Haram, which have destroyed the economy of most parts of Northern Nigeria. The majority of farmers in these areas were left without any means of livelihood. This has created a total breakdown of law and order, where the populace is now attacked without checks, while many younger generations divert their skills into kidnappings and other vices for money. This, in turn, aggravates the level of poverty within the 21st-century Nigerian nation.

The Alleviation of Poverty through Visual Arts:

As opined by Abdullahi (1998), many of the aforementioned factors have enabled poverty to thrive in a society like Nigeria. Just as emphasized by Ajayi (1985), those who possess genuine knowledge of art lack the capital necessary to establish themselves and train the younger generation. Even the lackadaisical attitude of every level of government towards the Visual Arts, as a pivotal agent in reshaping each younger generation, is concerning. The opportunities this form of education could have offered the country are immeasurable. This indicates that these individuals could have positively harnessed their natural endowments and potentially transformed Nigeria into a 21st-century nation. I believe that if this aspect of education is given a prominent place in the curriculum, many parents will view it more favorably. This will, therefore, shift the perception of many parents who have seen Visual Arts as an education for academic layabouts or as a refuge for societal dropouts. As emphasized by Ogunmola (2006), this form of education

develops natural skills, broadens the knowledge of youth, and prepares them to utilize available local technologies. According to this scholar, it expands their perspectives and cognitive abilities, enabling them to rely on their natural endowments for a living and become key players in the accelerated development of Nigeria towards the 21st century. Hence, there is a need for every government body at all levels to recognize the benefits derived from Visual Arts as a means to develop and enhance individuals' natural skills for the betterment of mankind and the nation at large.

This aspect of education justifies itself as a veritable platform through which a nation's socio-economic development can be achieved. Thus, it proves useful in alleviating poverty in the Nigerian nation in the 21st century. Consequently, Visual Arts can be employed in various ways to combat the acute poverty ravaging the lives of the younger generation and hindering Nigeria's accelerated development towards becoming a realistic 21st-century nation. Among the major methods are as follows:

- (a) ***Veritable platform for providing jobs for the younger generation:*** Through Visual Arts, all other subjects and disciplines in the curriculum are equipped with skillfully relevant manpower needs. This is achieved by placing individuals with different aptitudes into specific careers or professions. Just as Ogunmola (2006) concluded in his studies, by training individuals to acquire necessary skills suitable for a chosen profession, Visual Arts instill in every person the abilities needed to use their naturally endowed talents productively. This means that those who pursue Visual Arts as a foundation for their education are prepared against joblessness. This effectively means that the group of students who specialize in Visual Arts after their schooling become employers themselves, just as they employ others. Examples can be found in individuals like Olayinka Ayefele, Oriyomi Hamzat, Aliko Dangote, Femi Otedola, and many others. This implies that thousands of people like these within the Nigerian nation can completely eliminate poverty and transform the nation into a 21st-century country. This is because Visual Arts, as a skills-oriented form of education, has instilled in these individuals the ability to rely on their natural talents while also providing employment to others. As Sanusi (2006, 2009, and 2020) expressed in many of his writings on this form of education. Since Visual Arts provides a means of livelihood for individuals based on their built-in skills, every younger generation will be productively engaged. This brings Nigeria from a state of complete abject poverty to a realistic nation of the 21st century. This positions the nation within the community of economically advancing nations capable of competing effectively with other developed countries such as America, the UK, Canada, China, India, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and others.

