

**EFFECT OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION ON JOB CREATION IN
A DEPRESSED ECONOMY AS PERCEIVED BY UNEMPLOYED SKILLED
BUILDING TRADESMEN IN ENUGU STATE**

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Abstract

The study focused on the effect of Poverty alleviation on job creation for skilled unemployed youths in Enugu State. There is the need therefore to find alternative means of improving economic activities for manpower development and job creation. To carry out the study, two research questions were postulated. Survey research design was adopted for the study. The area of the study was Enugu State. The population was 500 skilled unemployed youths drawn from all the wards in the 17 Local Government Area of the state. Simple Random Sampling Technique was used to select 200 skilled unemployed youth from the population. Structured type of questionnaire was adopted for data collection. The instrument was validated by 2 experts and the reliability obtained using Cronbach alpha co-efficient which stands at 0.65. A 4 point type scale of Great Extent, Moderate Extent, Low Extent and Very Low Extent were used. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyse and answer the research question. The findings revealed that the state of the economy did not favour or guarantee job creation and poverty alleviation. It shows that the unemployed skilled tradesmen are diversifying in order to have something doing. Recommendations were made on possible ways of solving the economic problems in Nigeria, thereby alleviating poverty level of the citizenry and create employment opportunities.

Introduction

Economic depression is the suppression of economic development and activities which results into poverty and unemployment. The state of the economy of any nation determines the level of economic activities and the extent of job creation within her labour market. Oranu (1990) stated that the economic down-turn of any nation would not encourage new investments which could have created jobs for the citizenry.

A close look at the visible manifestation of the economic recession in the industrial countries show that low grade jobs are the most affected by the state of the economy. International Labour Organization (I.L.O), (1976) lamented that the collapse of numerous theories which were previously used by the market economy, economist to remedy the unemployment problems in Nigeria have not yielded any positive result. The organization also started that new jobs must be created for young graduates in order to reduce poverty and enhance the living standard of the people. In order to alleviate the problems of the citizenry in terms of job creation and poverty eradication, the Federal Government of Nigeria established the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) and recently the Poverty Alleviation Programme. All these programmes are meant to cushion the effect of unemployment in Nigeria.

Yusuf (1972) highlighted the warning by economist and social scientists, stating the gravity of the problems of unemployment and its attendant poverty implications. He stressed that the economic policies designed to ensure high rate of growth of the national product are no longer adequate for Nigeria. A well articulated economic development will on its own create enough job opportunities for the masses. The alleviation of poverty can only be actualized by well planned economic activities and policies that are well implemented.

Deliberate creation of job opportunities for gainful employment should be the guiding principle of public and private sectors of the economy. and there should be a step forward in poverty alleviation in the society. Nigeria is yet to achieve an economic growth rate which compares favourably with what is obtainable anywhere in the world. There are alternative paths to immediate economic development and more jobs creation. The main purpose of economic development is to raise levels and standard of living of the citizenry and the employment objectives should be given weight in the choice of alternative paths of economic development. That is the surest means of improving the living standards of citizens of this country in particular and the world in general.

The economy of Nigeria has strangled industrial development thereby creating poverty at all levels of human existence in this country. Unemployed youths roam the streets with their faces showing poverty at its peak. The poverty alleviation programme was meant to cushion the unemployment problem, but the effect still remained unabated.

According to the blue print on National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) (2001), many unrealizable strategies were embarked on for the eradication of absolute poverty in Nigeria, but to no avail. Youth empowerment Scheme (YES) could not work due to poor implementation and corruption within the society. Therefore, the problem is multidimensional in terms of implementation and policy formulation. The jobless members of the society are confused on how to solve their economic problems, thereby causing some of them to engage in criminal acts against their wish. There is therefore the need to find alternative ways of providing job to the masses to remove poverty.

The following research questions guided the study

1. What is the extent of effect of depressed economy on job creation as perceived by unemployed skilled building tradesmen in Enugu State?
2. What is the extent of effect of depressed economy on poverty alleviation as perceived by unemployed skilled building tradesmen in Enugu State?

