

## **HARNESSING THE PROSPECTS OF TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN NIGERIA (TVET)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This paper identifies the prospects for harnessing technical vocational education and training (TVET) in Nigeria and proposes a review of its current status. The objective of the paper is to study the current status of TVET with a view to recommending measures to be adopted for its improvements. The methodology adopted is content analysis. Findings in the paper suggest that improvements should be made with regards to the issue of funding, regulations, infrastructural development as well as other support institutions. It is in this regard that the paper recommends that government should put in place measures to harmonize the affected institutions by developing a single adoptable curriculum of studies. This in addition to ensuring that the trainees are trained and produced on the basis of the market needs and not what the trainees or training providers desire.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

It is increasingly becoming apparent that sound economic development cannot be attained without functional education system. This is the more reason why the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO, 2002) cites education as the key to effective development of a nation.

However currently at the fore front of this estimation is technical vocational education and training (TVET) which is now seen as a master key that unlocks the fortunes of quality life leading to sustainable development (Amedu,2013). It is therefore no wonder that TVET is gradually becoming a global affair with many countries now in the rush to embrace not only for its practicability but also for the windows of opportunities which it holds for providing a lifelong career for citizens of these countries (Okoye and Udoudu, 2015). According to Mohan (2003), the pace of technological change of a given society is determined by the nature of its infrastructure and institutions as well as its social capital.

TVET is one huge asset which if fully harnessed has the capacity to encourage industrial growth, capital accumulation, technical innovation and speedy development of a nation. In alluding to this Odu (2010) opines that TVET not only enables the trainee to acquire the requisite skill that would enable him/her increase their productive power but also contribute effectively to the economic growth of their countries. Okoye and Udoudu (2015) seemingly aliened to this view that the vocationalization of education not only lead to the development of individual's relevant skills with windows of opportunities in the acquisition of socially and economically rewarding jobs not restricted to the formal sector but inclusive of the informal sector as well.



Ayodele (2006) supports the idea of vocational education development. In his findings using descriptive analysis suggested that any system of education which prefers to support the development of concepts and theories and tailored towards the search of the white collar jobs is not likely to adequately lead to the preferred economic development of that system. In furtherance of his arguments she maintained that the number of infrastructural facilities provided by the Nigerian Government in the area of vocational education actually cannot be said to tally with the needs of the sector. Positing that were there to be the redoubling of effort in this area, TVET is one mechanism which could help tackle the menace of prostitution, kidnapping and armed robbery, violent agitations and the volume of poverty and unemployment bedeviling the country.

This paper studied the current status of TVET in Nigeria and recommend measures that would lead to harnessing the prospects of TVET in Nigeria. As a precursor to these measures the paper is at first classified into five sections. Section one introduction, section two; the review of related literature, section three: discusses the methodology, section four: discusses the analysis of findings and section five concludes the paper.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This section reviewed the literature on the meaning of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Issues relating to the meaning and the roles of TVET and the prospects for its development were discussed.

### **The meaning of TVET**

TVET is said to include any form of education that gives emphasis on the development of occupational skills needed that would provide lifelong career opportunities to its recipient's. Akram (2012) maintained that it is a form of education which promotes the dignity of labor by entrenching work as a goal of education. Similarly, Lawal (2013) opined that TVET is that form of education which gives more emphasis on practical application of knowledge and facilitates the spirit of independence on its recipient's. In the views of Ozoema (2013), TVET involves the acquisition of practical skills, knowledge, attitudes and science for the use of man and his environment.

### **The Role of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**

Every economy big or small is faced with challenging problems of its own which it has to contend with. However issues peculiar to a given environment can only adequately be tackled through the collective efforts and determination of its citizens by way of evolving measures better suited to their needs. Therefore the development of human race irrespective of its economic set up can be said to lie on how profoundly its citizens are stimulating the productivity of citizens of a nation does not however occur in isolation (Oguntuyi, 2013). It lies on the concerted effort of government and educational system put in place especially on TVET (Lawal, 2010). It is increasingly becoming obvious that the institution of a viable TVET is one sure ticket



to the personal and national development. TVET graduates not only help to address positively issues of chronic unemployment situation bedeviling mostly the developing nations but first track their development. Countries of the world are now more than ever before determined to improve on the quality of life of their citizens as they embrace new and better ways of doing things to counter the effects of globalization. It is thus becoming increasingly clear that society's which depends on imported technology now hardly thrives through competition, whereas the reliance on simple adoptable, renewable and transferable knowledge is helping to guarantee the future with minimum concern. China, Denmark, Japan and South Korea are examples of countries where technology can be said to have worked (Magatakarda, 2017).

