ABSTRACT
There are many variables to be considered, when selecting a course of study for a future career, in an institution. Visual art is one of such courses that can guarantee job security in Nigeria. This has become obvious, considering the present situation of Nigerian economy, which has also resulted to mass unemployment. The paper posits that, vocational education, entrepreneurship, and apprenticeship systems are somehow related technically, to visual art as a creative enterprise. Thus, could sustain job security in the country. The paper discusses some of the deterrents to these possibilities and concludes by looking at how Ndidi Dike as a professional artist has sustained herself as a practicing artist.

Keywords: Visual art, indigenous technological education, artist, entrepreneurship

INTRODUCTION
Education is the most valuable treasure any citizen can get from any nation. The functionality of education is usually seen through the acquisition of knowledge and information, as well as, skills acquisition or competence. Vocational training, entrepreneurial skill acquisition, and artistic apprenticeship are all related skills gaining systems that prepare an individual towards job security. All of these are known as technical education.

In the Nigerian Educational system, Technical education is offered at the upper secondary and tertiary levels of education. Such training prepares middle and higher level technical manpower, at the Polytechnics and has to do with an understanding of concepts, values, fundamental beliefs and purposes. The national policy on education (2004) states that, the philosophy and value of education in Nigeria include,

i. Integration of the individual into a sound and effective citizen
ii. Respect for the work of the individual
iii. Faith in man’s ability to make rational decision
iv. Moral and spiritual value in interpersonal and human relations
v. Shared responsibility for the common good of the society and
vi. Social, cultural, economic, scientific and technological progress

The above-stated philosophies of education should be seen to offer “certificates” that are mostly worked oriented. This will, to a certain extent, create job opportunities for some individuals that must have been trained towards skills acquisition. This will in essence, also empower the graduates to be relevant producers of goods and services in the country. The foundational philosophy of technical and vocational education is to enhance human dignity, enthrone work ethics and acquire or develop employable skill competencies, attitudes as well as, knowledge to enable individuals gain and maintain basic job security or self reliance for a good standard of
living. Technical and vocational education therefore, is expected to create a true egalitarian Nigerian society.

**African Indigenous Art Education**

There are non-formal educational systems in Nigeria that have provided job security for a number of citizens. Jegede (1983), Avers that before the coming of the missionaries and the colonialists in Nigeria, traditional Art education was based on the apprenticeship system. Among the Yoruba, Adegbologe family of Abeokuta, with other wood carvers, ran a workshop and art shop. Bamigboye and Arowo-Ogun and later Bamidele all apprenticeship centres which made the traditional education system to flourish.

Benin City is another important art community in the traditional apprenticeship/training systems known for brass work, ebony and ivory carving in Nigeria. According to Jegede (1983) the apprenticeship system is a vital contribution that Nigerian traditional artists have made to visual education and the propagation and sustenance of traditional arts and crafts; this has provided jobs for several of the traditional artists. The apprenticeship training system is a viable traditional education system that is still empowering the youths towards the future of self sustenance. This has created a huge advantage; for it has taken boredom away from these young men/women and reduced crime in Nigeria streets. Early training of the child in this system of apprenticeship training has provided the child confidence to learn at an early age and if sustained can also do same in contemporary society. The apprenticeship training has also enabled the individual, to develop a personal ability, without any emotional tension.

Still looking at the apprenticeship training in Nigeria, Ali (2000) opines that at about 1892, different ethnic groups in Nigeria, were already training young men and women in various occupation, trades, as well as production of different materials and services such as: building, carving, gold, hair making, pottery and iron-smiting. Though, the apprenticeship system is a kind of traditional education, it has a strong impact in the development of a child where a child. Since the apprentice, will usually stay with the master craftsman or woman, a kind of boarding house can be arranged. This will enable the child stay with a family and be provided with basic items such as; shelter, food and clothing, as well as moral training along with moral training, and this could last as long as agreed between both parties. (Lamidi, 2009)

**Entrepreneurship system**

Entrepreneurship embraces, initiative organization of social and economic assets, to turn such resources and situations, to practical risk management accounting. In a general sense, entrepreneurship is the dynamic process of creating cemented wealth. The wealth is created by an individual who assume the role of taking a major risks, in terms of equity, time and/or career commitment to create value for some products or service. The product or service may or may not be totally new, but value must somehow be added by the entrepreneur, by receiving and locating the necessary skills and resources. (Hisrich *et al*, 2005).