Method

Survey research design was adopted for the study. Survey research is one in which a group of people or items are considered to be representative of the entire group. The area of the study was Enugu State. The population consisted of 500 unemployed skilled building tradesmen drawn from the 17 local government areas of the state. Simple Random Sampling Technique was adopted to sample 200 unemployed youths from the population.

Structured type of questionnaire was used in collecting data for the study. The instrument was made up of seven and six questionnaire items for each of the two research questions. The instrument was validated by two experts, one from measurement and evaluation and the other from the Department of Technology and Vocational Education, Enugu State University of Science and Technology.

Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability co-efficient of the instrument. The pilot test was carried in Anambra State. The reliability test was conducted using 100 unemployed skilled building tradesmen which yielded a result of reliability co-efficient of 0.65.

Four point scale of Great Extent (4) Moderate Extent (3) Low Extent (2) and Very Low Extent (1) was used for data collection. The instrument was administered by the researcher to the respondents on the spot. A 100% return rate was recorded.

Mean with standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. For a decision to be taken on each item statement, any item with a mean of 2.50 and above will be regarded as moderate extent while mean below 2.50 will be regarded as low extent.

Data Analysis

Table 1: The Extent of Effects of Depressed Economy on Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	Standard Deviation	Decision
1	Depressed economy affects poverty alleviation programme in Enugu state	2.96	1.29	Moderate Extent
2	Poverty alleviation programme is not felt by the citizenry of Enugu State	3.00	1.30	Great Extent
3	The economy challenges the poverty alleviation.	2.89	1.20	Moderate Extent
4	Poverty alleviation creates jobs in Enugu State	2.40	1.15	Low Extent
5	Public sectors uphold poverty alleviation	3.57	1.15	Great Extent
6	Private sector embraced poverty alleviation	3.50	1.25	Great Extent
7	The society rejoices on poverty alleviation implementation.	2.45	1.28	Low Extent
	Grand mean	2.96	1.23	

Data presented in Table 1 shows that the respondents used for the study attested that depressed economy affected poverty alleviation programme in Enugu State. It shows that the economy affected poverty alleviation programme to a great extent in 3 items, 2 items at moderate extent and 2 items at low extent. The mean ranges from 2.40 to 3.57 with standard deviation range of 1.15 to 1.30 respectively. The data revealed that the economy is not alleviating poverty in Enugu State. This implies that an improved economy may help in solving the unemployment problem in the state.

The findings revealed that craftsmen diversify in order to get employed. It also revealed that the economy could still be favourable to the employer of labour if well managed.

The findings also revealed that self-employment could be improved significantly. The findings revealed that a good economy guarantee better standard of living and total eradication of poverty in the society.

Table 2: The Extent of Effect of Depressed Economy on Job Creation.

S/N	ITEM	X	STANDARD DEVIATION	DECISION
1	The economy strangulates job creation	2.90	1.08	Moderate Extent
2	Depressed economy creates more jobs in Enugu State	1.46	1.20	Low Extent
3	Industry reduce workforce due to bad Economy	1.29	1.29	Great Extent
4	The economy makes craftsmen to do mean jobs in order to survive	3.47	1.14	Moderate Extent
5	Unemployed skilled building tradesmen roam the streets as a result of bad economy.	3.41	1.20	Great Extent
6	Establishment were closed down as a Result of depressed economy	3.50	1.23	Great Extent
	Grand Mean	2.67	1.19	

Table 2 above shows that the opinions of the respondents were consistent in the items of the instrument. The respondents affirmed that the economy has negative effect on job creation for craftsmen. It shows the effect on job creation in 3 items at low extent. The data revealed that the employers of labour and the society uphold the negative effect of the economy on job creation.

The mean ranges from 1.46 to 3.50 with standard deviation range of 1.08 to 1.29 respectively. It revealed that poor state of the economy affected job creation for unemployed youth in building trades. Our industries were forced to close down or reduce their workforce, thereby increasing unemployment. It also shows that poverty alleviation could not solve our unemployment problem rather it will aggravate the hardship of the jobless members of the society.

The findings revealed that poverty alleviation is yet to yield any positive dividend in terms of job creation. It also showed that the only remedy to the effect of poor state of the economy is re-activation of the industrial sectors which provide jobs to our youths.

