

# Re-Structuring the Implementation of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for Accelerated National Development

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**Abstract:**-This paper discussed the need to re-structure the implementation of TVET in Nigeria for accelerated national development. This is because the novel changes in the world of work have been fueled by myriad competitiveness in industry and also the fact that TVET plays a key role in poverty alleviation of a country. This has presented a need for policy makers and administrators to equip the TVET schools with the right equipment and also the students with the right skills. This paper also x-rays the history of TVET in Nigeria, Employment and workplace pressure for change, problems of TVET in Nigeria as well as the need to Re-structure TVET for National Development. A number of recommendations were made which includes the need for a strong linkage and collaboration between training institutions and the industry and also that the initial TVET curriculum should be adjusted to the current and future skills needs of the industry.

**Key Words:** TVET; Re- Structuring, National Development; and Acceleration.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The novel changes in the world of work which was fueled by myriad competitiveness in industry has given rise to the need for us to re-structure the implementation of technical and vocational education and training (TVET), for accelerated national development. This is because TVET plays a key role in poverty reduction. This made UNESCO (2004) to opine that the two major objectives of TVET is the urgent need to train the workforce for self-employment and the necessity to raise the productivity of the informal sector. In many countries of the world, governments are renewing efforts to promote technical and vocational education and training (TVET) with the belief that development of core skills and competences among TVET graduates will act as sine qua non to productivity and competitiveness in the global economy. TVET thus plays an orientation role towards the world of work and its curriculum emphasizes on the acquisition of such employable skills, which is a fundamental necessity for driving the industrial and economic growth, and it is a key to building this type of technical and entrepreneurial workforce which Africa needs to create wealth and emerge out of

poverty. TVET therefore is a means through which training needs of learners from different socio-economic and academic backgrounds are responded to, thus preparing them for self-employment and sustainable livelihoods. The youth, the poor and the vulnerable of society can therefore benefit from TVET. According to Njoku (2014), the reputation of TVET institutions is dependent on their ability to produce qualified young people who will be immediately operational in the work place. In case of Nigeria, the certificate acquired by TVET graduates are theoretically oriented, no wonder scholars like Atsumbe (2002) stated that it will really be tough for students to acquire the required skills needed by the industries going by our curriculum.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training refers to the educational processes that entails the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills and knowledge aimed at preparing the individual for employment in various sectors of economic and social life and also to be self-employ. This has given rise to the reason why in recent times, the economic, technological, demographic, societal and educational context in which vocational and technical education is practiced has changed (European Commission, 2010). These changes offer a great challenge to the delivery of vocational and technical education. Vocational and technical education must respond appropriately to these changes in order to remain relevant in preparing individuals to take advantage of the opportunities for the kind of workforce needed in today's world of work. In this regard, effective leadership becomes an important variable that must be considered in the new vocational education environment.

## II. A HISTORY OF NIGERIA'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

There was little attention paid to TVET before Nigeria's independence in 1960. Soon after, it became clear that the traditional trading, commerce and service sectors alone could not generate sufficient jobs for the number of school leavers in a growing population. The overall strategic

plan of the Nigeria Government then was to diversify and accelerate economic growth through industrialization. During this early phase of economic development, from the 1960s to the 1970s, the educational priority was to expand primary and secondary education, including technical education and training, so as to lay the necessary foundation for the acquisition of basic vocational skills. It was only from the 1980s that an increasing emphasis was placed on improving the level of skills and quality of the education and training system, including the schools, universities, polytechnics and TVET. In order to ensure national unity, integration, technological development, and indigenous education policy, with unified structure, a special national conference was arranged in 1969 (Abubakar, 2007). The report of this conference brought some changes and modification known as the national policy on education NPE, first issued in 1977 revised in 1981, 1998 and 2004.

### III. NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION (NPE)

The National Policy on Education main goals has been to restructure colonial education system with emphasis on vocationalization. Consequent upon the attainment of independence, it was discovered that the colonial education did not meet the aspiration of Nigerians. This led to the introduction of 6-5-4 system of education in 1970's and the 6-3-3-4 system in the early 1980's and also the 9-3-4 system of education in 2008. Tehobo (2000) stated that the need for restructuring of these educational policy arise as a result of the fact that the policies of the 1970's and 1980's are focusing more on the acquisition of certificate instead of the needed vocational skills. This is because the rapid technological changes coupled with globalization poses a great challenge to education and employment sectors. The new labour market demands have caused a lot of graduate who does not have the required vocational competences to be unemployed. The reason for this is not far fetch. According to Njoku (2014), the industries want to produce goods that are of high quality and less cost, the need to acquire sophisticated equipment that will require skill technicians to operate. The new policies of the late 90's and 20's sought to introduce a functional technology-based education, which could sustain the nation's economic activities for rapid socio-economic development. Nigeria has long acknowledged TVET, at least in policies, as the master key to unlocking the future. According to the NPE, Junior secondary school will include Integrated Science and Introductory Technology (generally known as INTRO-TECH), among its main objectives. This will eventually leads to full-blown vocational and technical subjects at the senior secondary level (Dike, 2009; Ofoha, 2011; Oni, 2008). The new skill-based secondary-school curriculum was supposed to empower the youths with employability and entrepreneurial skills (Awogbenle & Iwuamadi, 2010). However, when the efficacy of the new curriculum was assessed, it revealed that the policy was poorly implemented (Moja, 2000).