Familoni (2012) sees entrepreneurship as a dynamic process of vision, change, and creation. It needs an application of energy and passion towards the creation and implementation of new ideas and meaning solutions. The essential ingredients include the willingness to take calculated risks in terms of time, equity, or career; the ability to formulate and effective venture, the creative skill to turn out required resources, and fundamental skill, of building concrete business plan, and finally the vision to recognize opportunity, where others see chaos, contraction. In another view, entrepreneurship is the process of creating something new with value, by devoting the necessary time and effort, assuming satisfaction, monetary rewards and independence. Entrepreneur is found in all professions, educational system, in medicine, research, law, architecture, engineering and visual art. The central focus of all the ideas and definitions put forward include, similar attributes, such as, organization, wealth creation, newness of ideas, and risk taking. Entrepreneurship in visual art should be taken without laxity, for it is a vital training in
empowering individuals in a society and should be seen as a well articulated enterprise of job security. Most people have the misconception that if one wants to be an entrepreneur, the formal schools like University, polytechnics and colleges of education cannot provide such knowledge. Entrepreneurship can be acquired in the stated formal schools, even before entrepreneurship was added into the university curriculum in Nigeria, most school were teaching it, not directly as a core course but as a relatively related course. For, example, the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) has been responsible for taking such attachment that inculcate some aspect of entrepreneurship training in various institutions in Nigeria. Another example, is the course Trends in Sculpture in the curriculum of Sculpture, in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. This course has been structured to include some aspect of entrepreneurship. This is to enable the students understand the need to empower themselves after graduation, in case they can’t find a job. This is the main significance of visual art and job security that this paper is trying to highlights.

To further stress the importance of entrepreneurship as a key step for job security in Nigeria? The Vanguard of April 28th, 2010 reported that the National Board for Technology Incubation (NBTI) and the National University Commission (NUC) has signed a memorandum of understanding to develop entrepreneurship education curriculum, in Nigerian Universities. This is aimed at cultivating a durable culture of entrepreneurship in higher institutions of learning, in an effort to forester the country’s economy towards 2020. Divine (2012), also sees entrepreneurship as a driver of Nigerian economy’s wealth in which a high majority of jobs are created by small businesses started by entrepreneurial minded individuals. Entrepreneurship skills and attitude create creative benefits to society, even beyond their application to business venture. Personal qualities that are vital and relevant to entrepreneurship, such as creativity and a high spirit of initiative can be helpful to everyone, in their working responsibilities and daily existence. Also, the significance of technical skill that is needed to be self-employed is gained through entrepreneurship education.

Technical and Vocational Education
Technical and vocational education has been an integral part of national development strategies in many societies, because of its impact on productivity and economic development. Technical and vocational education, begins with exploration of career options, supports, basic academic and life skills, and enables achievement of higher academic standards, leadership, preparation for industrial-defined work, advanced and continuing education. Vocational education and training, prepare learners for careers that are manual based or practical, traditionally non-academic and totally related to specific trade, occupation or vocation.( applied or visual art) Calhoun and Findi in Apagu and Andural( 2007) also are in support of technical and vocational education and suggested that, society currently, should insists that everyone leaving the public system, should have some kind of occupational skill, to appropriate individual to earn a living.

Ndidi Dike’s and the Visual art Practice in Nigeria
This paper posits that visual art education is one of those viable areas toward job security in Nigerian particularly for those who have been privileged to have some form of apprenticeship and vocational or technical education. However, the contemporary visual art in Nigeria will be incomplete without referring to the courageous and instrumental contribution of other artists. Since, this conference is organized by the Female Artists Association of Nigeria, permit me to focus on female artists in Nigeria. One of the first female exponents of art in Nigeria is Etsu Clara Ngobodaga, according to Okoli (2011), Clara was a versatile painter and a sculptor, with outstanding exhibitions at home and abroad. She opened the way for other women to be appreciated in the visual arts in Nigeria today. Another pioneering artist is Elizabeth Olowu nee Akenzua, from a royal family advantage and exceptional boldness. She went into the male dominated bronze casting association of the Bini kingdom against all the taboos attached to the female gender. Other female artists in the development of the visual arts today, include, Chinwe...
Uwatse, Kaltume Gana, Nkechi Nwosu-Igbo, Lilian Pilaku, Nkiru Nzegwu, Aisha Augie Kuta, Tyna Adebowale, Chionye Gloria, Aisha Ibrahim, and Ndidi Dike who’s contributions to the visual art in Nigeria this paper discusses. Please note that this paper does not insist that every artist must have some form of apprenticeship or vocational education, to succeed. The realities in most art circle according to Ikwuemesi (2010) embody a male-privileging tendency with a handful of women practitioners operating as superficial icon on the art scene. Though, in the face of contrary-critique, which viewed that the world is indeed woman-driven, most art ecologies have proven otherwise. For, example, in Nigeria there are many female art students, female ex-students of art, but few active practicing female artists. And it is on this note that this paper focus on a female artist that represent an Amazon of Nigerian art, Ndidi Dike. Her interest in art started to manifest around the age of five, when she observed that she had a flair for any activity that involved the creative use of the hands. She obtained a Diploma in music education majoring in voice, from the University of Nigeria Nsukka and went ahead to study Fine and Applied Arts in the same institution. During her National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), she started to explore mixed media and began her professional career as a studio artist with her studio based in Owerri, Imo state.