Discussion

From what was found in research question 1, the respondents used in this study affirmed that poverty can not be alleviated in an unstable economy. The findings revealed that poverty alleviation programme in Enugu State did not make significant impact on job creation as a result of economic depression. It also revealed that the only way to improve the living standard of the people is by stabilizing the economy which revives the industrial sectors of the economy. The findings show that an improved state of the economy guarantees a steady alleviation of poverty in the society.

For research question 2, which deals with job creation and the economy, the findings revealed that poverty has not been alleviated in terms of job creation, because of poor implementation of the programme. It showed that no significant progress or impact has been made through the programme in creating jobs for the masses. The main gates of the industries that give jobs to the citizenry are still closed due to the state of the economy. The findings revealed that the programme is aggravating the problems of the jobless rather than alleviating their problem.

Poverty alleviation is a welcome programme which is meant to cushion the effect of unemployment problem in a well managed economy. But the reverse is the case in Nigeria where the programme is creating even more hardship to the people it was meant to solve their employment problems. NAPEP (2001) enumerated strategies that could be used to empower the youths in our society, but administrative bottle-neck had made it impossible to be realized.

Summary and Conclusion

The market economy in Nigeria did not create avenue for poverty alleviation programme to flourish. The finding revealed that the programme that was meant to alleviate problems in terms of unemployment. The implementers of the programme seem not to have focus as to make the programme viable. The findings showed that industries which are meant to provide jobs were forced to close down due to the state of the economy. The standard of living of the citizenry was the main focus of the poverty alleviation, but the economic situation in the country has made this unrealizable. The findings revealed that poverty alleviation programme is yet to meet the target aim of its establishment.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made and based on the findings of the study.

1. The stake holders of our economy should endeavour to reactivate economic activities in the country.
2. Implementation of the poverty alleviation programme should be pursued with vigour, in order to cushion the problem of unemployment in our society.
3. The economy of the country should be improved in order to have a stable state of the economy for sustainable development.
4. The industrial sector of the economy should be encouraged to reopen or revive for them to create jobs for the citizenry.
5. A more permanent policy that will continue to create jobs should be developed for sustainable national economic stability.

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ACQUISITION OF MANAGEMENT SKILLS THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: A FACTOR OF GROWTH FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SELF-EMPLOYED CRAFTSMEN IN ENUGU URBAN.

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Abstract

This study was designed to determine the management skills that can be acquired through entrepreneurship education as a factor of growth for economic development of self-employed craftsmen. One research question guided the study. The area of study was Enugu Urban where 120 craftsmen in different trades options were identified. The instrument used was the questionnaire with 40 items. Mean was used to answer the research question. Findings of the study showed that management skills were acquirable through entrepreneurship education which was identified as planning skills; organizational skills; controlling skills; directing / leadership skills; showing skills in time management and expedient use of feedbacks / evaluation; provision of leadership duties; delegation of functions and effective supervision; determining courses of actions and decision to make and take; showing ability to maintain business policies and effective management growth of the self-employed craftsmen are essentials for economic development and self reliance which will in turn impact positively on the national economy. Conclusions were drawn that the acquisition of management skills through entrepreneurship education was cardinal to the growth and economic stability of self-employed craftsmen.

Introduction

Management can be described as the co-ordination of all the resources of an organization through the process of planning, organizing, directing, leading and controlling in order to achieve organizational objective (Osinem, 2008). In defining management, Koontz and Weighrich (2005) stated that management is the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals working together in a group or as individuals efficiently accomplish selected goals. According to Miller and Miner (1989) stated that planning as a component of management deals with the different ways and the overall operations through which any organization develops strategies for achieving stated objectives. It involves long-range, short-range and contingency plans, which deals with alternative courses of action when the primary plans would not achieve given goals. Organizing as a management function deals with the ways and means through which the establishment allocates resources, assigns tasks and monitors whether the allocated resources and assigned tasks are achieved. Here, the process of organizing arranges a framework that connects or links all workers, tasks, and resources together so that the firm's goals can be realized. This connecting framework is clearly known and called organizational structure and it also varies from one establishment to another. Directing has to do with the process of supervising, leading or guiding workers to accomplish the goals of the organization. It involves giving assignments or duties, helping the workers to carry out the duties or assignments, communicating and interpreting organizational rules, regulations and policies, and informing the workers on how well they are performing. Indeed, directing as a management function needs that any one carrying it out or leading must have good leadership skills in order to get workers to perform effectively. The controlling

aspect of management skill deals with the evaluation and feedback activities which organizational heads carry out to determine if the establishment goals and objectives are being met. It involves setting specific standard expected of a worker and comparing performance against the set standards.

