

A MODEL FOR “SKILLING UGANDA” TO PRODUCE JOB MAKERS MORE EFFECTIVELY

Prof. John C. Ssekamwa, Ph.D., Dip.Ed
St Lawrence University, Mengo, Kampala

Abstract

The author wanted in this research to find out whether the jargon of the Ministry of Education and Sports which is called “Skilling Uganda”, is an innovation in the education system of Uganda. The idea behind “Skilling Uganda” is to emphasize the teaching of practical technical skills in the Uganda education system to produce job makers to reduce unemployment in Uganda. The author used the historical chronological method of research while Prof. Asavia Wandira’s proposition of “Fashion in Education” underpinned this study. The author found out that the jargon “Skilling Uganda” which is used by the Ministry of Education and Sports is not an innovation in the Uganda Education system. It expresses the same old education issue of teaching practical technical skills so that after graduation, many former students should create their own jobs instead of seeking employment. The author concluded that the new jargon of “Skilling Uganda” is meant to focus a greater attention to teaching practical technical skills in Uganda’s education system now to produce job makers to fight against unemployment. This idea had been tried in the past but it failed to produce job makers. As an intervention, the author has proposed a model which will make “Skilling Uganda” more effective in producing job makers. He has called this model. THE JOB EQUIPPED GRADUATE MODEL

Key words: Skilling Uganda, Education, job makers, fashion, model

Introduction

Historically, the Uganda education system has been teaching students practical technical skills with the view that many of them would create their own jobs after graduation from schools of any description.

Production Learning

During the pre-colonial period, the approach to education to produce job creators was being called “Production Learning”. Learners studied as they produced, or they produced as they learned (Ssekamwa, 1996).

Education for Adaptation to the Environment

The 1924/25 Phelps Stokes Commission which the British government sent to Uganda from New York, USA called this practical technical education “Education for Adaptation to the environment”. That Commission wanted to see that the Uganda education system, should educate many graduates with the view of producing very many Ugandans with the attitude of creating their own jobs, instead of going out to seek jobs from the government departments, or from employers who owned commercial enterprisers, or from individual employers. (The 1925 Phelps Stokes Commission Report).

The Comprehensive education

During the 1950s, the drive for the education system of Uganda to produce job makers was spearheaded by the 1951 Binns Study Group. That education commission was sent to East Africa by the British Parliament in London to recommend drastic developments in the education systems of Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi and Zambia to prepare people in the above countries for independence ahead. (The 1951 Binns Study Group Report).

The 1951 Binns Study Group called practical technical education “Comprehensive Education”, to produce many students who would create their own employment instead of seeking that employment from

government establishments, companies and from individual employers.

Basic Education Integrated into Rural Development

The drive to produce job makers under the new independent Uganda government, 1962 – 67, was called “Basic Education Integrated into Rural Development”. Eventually this initiative was given the familiar name of the Namutamba Practical Curriculum Project. (Rukare 1974).

Basic Education for National Development

The 1987 Senteza Kajubi Education Commission set up arrangements to teach practical technical skills in the education system. This drive was intended to produce job creators and not job seekers from government departments, company establishments and from individual employers. The 1987 Senteza Kajubi Education Commission called that drive Basic Education for National Development (BEND). (The 1989 National Education Policy Review Commission Report).

The 1987 Senteza Kajubi Education Commission advised as follows

At Primary school level, the first four years would be for teaching literacy and numeracy. The next four years would be to consolidate literacy and numeracy, but the largest time should be devoted to teaching and learning practical subjects.

At the secondary school level, two kinds of schools would be teaching practical subjects with the purpose of producing job makers.

One category of such secondary schools were named comprehensive secondary schools. A student would study an equal number of academic subjects and practical subjects.

The second category of secondary schools were named vocational secondary schools. The concentration of teaching and learning would be on practical subjects in these vocational secondary schools. However, although the government sanctioned these practical secondary

schools through the 1992 Government White Paper on Education, these two categories of practical secondary schools did not take off. Between 1987 and 2022 when this paper is being published, it is 35 years ago.

The education system continues with the general secondary schools which are being attended today and are largely academic secondary schools. (The 1992 Government White Paper on Education).

“Skilling Uganda”

From 2013, the Ministry of Education and Sports adopted the jargon of “Skilling Uganda”. This has been a call for focusing teaching and learning on practical technical skills within the education system.

“Skilling Uganda” is the traditional call of teaching and learning practical technical skills within the education system of Uganda. During the pre-colonial days it was termed “Production Learning” where learners studied as they produced, or they produced as they learned to produce both job seekers and job makers.

Then from 1925 to 1950, teaching and learning was termed “Adaptation to the environment” by the 1924/25 Phelps Stokes Commission from New York, USA to produce job makers.

