Problems and Strategies for Revamping Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria

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Abstract
Technical and vocational education is considered as an important measure for the development of trained labour force required for the economic growth of a country. It is also a multifaceted, multi-disciplinary and pragmatic field of study aimed at equipping youths with requisites technical and vocational literacy skills which will create employment for themselves and also for others. Thus this study examines problems and strategies for revamping technical and vocational education in Nigeria. Secondary sources of data were utilized for the study. Findings from literature review showed that there is plethora of problems militating against technical and vocational education in Nigeria. They include wrong perception, societal stigma, poor funding inadequate, facilities dearth of qualified technical and vocational personnel, epileptic power supply, lack of indigenous technical and vocational education text books, poor student motivation, lack of continuity in technical and vocational education and training, poor teaching methods employed by teacher among other. Moreover, the study also revealed that flexible workable and adaptable programmes, adequate funding, required qualified technical and vocational training professional teachers, provision of required TVE facilities and resources, adequate internal and external supervision public private partnership and training and retraining or TVE teachers are strategies for revamping technical and vocational education in Nigeria. The study concluded that government and private organizations should adequately support the funding of technical and vocational education in order to reduce the menace of graduate unemployment in the country.

Keywords: Apprenticeship, Eco-geography, Self-employment,Technical Education, Vocational education, Vocational skills

Introduction
Technical and vocational education has been integral part of national development strategies in many societies because of the impact of human resource development, productivity and economic development. It is also a veritable instrument for graduate empowerment and one of the major parameters for measuring a country’s economic growth and development (Kehinde & Adewuyi, 2015). Grubb (1985) states that technical and vocational education can be used effectively to reduce drop-outs and migration from rural areas to
urban areas. The rapid industrialization of any nation is tied to acquisition of technical and vocational education as it prepares the individual for life-long learning of developing the necessary mental tools, technical and vocational skills and attitudes (Ezeoni & Urama, 2014). Despite its contributions, the leaders of Nigeria have not given this aspect of education the attention it deserves, which explains the prevalence of poverty, unemployment, prostitution, drug abuse, hunger, violence, insurgency, armed robbery and the forms of social vices in Nigeria to day. It is on this note that this study examines the problems and strategies for revamping technical and vocational education in Nigeria.

**Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study are:

i. To identify the objectives of technical and vocation education in Nigeria.

ii. To highlight the role of technical and vocation education in Nigeria.

iii. To examine the challenges and strategies for revamping technical and vocational education in Nigeria.

**Literature Review**

**Concept of Technical and Vocational Education**

Technical and vocational education is variously defined by different scholars, researchers and organizations. For instance, UNESCO (1978) defines technical and vocational education as a comprehensive term referring to the educational process when it involves in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. It is also defined by Immaculate (2005) as leaving experience meant to be impacted to an individual systematically in order to get him/her adequately equipped for a good employment in a recognized occupation. Olaitan (1985) conceptualizes technical and vocational education as a highly useful education as its occupation content is such that the trainee acquires skills. Interest, knowledge for both himself and the society. Okoh (2000) views technical and vocational education as part of the total experience of the individual whereby he/she learns successfully how to carry on a gainful occupation which involves the development of skills knowledge and attitudes required for success in the occupation. Abdulrahaman (2013) regard technical and vocational education as planned programme of courses and learning experience that begins with exploration of career options, supports basic academic and life skills and enables achievement of high academic standards, leadership qualities, preparation for industry define work and advanced and continuing education. Adele and Olukayode (2007) describe technical and vocational education as a programme with various branches that can transform Nigeria into a producer / manufactures
nation from its present status of a consumer/importer nation. Lawal (2010) also describes technical and vocational education as that types of education that prepare people who could apply relevant practical skills to make positive changes within their society and afford a self-dependent life. This form of education has been attested severally as an education that provides self-employment, enhance productivity and self-reliance. It also gives individual the skills to live, learn and work as productive citizens in a global society.

Objectives of Technical and Vocational Education

According to Adebayo (1988), the objectives technical and vocational are:

- To provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for economic development.
- To provide trained manpower in applied science, technology and commerce.
- To give training and impart necessary skills leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians and their skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant.