Osinem (2008) stated that since management involves effective use of human and material resources, management in education entails the integration of human and material resources as a process of achieving and maintaining educational goals. Onoh (2006) noted that education trains the mind, moderates character and sharpens the innate ability and self-actualization with economic independence. Entrepreneurship education involves the development of skills required for human and material resources development. Similarly, Ojukwu (2000) observed that entrepreneurship education creates appropriate entrepreneurial climate in the nation's economy and bequeaths entrepreneurs with more skills made available for success in various entrepreneurial endeavours. Programmes in entrepreneurship education are geared towards developing entrepreneurs that will contribute meaningfully to national economic development through self-employment and self-reliance. Onoh (2006) also observed that the acquisition of management skills through entrepreneurship education will lead to the production of craftsmen who will be well informed, enterprising and self-reliant. Self-employed craftsmen are skilled persons with a measure of formal education in different occupational areas. The contributions and impact of craftsmen in economic development are overwhelming in that the wheels of national development could be grounded without them. National Policy on Education (2004) emphasized that craftsmen are an essential part of the human resources required by any nation for effective sustenance of economic growth and development. It means that the acquisition of management skills by craftsmen entrepreneurs is crucial and central to the growth of any national economy. Self-employed craftsmen will be valuable entrepreneurs if they have management skills that would improve, grow, develop and consolidate them economically. Hornby (2000) defined entrepreneurship as the ability to organize a business undertaking and assume the risks for the sake of profit and economic growth. Onoh (2006) opined that entrepreneurship is the ability and willingness of a craftsman to initiate, control, and direct the process of production of goods and services and bear the attendant risks. In other words, it is the careful management of the production of goods and the provision of essential services for the maximization of profit bearing the attendant reasonable risks. Entrepreneurship education will help the craftsmen entrepreneurs to take reasonable risks with the acquisition of management skills.

Moreover, entrepreneurship development is motivated by the courage and ability of a person that seeks out direct investment opportunities, establish and manage an enterprise successfully. Ayeduso in Osuala (2004) stated that entrepreneurship education is a specialized education given to recipients of vocational and technology education through which they acquire skills, ideas, management abilities and capacities for self-employment, self-reliance and economic growth. Akintola (2001) revealed that entrepreneurship education is that which prepares individuals to undertake the formation and or operation of small business enterprises for the purpose of performing all business functions relating to a product or service with emphasis given to the social responsibilities, legal requirements and risks for the sake of profit making in self-employment. An entrepreneur can therefore be defined as one who takes risks as an organizer of production and provider of services in order to earn a living in operating business enterprises. The entrepreneur employs the management functions in the process of gathering both human and material resources needed for starting a business venture and for its sustenance.

Self-employed craftsmen entrepreneurs fall within the purview of business managers as persons who seek out investment and business opportunities for the purpose of achieving economic goals. These self-employed craftsmen span all the skilled-trade areas and they serve

their immediate communities and environs. The need arose to determine how they utilize management skills to function as chief executives, motivators, crisis resolvers, leaders, role models, instructors, resources allocators, counsellors, financiers and so on. The problem of this study was to determine how the acquisition of management skills through entrepreneurship education is a growth factor in economic development of self-employed craftsmen.