From 1951 to 1963 the same idea was expressed in the “Comprehensive Secondary Schools by the 1951 Binns Study Group from London.

The same idea was expressed by UNESCO curriculum designers between 1967 and 1977 under the name of “Basic Education Integrated into Rural Development”, which earned the local name of the “Namutamba Practical Curriculum Project”

The same idea was expressed by the 1987 Senteza Kajubi Education Commission under the catch expression of *Basic Education for National Development, BEND*.

Failure of practical education in uganda’s education system to produce a critical mass of job makers

The above historical narration shows that efforts have been made to

teach and learn practical technical skills within the education system of Uganda for producing job makers. But those efforts have not succeeded. This led Hon. Geradine Namirembe Bitamazire, a long time Minister of Education to utter in 2013 the following quotable quote:

“Uganda needs training that can change students’ attitude from the seeking employment syndrome to self-employment bias”. This utterance was accompanied with the declaration of “Skilling Uganda” with the intention of producing job makers and not job seekers, to reduce unemployment in Uganda. (Ssekamwwa J.C. 2019).

The observation of the author of this paper is that the failure for the above efforts of teaching and learning practical technical skills to produce job makers has been that the schools which produce graduates with practical technical skills, dump them into the world literally bare to face the formidable challenge of creating their own employment.

METHODOLOGY

The author of this paper has created a model as an intervention to make “Skilling Uganda” more effective in producing a critical mass of Job makers to reduce unemployment in Uganda. The historical chronological method of research was used based on Prof. Asavia Wandira’s proposition of “Fashion in Education” (Wandira 1972) to underpin this study.

RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

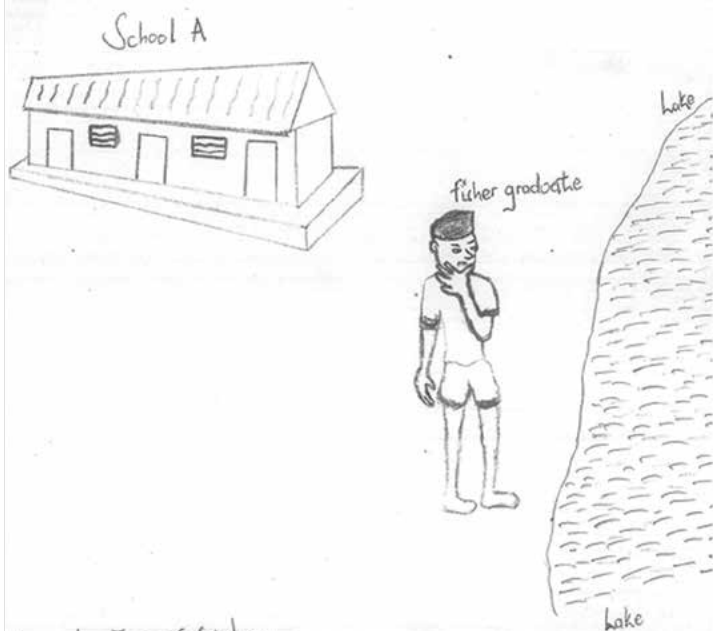
The Job Equipped Graduate model has been shown through two diagrams namely School A and School B.

School A teaches the student practical technical skills. On graduation, this school dumps the graduate into the world literally bare to initiate his own employment.

In school B, the teachers give the graduating student some “Seed Money” and a tool box and dumps him in the world to start initiating his own employment.

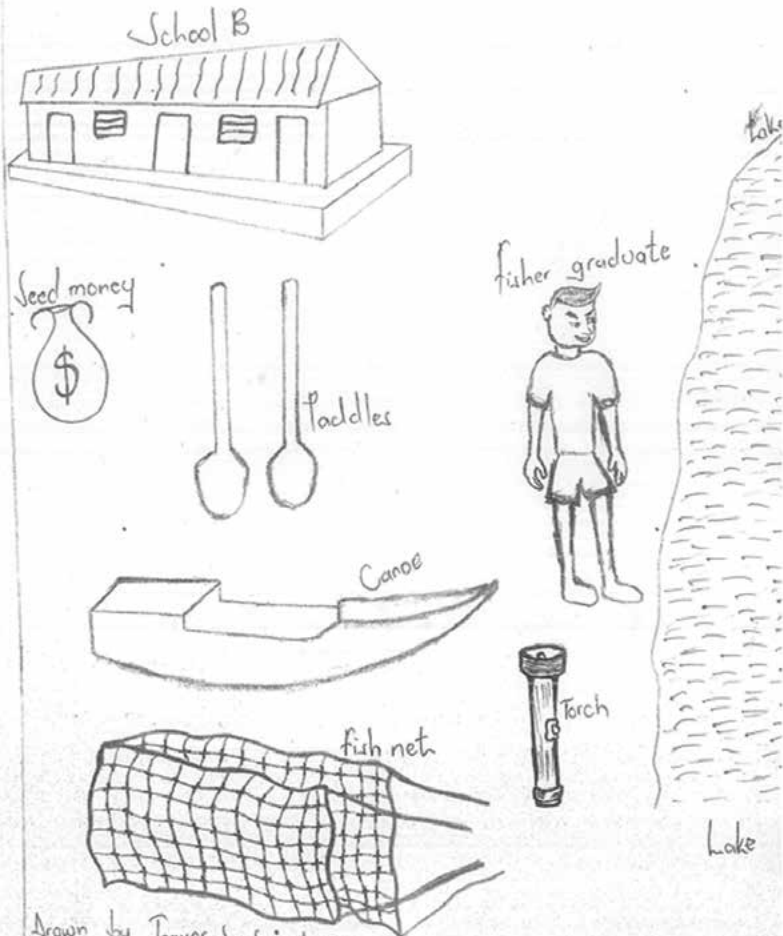
School A teaches the student
Practical technical skills.