The National Policy on Education (2004) enumerates the objectives of technical and vocational education in Nigeria as follows:

i. To provide trained power in applied science, technology commerce particularly at sub-professional grades;
ii. To provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commerce and economic development;
iii. To provide the people who can apply specific knowledge to the improvement and solution of environmental problems for the use and convenience of man;
iv. To provide an introduction of professional studies in engineering and other technologies;
v. To give training and impart the skill leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians and the skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant and
vi. To enable a young men and women to have an intelligent understanding of the increasing complexity of technology.

Role of Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria

Abdulrahaman (ibid) highlights the vital role of technical and vocational education in Nigeria. They include:

i. Technical and vocational education helps to reduce the rate of drop-outs or unemployment in the society. Technical and vocational education could be used to developed marketable skills in students/youths so that they can become easily employable.
ii. Technical and vocational education helps a nation develop technologically and industrially by producing people competent and capable of developing and utilizing technologies for industrial and economic development. It is a tool that can be used to develop and sustain the manpower needs of any nation.
iii. Technical and vocational education offers the beneficiary the ability to be self-reliant, to the job creators and employers of labour.

iv. Technical and vocational education helps reduce poverty in time of employment crisis.

v. It promotes the national economy through foreign exchange by exporting our products. The knowledge of technical and vocational education helps in conversion of local raw materials, this reduces the importation of foreign goods which lessen our import dependency and encourage of our local products.

vi. It helps to promote the Nigerian culture and cause us to appreciate what we have. This can be seen in the national and international appreciation of Aso-Oke in South Western part of Nigeria.

vii. Technical and vocational education helps to prevent waste of human resources. It is clear that waste of labour by improper employment can be avoided through technical and vocational education.

viii. It acts as a vehicle towards self-actualization and enables people to be psychologically balance and physically fit because work gives a sense of identity, purpose and value.

ix. It boosts economic activities and improves per-capital income of citizens.

**Historical Background of Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria**

The origin of vocational and technical education in Nigeria could be traced to the pre-colonial era when traditional education was in practice. During the period, the child was trained in the family trade by direct apprenticeship to either the parent or relations. Ogunmila (2006) maintained that traditional education of the various ethnic nationalities, arts and crafts of various types have existed as their own expression of Vocational training; while traditional agricultural practices have been developed to suit the cultivation of these agricultural species predominantly produce in the different eco-geography areas of the country (Sofoluwe, 2013).

In 1959, Federal Ministry of Education (Nigeria) appointed a commission to conduct an investigation into Nigeria’s needs in the field of post-secondary education in Nigeria. The reports recommended that adequate attention should be given to technical and vocational education, encourage students to study technical drawing and craft subjects and upgrade the technical schools courses to the award of city and Guilds of London. The Comparative Technical Education (1963) recommended three levels of technical and vocational education as follows:

1. Pre-vocational and pre-technical training usually offered in secondary schools

2. Craftmen training usually offered in technical colleges, trade centers and vocational schools.

3. Technical training usually offered in polytechnic and college of technology. The establishment of college at Ayetoro (now in Ogun State) by the Federal Government...
through assistance by the food foundation brought a novelty the provision of technical and vocational education in Nigeria.

However, the development of technical and vocational education seems to have been left in the hands of the Federal and State Government due ostensibly to the heavy investment required. This trend persisted in all part of the country till date (Owolabi, 2003).

Features of Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria

Okorie (2001) states that some of the features of technical and vocation education include:

- Providing skills knowledge and attitudes to prepare individuals for employment in occupations or career for national development.
- Helping young people to develop occupational competencies for individual work.
- Aiding or making individual to uphold the dignity of labour attitudes to real work situation.
- Inculating through innovative methods and techniques necessary skills for employment in the formal and informal sectors of the economy.
- Providing efficient workforce in the business, agriculture and industrial sectors (Agbionu, 1994).