Methodology

The purpose of the study was to determine the management skills acquirable through entrepreneurship education by self-employed craftsmen for economic growth. One research question was posed in line with the purpose of the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and was carried out in Enugu Urban of Enugu State where there are large concentrations of these craftsmen engaged in diverse business activities. The instrument used was the questionnaire. It constituted of a five point Likert type scale with item ratings as Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree with scale values of 5,4,3,2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was administered directly to the craftsmen by the researcher and collected on the spot on their completion. The population was 120 craftsmen identified within the area of study. No sampling was done as the identified population was within reach and they were all studied. The data collected were analyzed by computing the mean scores for each of the items. The decision rule was therefore, any item with a mean score of 3.50 and above was considered as agree while any item with mean score below 3.50 was considered as disagreed respectively.

Research Question 1

What are the management skills acquirable through entrepreneurship education as a growth factor by self-employed craftsmen in Enugu Urban?

Data for answering the research question was presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean Responses of the Respondents on the Acquisition of Management Skills through Entrepreneurship Education as a Growth factor in Economic Development of Self-Employed Craftsmen.

S/N	Management Skills	\bar{X}	Decisions
1	Ability to identify and state clear goals .	4.30	Agree.
2	Competency for time management.	4.23	Agree.
4	Ability to lead others well.	4.22	Agree.
5	Competency in the delegation of functions.	4.26	Agree.
6	Ability for effective supervision.	4. 23	Agree.
7	Ability to determine and make immediate decisions.	4.24	Agree.
8	Competency for growth management.	4.22	Agree.
9	Ability to maintain business policies.	4.24	Agree.
10	Competencies to initiate good plans.	4.42	Agree.
11	Competency to demonstrate good drive.	4.24	Agree.
12	Competency in introducing new ways of doing old things.	4. 41	Agree.
13	Competency in planning for changes in technology .	4.24	Agree.
14	Competency in planning for changes in manufacturing needs.	4.18	Agree.
15	Skills in planning for good goal implementation.	4.24	Agree.
16	Ability to plan the production line.	4.24	Agree.
17	Ability to source and gather relevant business data.	4.22	Agree.
18	Competency in organizing materials for production.	4. 20	Agree.
S/N	Management Skills	\bar{X}	Decisions

19	Ability to organize other economic factors to realize goals e.g. land.	4.29	Agree.
20	Ability to demonstrate initiative in activities.	4.18	Agree.
21	Skills in demonstrating self-organizational discipline.	4.27	Agree.
22	Skills in maintaining singleness of purpose.	4.20	Agree.
23	Skills in developing right attitude to work.	4.24	Agree.
24	Skills in good leadership models.	4.30	Agree.
25	Competency in maintaining effective management of growth.	4.26	Agree.
26	Ability to utilize available human resources well.	4.28	Agree.
27	Skills in being resourceful.	4.22	Agree.
28	Ability in being flexible with challenges.	4.26	Agree.
29	Ability in maintaining personal discipline.	4.24	Agree.
30	Skills in maintaining effective control of human resources.	4.28	Agree.
31	Skills to set goals rationally.	4.22	Agree.
32	Skills in sustaining personal initiative.	4.26	Agree.
33	Skills in developing ability to carry out actions sequentially.	4.18	Agree.
34	Competence to always plan for the future.	4.22	Agree.
35	Ability for effective organization.	4.24	Agree.
36	Skills in developing ability for good time management.	4.30	Agree.
37	Skills for responsible division of labour.	4.28	Agree.
38	Skills in being adaptable to novel situations.	4.26	Agree.
39	Skills in being dynamic.	4.24	Agree.
40	Skills for specifying action points.	4.22	Agree.
Grand Mean		4.24	Agree

Table 1 shows the mean scores of the respondents on the acquisition of management skills through entrepreneurship education as a growth factor in economic development of self employed craftsmen. All the 40 items have their means above 3.50, hence the grand mean of 4.24 indicates complete agreement by the respondents. This means that acquisition of management skills through entrepreneurship education by self-employed craftsmen will greatly enhance their economic growth and development.

Research Findings

It was found that the acquisition of management skills through entrepreneurship education as a factor for growth in economic well being of self employed craftsmen is highly needed and they include. Findings of the study also showed that management skills were acquirable through entrepreneurship education which was identified as planning skills; organizational skills; controlling skills; directing / leadership skills; showing skills in time management and expedient use of feedbacks / evaluation; provision of leadership duties; delegation of functions and effective supervision; determining courses of actions and decision to make and take; showing ability to maintain business policies and effective management growth of the self-employed craftsmen are essentials for economic development and self reliance which will in turn impact positively on the national economy.