The Center for Technical Education (2009) submits that in order to have a viable TVET, its curriculum must be a planned program or course of study and learning experiences beginning from the exploration of career options, the provision of basic support requirements and the acquirement of academic and lifelong skills tailored in such a manner that leads to the achievement of high productivity in academic standards, quality leadership and the preparation of expertise for industry and continuing education.

Anderson (2009) posits that TVET is generally built upon two way productivists assumptions. In the first instance it is a pattern of training which leads to productivity and economic growth and secondly, the acquisition of skills which lead to employability paving way for the creation of more jobs. In stressing the roles of TVET in Nigeria's economic growth Lawal (2013) listed the following aspects which can be guaranteed with the proper application of TVET:

- a) Employment generation
- b) Industrial development
- c) Entrepreneurship
- d) Poverty reduction
- e) Foreign exchange accumulation
- f) Patriotism

Oguntuyi (2013) seems to agree with this view when he asserted that TVET is one major ingredient for promoting development. Arguing that not only does TVET facilitates the acquisition of applied skills and basic scientific knowledge but the merit of productivity and human development.

### **Prospects for the Development of TVET in Nigeria**

The UNESCO (2002) have suggested that the revitalization of this sector is an essential component for the overall development of an individual and the nation, therefore Nigeria should step up measures and adequately improve on the funding with a view to realizing the prospects of TVET. Ukporie (2009) in affirming the position of UNESCO, itemized the prospects of TVET in the following ways:

- i. It affects the individual and the society's economy through the acquisition of skills making it possible for the trainee to explore his environment and harnessing all the benefits hidden in it.
- ii. It create specific talents for the trainees making them employable and flexible and of endless productivity in society where occupational structure exist.
- iii. TVET instill in its recipients skills and materials that influence his behavior in the environment at any particular time. The recipient of TVET are good manager of time, materials and labor.
- iv. TVET provides its recipients good leadership and fellowship skills. The spirit of team work and learning experiences are developed.
- v. TVET makes it possible to develop simple, adoptable, transferable technology with its influence in productivity, skills, communication and business management.  
Min and Tsang (1990) studying the Beijing general auto industry postulated the following:
  - a. Vocational secondary school graduates engaged in jobs closely related to their training tend to exert higher effort in their jobs than their counterparts in conventional schools who were assigned the same jobs.
  - b. Vocational secondary schools graduate used to be more productive when assigned jobs related to their training than conventional high school graduate being assigned the same jobs.
  - c. Vocational secondary schools graduate performs greatly when assigned specific taxes.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Secondary means of data collection has been employed in gathering of information required for the conduct of this work. Sources from Books, Periodical Reports, Term Papers, Academic Journals, Seminars and Symposia as well as online sources. The related literature were summarized, classified, tabulated and carefully analyzed. Content analysis method of data interpretation has been employed. Information relating to budget allocation to the educational sector was sourced from the web sites of the budget office and that of institutions was sourced from the web sites of their regulatory bodies.

## **ANALYSIS**

Analysis of this research is restricted to four basic issues which were perceived by the researcher as the contending issues that could create a healthy development of TVET when fully developed. They include, the educational institutions, the funding, the legislation as well as other support agencies.

**Educational Institutions**

TABLE: 1, Registered post basic schools in Nigeria and those providing TVET.

Category	Type of institution	Number of institutions	Number of specialized science and technology institution	Number of pure technical schools
A.	University			
	Federal	40	4	4
	State	44	5	2
	Private	68	2	-
B.	College of education			
	i. federal	22	5	
	ii. state	46	-	
	iii. private	14	-	
C. Polytechnics	41	-	-	41

From the table above it can be seen that of the 302 total number of registered post basic schools only 91 number of institutions run science and technology related programs and of this numbers only 52 teach purely technical vocational programs.

In addition to post basic schools there also exist many vocational work schools, skills acquisition centers as well as some registered and non-registered apprenticeship workshops where basic crafts and some special skills are acquired. Every state in Nigeria has a vocational technical secondary schools and government work schools where trade test certificates are issued with the aim to subsequently fit into career opportunities as encapsulated in the scheme of service. It should however be noted that the existence of schools without basic infrastructure is not enough to guarantee the attainment of objectives. The failure of the market to absorb grandaunts not only hinders the quest for further education but would not have any effect on poverty reduction and consequently make it impossible to attain the objectives of the training.