Problems of Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria

The development of technical and vocational education in Nigeria has been identified with some problems which service as hindrances to its development. According to NOUN (2009), the following are some of the challenges militating against effective technical and vocational education in Nigeria:

- Wrong perception of technical and vocation education.
- Societal stigma
- Lack of technical and vocational guidance and counseling
- Financial constraints
- Lack of physical resources
- Government policies
- Dearth qualified vocational personnel
- Lack of power supply
- Poor student motivation
- The gap between institution and industry.
- Lack of indigenous technical and vocational education text books.
- Lack of effective entrepreneurship education.
- Insufficient industrial work experience for student
- Administrative and curriculum problems
- Non-involvement of vocational education practitioners in policy making and planning.
Okolocha (2012) also added for technical and vocational education in Nigeria to compete with their world counterparts in the changing to economic order, they must address the following key challenges:

- Lack of continuity in technical and vocational Education and training
- Insufficient and lack of up-to-date data for assessment of progress in technical and vocational education system.
- Lack of standard and certification in technical and vocational education at all levels.
- Influence of politics on technical and vocational Education programme.
- Lack of adequate security /security needs

Strategies for Revamping Technical and Vocational Education in Nigeria

In order to curb the challenges facing of technical and vocational education in Nigeria, these strategies should be adhere strictly to:

i. Government must institute flexible, workable and adaptable programme.

ii. Government must use qualified vocational training professionals /teachers in implementing technical and vocational education programme.

iii. The three tiers of the government (Federal, State and Local government) should try to create an enabling environment for technical and vocational education as an integral part of government policies on youths and adult self-dependence.

iv. Government as a matter of urgent should promote the continuity of technical and vocational education programme in Nigeria.

v. The three tiers of government, education stakeholders and employers should give massive support to technical and vocational education programme by investing in the programmes.

vi. Training and learning must take place in on environment where all the necessary tools, machines, equipment and facilities are in place and resemble the place for real work environment.

vii. There should be sharing ratio of Education Trust Fund (ETF) among the three tiers of higher institutions in Nigeria.

viii. Government should put in place proper machinery to standardize, monitor and control the issuance of certificate from technical and vocational institution and training centres.

ix. Government should also set up national and local structure of technical and vocational councils to coordinate and monitor the overall activities and assessment of technical and vocational education in Nigeria (Tukur, Kaigamma & Saidu, 2014).
x. Nigeria government should strive to see that Board in charge of technical and vocational education keeps up-to-date data regarding technical and vocational education.

xi. There should be adequate provision and installation of information communication technology (ICT) facilities in all schools in the country at all levels to enhance quality (Okolocha, ibid).

Summary and Conclusion

The issue of technical and vocational education as a means for economic empowerment and curtailment of graduate unemployment has been discussed. It is therefore imperative for the government and policy makers to re-orientate our educational system in Nigeria with skills attitude and knowledge of technical and vocational education in order that the training youths and adult could achieve self-employment. For any country to utilize her population effectively for gainful employment technical and vocational education could reduce the drop-out rate by providing training centres or opportunities to youths and adults who are not satisfied with the types of education that are not suitable to the modern period. Moreover, government and private organizations should adequately support the finding of technical and vocational education in order to equip the beneficiary with needed skills, competencies, attitude knowledge that are needed in the nation’s drive for technological development and curtailment of graduate unemployment in Nigeria.

Recommendations

i. Government should provide adequate fund to support technical and vocational education in Nigeria higher institutions and technical colleges.

ii. The Government in partnership with the private organizations should create awareness on the relevance of vocational education to individuals through workshops, seminars and conferences.

iii. Effective technical and vocational education guidance and counseling should be mounted from primary to the tertiary level of education to correct wrong perception.

iv. All tertiary institutions should have full-fledged vocational technical programmes

v. Government should be courageous enough insisting that only professionally qualified, competent teachers involved in teaching are involved in teaching of technical and vocational courses.

vi. There should be adequate emphasis on practical aspect of technical and vocational education to enable the recipients acquire skills and reduce the over
dependence on government paid jobs.

vii. Efforts should be made by the government to see that there is full implementation of the policies concerning technical and vocational education.

viii. Salaries and incentives should be increased in order to motivate technical and vocational teachers to discharge their duties effectively.

ix. Government should take full responsibilities for the quality of technical and vocational graduates and make sure that they can compete with the challenges they may face in their work places.

References


