



**ACHIEVING TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA.
PROBLEMS AND WAY FORWARD.**

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Abstracts

Any type of training with the primary goal of educating people for employment in a recognized profession is referred to as "vocational technical education". Vocational technical education was founded on a concept that was created primarily for the self-employment and independence individuals who practice it. However the positive effects and philosophical values of TVET has not been deeply felt in Nigeria. Nigeria is yet to take her pride of place in producing high quality products expected from her TVET potentials and students in the various technical, vocational and polytechnic institutions across the country. This paper highlighted some of the challenges to the establishment of an enduring Technical and vocational education training culture in Nigeria after more than fifty years of Nigeria's independence. Some of the problems that have limited the success of TVET education in Nigeria include wasteful political leadership, high level of illiteracy and widespread indifference on the part of learners. By utilizing a qualitative research approach and textual analysis, the paper argued that the prospects of establishing a stable and viable TVET culture in Nigeria depends on students eagerness to participate in vocational training as well as appropriate funding of TVET education by the government at all levels in Nigeria.

Keywords: Vocational Education, Challenges, Prospects, Way Forward.

Introduction

Different authors describe vocational technical education in different ways. Vocational education, according to Okoro (1999), "is any experience that teaches a person how to perform any meaningful employment successfully". These engagement could be planned and institutionalized. Vocational education can be thought of as a sequence of a carefully planned educational processes designed to get someone ready for work that would benefit the society. Thompson (2002), argued that the goal of vocational education is to help people become more knowledgeable and skilled artisans such as bricklayers, shoemakers, tailors who could perform their various tasks excellently in their chosen professions. Winer (2000) also observed that vocational education assist in deepening the knowledge and information that workers need to be effective and productive in their areas of expertise. TVET also assist individuals develop their physical, social, civic, cultural, and economic competences, which helps them become productive citizens.

Vocational education does not have to be operated in a vacuum in order to be effective on learners and students alike. It must be connected to elements that will enable students and all other participants in vocational technical education to apply practical methodologies to solving problems rather than just remaining theoretical in approach to education. Due to poor public recognition, insufficient funding, parental and students preferences, TVET has remained a second-class educational program especially in Nigeria. Hornby (2000), argued that philosophy is "a specific that applies rational and reflective rational and logical analysis to various human ideas and concept with the primary aim of eliminating and removing the mental darkness in the human thought pattern." According to the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004), the main idea of vocational and technical training is to offer specific skills to individuals so that they could be self-sufficient and reliant.

Okorie (2011) argued that TVET is that individuals' occupational choices should depend on their background, social economic exposure, mental capabilities, vision and aspirations in life. Students must be encouraged to choose vocation and trainings that are in agreement with their aspirations in life. Education resources must be made available in order to develop all human resources; otherwise, some people may endanger others. From the above analysis, it is apparent that TVET can only be impactful to the Nigerian society if learners and students alike trained specifically in



developing the capabilities of being able to create practical tools, machineries and equipment that are useful in practical ways to the society in which they find themselves.

Okeke (1988) observed that the adopted approach of teaching programs under TVET Curriculum in Nigeria is essentially classroom based. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) mission to Nigeria noted that TVET in Nigeria is not feasible. Gana (1988) questioned the organization and content of vocational training in Nigeria, but Okorie (2001) ascribed inadequate TVET in Nigeria to a lack of an industry base, implying that much vocational training is theoretical. In the Soviet Union, the government, educational institutions, and businesses place a high priority on vocational education and training. As a result, the curriculum, instructional methods, staffing, and equipment are carefully developed to guarantee a high standard and appropriate vocational training (Osuala, 2004).

Many subjects, including woodworking, metal working, metal fabrication, tailoring and dressmaking, dyeing, plumbing, electrical installation, block laying and concreting, carpentry and joinery, furniture making, motor vehicle mechanic works, are covered in practical vocational technical training. service of electronics, radio, and TV, and technical drafting. According to studies, the suitability of a person's vocational training determines how much of a contribution educated workers make on the workplace (Nneji, 1997).

Idirisu, (2007) contended that "the setting in which a trainee is trained should be similar to the environment in which he will undoubtedly find employment". This ideology is still far from being implemented in Nigeria. Schools and universities' facilities, including their classrooms, workshops, labs, studios, equipment, and supplies, are woefully inadequate in Nigeria. The challenge of acquiring facilities leaves no room for learners to practice their newly acquired skills because the various sectors where the students would eventually work have sophisticated hand tools and machines thus making the training environment considerably different from that of the industries.

Scholars are also agreed that each occupation has a minimal level of preparation required in order for trainees to be able to enter and remain employed in that occupation, and if that level of preparation is not met, neither the trainee nor society will gain from that occupation. By applying this principle to Nigeria's current vocational education and training, it is clear that almost all of the country's programs for vocational technical education should have been discontinued or shut down because students who complete these vocational programme lack marketable skills.

Methodology

By utilizing a qualitative research approach and textual analysis, the paper argued that the prospects of establishing a stable and viable TVET culture in Nigeria depends on students eagerness to participate in vocational training as well as appropriate funding of TVET education by the government at all levels in Nigeria.

Discussion

Okorie, (2001) observed that the ratio of admission into vocational technical education institutions and programs including Technical Colleges, Monotechnics and Polytechnics remains abysmally low in Nigeria. In addition, majority of Nigerian parents and guardians deliberately discourage their children and wards from developing interest in technical education and training but prefer that their children study educational programmes in professions such as Medicine, law, Engineering, Architecture, Pharmacy and Nursing amongst others. Parents often encourage their children to study courses that do not require practical abilities because they prefer their children to work in air conditioned environment and receive huge monthly emoluments.

Conclusion

In Nigeria, the idea of Technical and vocational training is commendable. The underlying philosophy and primary goal of this type of education is to provide relevant and practical skills to individuals so that they could be self-reliant in life. The level to which this educational philosophy has been implemented in Nigeria leaves much to be desired. Currently there still exist many impediments to implementing the philosophy of vocational training and education in many tertiary institutions across the country.

Other major challenges that has continued to limit the impact of TVET in Nigeria include, scarcity of skilled vocational technical teachers, hand tools, equipments, and materials; the persistent negative perception and position of technical training acquisition; insufficient funding by the government; and preference for general education by student as motivated by parents. In conclusion, TVET would could receive a huge boost and become more impactful



in Nigeria if government could increase its commitment and participation in the provision of human, technological and funding resources to the various institutions established to offer TVET to Nigerian students.

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