She is fascinated with the freedom of interpreting, or exploring different media and often felt a sense of serenity in the process of creating art. The drive, within her constantly enables her to push aesthetic frontiers in material usage for example, sculpture which at a period of her practice appeal to her senses, regarding new found sensibilities and artistic challenges of wood manipulation, within its innate colour expression, using techniques, design and patterning. Dike gained experience and visibility in her practice as she had the opportunity to work with national and international art facilitators, and curators, in numerous capacities, such as, Arts Advisor/consultant, Exhibitions jury panelist. She has also exhibited locally and abroad and attended and participated in seminars, symposia, international workshops and lectures. Going through some of her exhibitions, one will discover that she has contributed novel ideas to visual art issues and form development in the socio-political, historical context, in Nigeria and globally, generally, is in this sense that; this paper addresses some of her exhibitions.(Deepwell, 2010, Silver, 2005).

Waka-into-Bondage, 2008, is an exhibition at the Centre for Contemporary Art, Lagos. Waka-into-Bondage takes the history and the legacy of slavery, as its point of departure. Dike presented a sculpture installation, indication of a turning point in her exploration. She looked into the effect of slavery on the local population, in this case the coastal town of Badagry using symbols representing two large carved wooden boats, one covered and filled with sugar, the other filled with blood. The blood was represented with red liquid substance which triggers traces and memories of fore bearers, as they walked the last ¾ miles from Gleeful Island past the point of no return, towards the shores of the Atlantic Ocean.

In another of her mixed media sculpture titled Treasured Cloth, is a two dimensional exploration on Apa wood. This motif driven painting, is liken to the traditional print fabric found in most African societies. She probably combined pieces of fabrics in a collage manner, before introducing colours in tones of browns and yellow ochre, which flows into white and scanty black colours. The painting is divided into four sections or segments of lines and motifs interaction. The first part consists of wavy lines that are divided by an outline of motifs. The second part consists mostly of square shapes in multiple designs, circular patterns, and multiple triangular shapes, which forms the patterns on the cloth. The third horizontal part of the painting are made up of three masks placed within the reverted triangles, while the last segment of the painting combined the comb motifs with other decorative ornamentation.

Gender Power, is another mixed media painting in these category that combined the same brownish and yellow ochre mixture. The blend of ink and acrylic gave fluidity of a wash effect akin to the Chinese painting. The upper part of the painting is made up of rectangular shapes slightly bent and juxtaposed within the top and some bellow. Other works are Earthly Feeling and a wood construction titled, Traditional Staff of Office.
Plate I, Ndidi Dike, Gender Power, 2008, Acrylic and Ink on canvas, 100x100cm, collection of Dotun Suleiman

Plate II, Ndidi Dike, 2008, Earthly Feeling, Acrylic and Ink on canvas, 80x100cm, collection of Robert Mbonu

Plate III, Ndidi Dike, Treasured Cloth, 2008, Mixed media on Apa Wood, 100x120cm, collection of Pat Utomi

Plate IV, Ndidi Dike, Ndigbo Traditional Staffs of Office, 2008, wood and mixed media, 100x120cm collection of Uzo Ajukwu
Visual art education should be seen in relationship with non-formal training, like the apprenticeship system that has always focused towards an effective and sustained form of job provider in Nigeria. The visual art practice should start from primary school with handicraft, into the secondary school, where the contemporary visual art is taught. This will inculcate positive attitude towards vocational, technical and indigenous technological education, among the Nigerian youths and during the early part of their formal training.

The visual art education sub sector has depreciated immensely and there is the need to relook at it from the perspective of traditional education and entrepreneurship systems that have long provided Nigerians with traditional technology. Therefore, this and other related issues are the problems visual art is facing in Nigeria. Thus; should this stop the aspiration of artists in developing and contributing their best to the visual art growth in contemporary Nigerian art scene? There is no doubt, that visual art has provided livelihood for many graduates in Nigeria today, with Ndidi Dike as an example and this is as a result of her visual art training. This has shown the viability and sustainability of the visual arts in Nigeria. However, in a broad perspective, can any nation strive for success in economic development, without the visual art sector? This is a question we all need to answer.

REFERENCES