### IV. EMPLOYMENT AND WORKPLACE PRESSURES FOR CHANGE

More than ten years ago, the ILO in its World Employment Report: Employability in the global economy – How training matters (1999) estimated that, out of a world labour force of 3 billion people, 25–30 per cent were underemployed and about 140 million workers were fully unemployed. The ILO further estimated that 60 million young people between the ages of 15 and 25 were in search of work but could not find it. In 2010 the situation does not look much better. At the beginning of 2010, the ILO (2010) estimated the number of unemployed persons at 212 million in 2009 (6.4 per cent of a world labour force of some 3.3 billion people), with an increase of almost 34 million over the number of unemployed in 2007, most of this increase occurring in 2009 following the world's financial crisis and the subsequent worldwide recession. The number of unemployed youth increased by 8.5 million between 2008 and 2009 (and by more than 10 million since 2007), the largest year-on-year increase in at least ten years. Projections for 2010 were likely to be higher in the absence of a strong recovery. In this environment, as the ILO's Global Jobs Pact (2009) sets out, one of the key policy solutions to ending the worldwide jobs crisis will be equipping the workforce with the skills needed for employability. How TVET systems can contribute to improving this situation, particularly in reducing the number of inactive young people – those not in employment, education or training – and reducing social marginalization for all population groups has become a priority question for decision-makers. Against the somber economic backdrop, TVET systems worldwide are under pressure to deal with a host of other employment and workplace challenges created by, changing technologies, shorter product cycles, and new forms of work organization, sustainable development and green jobs in a creative and employment-driven way. In view of these far-reaching developments, using TVET policies in the most effective way in support of enhanced education and skill levels of workers has become prime importance in economic, employment and social integration strategies worldwide.

### V. THE SKILLS CHALLENGE

The question of how to reduce unemployment, under-employment and also reduce the mismatch between skills and jobs, while simultaneously creating the new productive jobs and improving quality of life of the worker, are some of the core issues that concern TVET. TVET should consider these and at the same time address most of these issues by implementing appropriate curriculum, innovative teacher-training and strengthening skill and competencies development. This is because balancing supply of skills with demand in the labour market constitutes one of the fundamental issues in skills development policy. Historically, since economic and technological change worldwide accelerated in the 1980s, the inability of most TVET systems to adequately respond to these challenges can mostly be seen

as a major skills mismatch due to an insufficient demand orientation in TVET. This is even more troublesome, since the demand for skilled labour has risen significantly as a result of globalization, changes in technology, the organization of work, new development policies, including the transition to a low carbon economy, and the recent international financial crises and subsequent worldwide recession. In this present environment, many observers contend that different individual skills sets are needed. This skill mix in turn forms an essential component of a sustainable institutional and economic environment in which public and private enterprises enable growth, the generation of greater employment and income opportunities for all citizens, and whereby societies achieve their goals of economic development, good living standards and social progress. Consequently, there is a demand for a more skilled labour force, with more autonomous, adaptable and multi-functional workers. But the question remains: what incentives can be established to encourage training providers to organize training around this enhanced labour market and societal orientation? The concept of competency-based TVET training tends to put more emphasis on the more traditional notion of skills, largely technical in nature, whereas many employers place more importance on the overall competence of individuals and especially on their ability to communicate, to solve problems, and to work in teams, in addition to technical skills, all part of a skills package. In Nigeria, most skills gained during TVET training are too narrow in scope and lack overall context, whereas competencies acquired over a work lifetime are still very often developed on the job, in both the formal and the informal economy. In addition, more effective delivery of TVET as well as assessment of its functional outcomes through cooperation in TVET systems between enterprises and schools and with other stakeholders is still far from generally applied.