Discussion of Results

The components of management skills acquirable through entrepreneurship education, which were found to be of paramount importance include planning skills, organizational skills, controlling skills and directing leadership skills of self-employed craftsmen. Hall (1983) had found that these components of management skills focus on getting the best out of the people in an attempt to achieve the goals of ones entrepreneurship efforts; as well as realizing the objectives of an establishment by effectively employing human and material resources. Osuala (1995) also identified lack of management skills as a vexing problem facing entrepreneurs. Anyakoha (1995) opined that entrepreneurship education is a vital element in self-employment, which management skills are part and parcel. Anaele (1997) found that possessing management skills was essential for the successful achievement of the objective of a business venture. Nwachukwu (1990) stated that entrepreneurship education helped to produce entrepreneurs who could use entrepreneurial skills for business success, economic empowerment and self-actualization.

All these earlier studies go along way to buttress the thrust of this study. Indeed the acquisition of management skills through entrepreneurship education will certainly bequeath craftsmen with the entrepreneurial skills needed for self-employment and economic stability. It is also clear from the study that these craftsmen are the chief executives of their respective organizations. To that extent, they are the leaders, architects and image-makers of their enterprises. It follows too that they are responsible for the identification and stating of clear goals; showing skills in time management; expedient use of feedbacks; provision of leadership duties such as delegation and supervision of activities of the establishment; taking of decisions to determine courses of actions, showing competency in maintaining business policies and effective management of the growth of the organization. Osuala (1995) pointed out also that entrepreneurs as small business managers must delegate functions, and that delegation of duties is a function of management that helps a manager to get the maximum benefit from each employee. Nwachukwu (1990) opined that decision-making by entrepreneurs is an indispensable part of success in business as it is a means of making things happen. The absence of a decision to act when it is necessary is a decision on its own. For the craftsmen entrepreneurs, major areas where management skills are fully required in so far as decision-making is concerned include identification of the problem and weighing the alternatives rationally (Bucher, 1979; and Nwachukwu, 1990). Moreover, activities of entrepreneurs go beyond decision-making to policy formulation. Formulation of good policies as a planning skill functions as a guide in the day-to-day running of business activities. It justifies the fact that with well thought out or reasoned policies, craftsmen entrepreneurs can function efficiently and effectively. This study appreciates that decision-making and good policy formation skills are recognized as acquirable through entrepreneurship education.

Furthermore, the result of the study showed that planning and organizational skills that were found to be basic entrepreneurship education needs of self-employed craftsmen have to do with the competency to begin to plan, maintain good drive in innovative and creative activities, integrate other macro and micro economic factors to achieve stated goals, and competency to initiate activities based on personal organizational discipline.

Conclusion

Education trains the mind, moderates character and brightens up the innate abilities of persons who are eager to attain self - actualization and economic independence. The production and availability of highly skilled persons who have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of science and technology are contingent upon the level of education acquired by them. Craftsmen acquire necessary skills and training through entrepreneurship education that will enable them to become enterprising and self-reliant. Craftsmen irrespective

of trades type and level of education attained prior to entry into self-employment can acquire these management skills for efficiency and effectiveness. These management skills when acquired are vital in ensuring self-independence, self-reliance, economic emancipation, social development and technological advancement in the world of work. Finally, acquisition of management skills through entrepreneurship education will not only enhance the wealth creation ability and poverty reduction efforts of the self-employed craftsmen, but will also reduce unemployment when the unemployed becomes an employer. It will develop the craftsmen further into being well informed persons with polished character, trained mind sharpened innate abilities and enviable social recognition.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

1. Self-employed craftsmen and artisans should endeavour to acquire the entrepreneurship skills such as management skills, accounting skills, public relations skills, communications skills, marketing skills, and records keeping skills that will enhance their quality of paid services and products.
2. The National and State Directorates of employment should embark on effective awareness and mobilization campaign to sensitize self-employed craftsmen and artisans on the need to acquire these entrepreneurship skills for self-actualization and economic development.

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