**FUNDING**

The funding of education is the collective responsibility of the various investors in education with the federal government taking the lead. Since 1999 to 2014 the federal budgetary allocation to education sector stood at N 3.128 trillion out of its total budget of N35.133 trn during the period under review. The average allocation to the sector from 1999to 2016 can as well be seen below.

**Table II; Federal Governments’ votes for education in Nigeria 1999-2016**

Year	‘99	‘00	‘01	‘02	‘03	‘04	‘05	‘06	‘07	‘08	‘09	‘10
% allocation	4.46	8.7	7.13	6.90	7.75	5.24	8.21	10.43	9.75	10.04	8.79	7.37

‘11	‘12	‘13	‘14	‘15	‘16
9.32	9.86	10.21	8.28	11.0	8.0

Source: [http://: www.budgetoffice.gov.ng](http://www.budgetoffice.gov.ng)



From the schedule shown above it would be seen that between 1999 when the federal allocation to education budget stood at 4.46% it has been on the increase though at varying levels with 2015 being the highest ever. It would however be noted that there has never been a time when the UNESCO recommended budget of 26% was attained.

Although the Nigeria state governments usually contribute to the funding of state owned institutions their budgetary allocations are most times based on the preference of the government in power (Magatakarda, 2017). It is however, less encouraging to note that in many instances budgets are only used as a policy document with actual expenditures not usually executed. The governors hardly spend up to 70% of the annual estimates. Where they spend their budgets where budgets are spent they are largely for their personal interest. Nigeria's budget padding of 2015 is a clear example of what usually happen in states (Jibrin, 2016). Institutions only make use of what the budget office allocates to them and not allowed to inject their own estimates.

In addition to budgetary allocation to the educational sector, higher technical educational institutions also receive funding from the tertiary education trust fund (Tetfund) for some of their specific needs. Funds from this source are from statutory deductions of one percent tax from government contracts pooled together and accessed through a criterion.

Private sector investment in education is however very low in Nigeria. Although private Universities (68) are greater than the Federal (40) and States (44), there are only (14) fourteen colleges of education and two (2) private mono-technics. Of the 302 number of registered post basic schools only 85 are fully private. With the current spate of corruption, the level of expectation for quality output of graduates from these private institutions cannot be vouched for. Some of these institutions exist as conduit pipes for the receipt of grants from internal and external sources and in particular for making or maximizing profit and pay returns to the owners. Where the net return expectation is the basic objective of promoting a school then quality products undoubtedly bound to occupy the second best position.

## **THE LEGISLATION**

There is clearly no single government agency charged with the responsibility for managing the affairs of TVET in Nigeria. There are in the contrary two closely related but different organs of government majorly responsible for supervising the affairs of TVET. At the basic levels there is the federal ministry of science and technology (FMS and T) established with the sole objective is to facilitate the development of science and technology as an apparatus for enhancing the pace of socio-economic development of the country. Then there is the NBTE charged with overseeing the affairs of post basic education in Nigeria whose purpose are not only to add value but inject technological inputs into the productive activities of the nation. Note that although the NBTE is a principal organ of the federal ministry of education, it was specifically created to handle all aspects of technological education. Below are some of the functions of NBTE:

- i. To advise the federal government on and coordinate all aspects of TVET outside the universities limitations and to make recommendations on national policies necessary for the training of technicians, craftsmen and other middle level and skilled man power





- ii. To determine, after consultations with the national manpower board, the ITF and such other boards as it considers appropriate, the skilled and middle level manpower needs of the country in the industrial, commercial and other relevant fields for the purpose of planning and providing training facilities and this is in addition to preparing periodic master plan for the balanced and coordinate development of polytechnics. The NBTE also performs supervisory roles to TVET inclined institutions same way as the central bank does to commercial banks