Instead, in many countries, TVET and existing labour market policies do not always facilitate the school to work transition, thereby handicapping young people especially in obtaining a head start in working life. For TVET systems to become more flexible and responsive to new skill demands, which tend to be difficult to foresee and increasingly diversified, there must be certain incentives for the stakeholders in the training system as well as those in key employment planning and decision-making roles. Examining global drivers of long-term change that bear on the provision of training and skills, a strategic framework that creates bridges between training and the world of work, and the essential building blocks of a robust training strategy, the strategy emphasizes the cornerstones of policies to expand skills and broaden access to skill formation through: quality education as a foundation for future training; a close matching of skill supply to the needs of enterprises and labour markets; enabling workers and enterprises to adjust to changes in technology and markets; and anticipating and preparing for the skills of the future.

The strategy insists that, when applied successfully, this approach nurtures a virtuous circle in which more and better education and training fuels innovation, investment, economic diversification and competitiveness, as well as social and occupational mobility – and thus the creation of more but also more productive and rewarding jobs (ILO, 2010).

#### VI. PROBLEM OF VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

The problem facing technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in Nigeria is multifaceted. Before independence in 1960, the Ashby Commission was set up to review Nigeria's manpower needs (Fafunwa, 2002). The commission reported a shortage of skilled manpower at all levels (lower, middle, and high) and observed that "the major defect in Nigerian education is the strong bias toward the traditional literary and academic subjects. The report strongly recommended that Nigeria should introduce technical subjects in secondary education and warned that the nation should not avoid the recommendation. In line with that, the problems of Technical and Vocational Education are enumerated as follows:

1. The problem of bridging the demand for jobs with the actual needs of society. Politically, governments cannot afford not to invest in the skills of future generations.
2. The problem of Image and Status as TVET is perceived by some as second-class. These difficulties must be met with a renewed effort to raise the public perception of TVET.
3. The problem of attracting more female instructors and administrators into TVET for its promotion for Girls and Women.
4. The problem associated with high cost of construction, equipment, maintenance and the provision of consumable training materials and routine and preventive maintenance.
5. TVET Teachers' Conditions of Service in most countries are not the same with those in academics, as such; it serves as a demotivating factor.
6. Teaching and Learning: As TVET becomes increasingly more knowledge oriented; the role of the teachers and instructors must change from the didactic imparting of skills and knowledge to the facilitation of learning.
7. Lack of appropriate and relevant parties' involvement at the planning stage of TVET.
8. Corruption: Most people restrict corruption to financial embezzlement. The worst aspect of it is related to policies that obscure TVET related programs which are capable of empowering the society with skills and competencies that are not marketable.



## VII. RE-STRUCTURING OF (TVET) FOR ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA.

There is need to restructure TVET programmes which should be in alignment with the demands of industry and the market. The curriculum of TVET should primarily focus on the knowledge and skills required for industrial development. Provision of TVET should therefore enhance quality delivery, should assure employability of trainees, should improve consistency and management of its training and should promote life-long learning so as to make it more attractive to the youth. TVET should therefore be in line with the needs and demands of the current industrial development needs (Harrison & Reddan 2010). The following strategies should be laid down so as to ensure long-life restructuring of TVET in Nigeria.

1. Renewing interest in TVET form of education by government as a result of globalization
2. The provision of adequate equipment and tool with qualified instructors to enhance quality delivery of TVET.
3. Teaching pre-vocational subjects in the primary and junior secondary schools should be taken more seriously to raise the interest of students for vocational programmes.
4. Acquisition of practical skills should be stressed on the final outcome of TVET to boost practical skills.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

For accelerated national development, there is a need for the TVET administrators and policy makers in Nigeria to re-structure technical and vocational education and training. TVET must be seen as a sine qua non in other for us to surmount the critical challenges of this 21st century which are the attainment of full employment and sustained economic growth in the global economy and social inclusivity. TVET can be seen as the backbone of quality life as it contributes significantly to promoting the interests of individuals, enterprises, economy and society, by making the individuals employable. It also helps the individuals to gain access to decent work and good jobs, and escape poverty and marginalization. Underfunding of TVET at all levels has drastically affected adequate provision of reasonable workforce needed for industrialization and economic development in the country, hence, the presence of foreign experts who are paid in high currencies which is detrimental to the nation's economic growth.

## IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

**The study therefore recommends the following:**

1. There should be strong linkage and collaboration between training institutions and the industry.
2. There should be technical and vocational education board in every state of the federation for proper administration of TVET programme.

3. The initial TVET curriculum should be adjusted to the current and future skills needs of the industry;
4. There should be adequate funding of TVET programme by the government at all levels
5. There should be training and retraining of TVET teachers to acquire the current skills needed in industry.

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