After graduation it dumps the graduate into the world.



Drawn by Trevor S. Simbwa
Mugwanya Summit College Kyengera
Kampala

School B teaches the students Practical technical skills. After graduation, it dumps the graduate into the world with some "seed money" and a tool box. Some "seed money" and money for providing the tool box comes from the sales of the products and services which the student produces as he learns.



Drawn by Trevor S. Simbwa.
Mugwanya Summit College, Kisumu.

How the money for “Seed Money” and money for providing a tool box for the graduate is obtained by School B.

As the student is learning, he produces products and services. The teachers and the student must sell the products and the services in the society and even beyond the borders of Uganda. The school must open a special Bank Account into which money realized from the sales of the products and services of the student is banked.

As the time approaches for the graduation of the student, his teachers and himself work out the kind of employment the student wants to initiate. Then the teachers and the student calculate the amount of the “Seed Money” and of the tool box. The school draws that money from the special Bank Account into which money from the sales of the student’s products and services has been banked for four years or for six years.

The amount of money for buying the tool box will vary due to the kind of employment a particular graduating student is going to engage in. For example, a student who will be opening a saloon for cosmetology, will need a different amount of money for a tool box from that one who will engage in producing pop corns as a delicacy.

Similarly, a student who will be setting up a secretarial service, his tool box will cost a different amount of money from that one that will be setting up as a rearer of rabbits or a motor vehicle mechanic.

A word of Warning

The graduating student should not be given cash money as “Seed Money”. Similarly, he should not be given cash money to go out and buy the contents in the tool box. The school gives this money to the teacher who is the student’s supervisor. The school will require this teacher to render to the school accountability of the money and a report on the progress of the graduate regarding the employment he has embarked on.

Secondly, the graduate will be required to pay back into the special Bank Account in the school part of the “Seed Money” and money used to provide the tool box, when the graduate will have settled well in the

employment he has set up.

Thirdly, the graduate who would create his employment should be progressive. As his employment prospers, he should employ some other people. He should also buy more tools to supplement the minimum items which were given to him in the total box by the school.

For example, in the case of the graduate fisherman in school B above, gradually he should buy a boat/canoe engine to defy nature and to buy a variety of fishnets for catching different kinds of fish species. He should also employ a number of people to carry out a variety of activities.

Fourthly, the curriculum for students regarding practical technical skills for job making, must include entrepreneurship theoretically and practically.

Fifthly, time tabling must take much care for hands on practicing and for setting aside each week a day the student and the teacher go onto the community to sell the products and the services.

Sixthly, some of the graduates will not be job creators. They will seek employment from employers.

Seventhly, graduating students should be encouraged to form groups for initiating employment. This will also economize on the amount of “Seed Money” and on the tool boxes.

Finally, “*Skilling Uganda*” to be more effective in producing a critical mass of job makers, the education institutions which teach practical technical skills should use the Job Equipped Graduate Model.

Today owners of such schools advertise them as producing graduates who need not look for employment because they have been empowered to create their own jobs soon after graduating from those schools.

Similarly, at the graduation ceremonies of such schools, their owners and the guests of honour whom they invite to grace the solemn occasions, tell the jubilant graduating students that they have been empowered

to initiate their own jobs. Consequently they are not expected to look for jobs once out of those schools. Without using the “**Job Equipped Graduate Model**”, very few if any of those graduates will create their own employment and employment for other people. The history of education in Uganda has shown it clearly that damping qualified graduates in the world without “Seed Money” and tool boxes will produce an insignificant number of job makers. Thus Margaret Thatcher, one time Prime Minister of Britain said, “Who knows what tragedies the future holds for us, if we do not learn from the repeated lessons of history?”

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