- (b) ***The platinum standard for providing income for younger generations:*** Visual Arts, as it emphasizes skill development and application, offers a means of income generation for every individual trained in this discipline. A typical example can be found in Agbo (1993), who wrote on man's effort in environmental beautification many years ago. According to this scholar, ever since man has been living in urban clusters, towns, and cities, he has used sculpture to commemorate important events and glorify worthy personalities. It is clear that this has served as a means of income for the artists who engage in the production of these sculptural works, paintings, and industrial art. Visual Arts trains every individual to harness their naturally given talents and develop necessary skills applicable to their various professional paths. Therefore, someone trained according to their aptitudinal capabilities can utilize local technologies to invent and create valuable items, which in turn grants them access to the basics of life in order to earn a living. A classical example can be found in Olayinka Ayefele, who utilized his iconic voice to establish Fresh FM Nigeria. This also earns him a living apart from his musical career and provides jobs for others, thereby helping to mitigate poverty among younger generations.
- (c) ***Encourages Creativity and Imaginative Reasoning:*** With Visual Art, younger generations are encouraged to take advantage of existing local technologies to create wonderful scientific innovations that benefit other members of society. This means that individuals' powers of manipulation and innovation are developed according to their capabilities. It is an aspect of education that encourages every citizen to package ideas in a way that makes them widely acceptable and marketable. This provides such products with a unique outlook and branded identity, making every mind agile and always ready to generate new ideas. Just like Aremu (1993) noted the importance of art as a means of reasoning and creativity. Examples can be found in many restaurants that have incorporated customized packaging into their products. With the above, every young individual is encouraged to make innovative discoveries to earn a living and rely less on society for survival. This eventually alleviates poverty among youths and advances the Nigerian nation into a true 21st century.
- (d) ***Reorganize younger generations to live self-dependent lives:*** As Ajayi (1985) cited from Haggery (1940- 1965), Visual Arts is a kind of program meant to develop the attitudinal skills of the younger generation. It facilitates the realization of the potentialities of every individual, enabling this group to live their lives without relying on others for survival. With Visual Arts, younger generations become productive elements, useful to themselves, and in turn, earn a living, which makes them self-dependent. According to Sanusi (2001), a well-trained worker will be more productive and lead a self-dependent lifestyle than one trained to practice his/her career only within a

set pattern, especially in glamorous fields like Medicine, Law, Accounting, and so on. According to Sanusi (2006), individuals in this aspect of education (Visual Arts) will be well prepared for life after school. This means that such individuals will be able to earn a living that enables them to access the necessities of life and not become a burden to the 21st-century Nigerian nation. Hence, younger individuals are now presented with job opportunities, which ultimately minimizes poverty among the youth in the long run.

- (e) ***Encourages Creativity in younger generations:*** According to Sanusi (2020), every individual is a creative person naturally endowed with one talent or another. In the opinion of this scholar, many jobs are not visually arts inclined but require technical skills. This is something that Visual Arts strives to achieve in every human being. This means that with training in this form of education, individuals are guided in making intelligent use of their in-built talents to earn a living. As cited by Sanusi (2020 and 2023) in Lowenfeld (1985), the word "creativity" is termed as 'a constructively productive behaviour that can be regarded as an action or accomplishment'. It is unique to the world and does not have to be a completely new innovation from an individual. Creativeness is the manifestation of the gift known as "talents. " It is an act of invention that can pique society's interest, allowing the individual to be regarded as an asset. According to thinkers like Agbo (1993), ceramics, for example, has remained one of the most useful art forms ever developed by early man. In this scholar's opinion, ceramic wares have remained a widely used form of Visual Arts ever since, despite modern civilization. As opined by Sanusi (2023), no other aspect of education has equipped individuals with the requisite skills, imagination, and artistic vision more than Visual Arts. Individuals trained in this field are absorbed into industries to utilize their refined skills to contribute to national development and help shape a genuine Nigerian nation. Such individuals might even become employers of labor, advancing Nigeria into the 21st century. In conclusion, the ability to think creatively enables younger generations to earn money and reduce poverty among youth.
- (f) ***Overcoming the rate of social vices tendencies in younger generations:*** Having been prepared by Visual Arts, younger individuals are now wage earners and creators of jobs for others. This means that every younger Nigerian is already groomed to make money, enabling them to lead a comfortable lifestyle. This, in turn, makes them assets to themselves and useful to others by providing a means of livelihood. Consequently, this creates jobs for young people, curtailing the rate of poverty and positively impacting the Nigerian nation, helping it to become a 21st-century nation. An example can be found in the establishment of the "Western Nigeria Security Network," popularly called "AMOTEKUN," by the state

government of the western part of Nigeria. This organization uses youths with security skills to combat local security challenges. Not only this, another example is the establishment of the "Parks Management System" in most parts of Nigeria. This setup productively engages youths with anti-social tendencies, allowing them to positively use their skills to earn a living and contribute to safer travel along the roads. In a nutshell, all these aforementioned examples are platforms for overcoming anti-social vices and alleviating poverty within the Nigerian nation of the 21st century.