Although the scope of supervision and activities of the NBTE could if adequately pursued stimulate the positive development of and lead to the fulfillment of the yearnings and aspirations of every stake holder in the Nigeria project; the cankerworm of corruption and political considerations have dominated everyday lives of the policy makers and the NBTE cannot be an exception. The votes usually allocated of with respect to infrastructure, workshops, equipment's, curriculum development and personal emoluments do not adequately match with the requirements. There is the problem with the delay in the passage of annual budgets that often times affects every plan in Nigerian institutions including the NBTE. The high level of corruption affects the quality of instructions passed to students resulting from inappropriate or outdated method of teaching, learning, laboratories and equipment's. The number of students enrolled in the institutions by far outweigh their capacity thereby affecting the quality of learning. The African development fund (2005) have analyzed in its education status review (2003) that some vocational colleges in Nigeria do not have a single vocational teacher at all and all colleges are affected by inadequate TVET teachers. There is the absence of political will on the part of those elevated to the position of trust to execute this mandate turning themselves to self-serving individuals thereby compromising on ethics with yet the attendant effects on the quality of output.

### **Other Support Agencies**

In its bid to catch up with the development needs, Nigeria has developed some agencies of its own and often times go into bilateral relationship with other countries with a view to supporting the educational needs of the country.

The industrial training fund (ITF) is one of the example of such agencies principally established vide decree N0 47 of 8<sup>th</sup> October, 1971. The fund was to assist in acquisition of skill in industry and commerce. The ITF was the first amongst the three manpower training and development plan program of 1970-1974.

The functions of the ITF are clearly spelt out which includes organization of research and studies into training as support to other activities of the fund. It also established vocational apprenticeship training scheme in the country. It is noteworthy that the cost of conducting training and retraining which is a vital tool for any human endeavor could enormously be high therefore, the ITF subsidize the training and provide facilities for the conduct of such. In the various states of Nigeria there is the establishment of works school under the states of ministries of works that engages in various skills acquisition in different crafts and an established



curriculum and scheme of service have been developed leading to trade certification. In many states across Nigeria there is the wide spread of skills acquisition Center's, private or publically owned. In Sokoto there is at least one new of such centers in each of the three senatorial districts, this is in addition to women centers in existence in each local government.

The Nigeria government has been receiving support from other agencies such as United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the UNESCO, USAID, JAICA and the Korean Government. The Korean international cooperation Agency (KOICA) had played vital roles in the development of TVET in Nigeria. A sizeable number of Nigerians have received various capacity building training under its capacity improvement and advancement for tomorrow (CIAT) initiative. The training include lectures and field trips on various aspects of vocational skills acquisition and training that gives Nigerians an insight into the importance and relevance of TVET on individual and the country at large.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

It is the conclusion of this paper that TVET is an ingredient towards the attainment of self-sufficiency, productivity, human and economic development. Based on the proceeding findings it can be said that TVET is amenable to the Nigeria's quest for development. For Nigeria to fight the problems of high unemployment, extreme poverty, violent agitations and foreign exchange conservation it should invest more on TVET. It is concluded that both the legislation, the funding, the infrastructure and institutions need to be upgraded to reflect the current and the future needs and aspirations of Nigerian's. The issues of basic infrastructure and manpower as well as an up to date curriculum could be tackled with increased funding. A review of budget allocation to the educational sector shows that the sub sector has not been adequately funded and this can be argued as the reason why graduates that couldn't match the market needs are produced in Nigerian institutions. Findings in this research also suggested that Nigeria is very much aware of the vital position of TVET. Hence the establishment of TVET center's from the federal government down to state and local governments

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the light of the above, the paper recommends that:

- i. There is the need to articulate a policy document on TVET and all training providers should be guided on that policy. All vocational training schools and centers should be under the supervision of a single institution which should be responsible for setting up competency examinations this is with a view to evolving a clear framework and guidelines on their employment.
- ii. There is the need to develop a specific curriculum of training for all training providers to adopt to its different levels of training. All training should conform to the national competency standard which should serve as a basis for employing TVET graduates.



- iii. Nigeria should increase its funding of education to cater for the needs of infrastructure and training with a view to decongesting the learning centers. Increased funding may come from levy to be paid by every individual engaged in productive activity.
- iv. There is the need to match supply and demand needs of both the training providers and employers of labor, this assures that every trainee has a job waiting for him in contrast to what obtains today in Nigeria
- v. Nigeria should engage more in its bilateral relationships with donor agencies such as Korea with a view to importing new techniques, ideas, and skills for the betterment of all. Technologically Nigeria cannot be said to match the already developed countries that have dedicated their resources to occupy their current position, therefore the benefit of indigenous manpower development would sprout the gross domestic product levels of Nigeria's economy and this can be facilitated with bilateral relationships

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