- (g) *Encourages the use of existing Technologies to invent monumental discoveries:* Individuals trained in Visual Arts are prepared to produce monumentally useful discoveries for the benefit of fellow humankind and the advancement of the society they live in, which reduces the rate of poverty and brings the Nigerian nation into the 21st-century community of nations. Therefore, for any serious-minded government, income can be generated through such wonderful monumental innovations via exports to other nations, since every younger generation is productively engaged to be self-dependent. This could easily serve as a means of alleviating poverty and ensuring recognition for Nigeria as a 21st-century nation.

What Visual Arts can do to alleviate Poverty in 21st Century Nigeria:

Arising from the 2001 Kuru Declaration, which envisioned a truly great nation for Nigeria among African democratic nations in the 21st century. A nation that is politically united, has productively integrated youth, is remuneratively stable, economically prosperous, and socially organized. A nation where equal opportunities are provided for all. A nation where the responsibility of ensuring the availability of the basic necessities of life is of paramount importance. The determination to become the catalyst of the African Renaissance is the mindset of the government of the day. This is achieved by ensuring that the younger generation is afforded all-embracing opportunities to become self-dependent through a skills-oriented form of education known as Visual Arts. Thus, making Nigeria a country that contributes sub-regionally, regionally, and globally as a 21st-century nation.

However, Visual Arts, with its emphasis on skill development, envisions stronger connections between the younger generation's maximization of their individual natural talents and earning remuneration to sustain a living. It also serves as a catalyst for stimulating rapid industrial development and the efficient utilization of local resources and technologies to advance Nigeria into a realistic 21st century. Based on the foregoing, Visual Arts can be utilized as a cutting edge to propel the Nigerian nation into a realistic 21st century through the following: Among these are:

- (a) **By Equipping the younger generations:** With visual arts becoming self-dependent, opportunities for employment are available for individuals to

create wealth for themselves. It empowers people to take advantage of these opportunities to work hard and earn a living. This, in turn, curtails corruption as everyone becomes self-dependent and comfortable. By investing in this form of education, the most vulnerable members of society are equipped with the necessary skills to rely on their abilities to productively utilize local technologies to earn money and alleviate each other's poverty. Thereby propelling the development of the Nigerian nation as a whole.

- (b) ***By promoting an enabling environment for innovations from the younger generation:*** Through visual arts, individuals are provided with a platform that encourages creative thinking to utilize available resources in producing goods and services. This not only allows these individuals to earn a living, but also creates means of remuneration for others. Consequently, these individuals become the engines of economic growth and prosperity for a nation like Nigeria. They excel as translators of ideas into reality, executors of innovations, investors in personal discoveries, and managers of uniquely packaged businesses. Meanwhile, the government fulfills its role as a caring enabler, an affectionate facilitator, and a responsive regulator. This propels the younger generations to develop new ideas, create jobs, and generate wealth for everyone, particularly for the nation as a whole. Changing the way individuals think, visual arts aim to fundamentally alter people's orientation and inspire faith in skills development and usage, rather than fostering a craze for non-existent, ready-made jobs. Governments at various levels are now empowering individuals to become more skilled in their professional pursuits, thereby cultivating a more efficient younger generation through the visual Arts as a platform.

CONCLUSION

Since Visual Arts is a subject that can bring wealth to individuals and employment to others, it is essential to change the societal perception of this discipline. This is to motivate every individual to have a creative mind. Although there are always plans and programs designed to address the issue of alleviating poverty, it is sad to note that little has been done to maximize Visual Art as a dependable agent to create jobs for everyone and guide them toward a self-dependent lifestyle.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote Visual Arts as a platform for national development; policies need to be adjusted to make this form of education fundamental in the curriculum.
- Ensure that the training of Visual Arts education trainers and teachers includes regular development to enhance their skills.
- Visual arts need to be made compulsory at all levels in schools.
- Create budget items that facilitate the professional integration of talented art graduates from arts institutions.

- 8. Organizing seminars, workshops, exhibitions, and learning activities for specialists in Visual Arts at all levels will significantly contribute to alleviating poverty in the land.

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