

BRIDGING THE IMPLEMENTATION GAP IN TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICY FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BY

¹ OMOLE ANDREW OSIANEMO & ² OMOLE ALFRED SUNDAY (Ph.D)

¹ Building Department, Faculty of Environmental Science, Ahnadu Bello University, Zaria. Nigeria.

² School of Technical Education, Federal College of Education (Technical), Gusau. Zamfara State. Nigeria

E-mail: omolealfred@yahoo.com Tel: +2348064914498

Abstract

This paper examines the implementation gap in Technical Vocational Education and Training policy from the National Policy of Education which is broader in scope than the TVET policy. In spite of several efforts by government through her different policies to make the Nigerian educational system more functional, there are still growing concerns among education stakeholders and industrialist that graduates from our Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) educational institutions lack adequate practical background and relevant job related skills for employment in industries. It was discovered through literatures that gap exist in the implementation of TVET specifically in areas that formulates skills development policies to engage all stakeholders in: setting a common vision of the skills system that a country aims to build; facilitating an alignment with national development framework and coherence with other policies; proposing coordinated and planned actions and reforms for improving outcome and impact of training; clarifying institutional arrangements for the skills system; anchoring existing good practices; and pledging political and collective will and commitment while clarifying roles and responsibilities of stakeholders as declared by International Labour Organization (ILO). Therefore, from the reviews, ways on how to bridge these gaps were proffered among others which includes the re-definition of TVET and deliberate implementation framework for TVET and the target group.

Introduction

All organized sectors, public or private, have a policy framework that guides the activities or behaviour of workers in the organization. This is because policy gives a sensory faculty of direction which determines the activities and action of the doers. It is for this reason that Nigeria, like other nations, has several national policies which are domiciled in government ministries or departments. Hence, there are national policies on health, environment, farming, industry, defence and education, among others. The effort to produce a national policy on education for Nigeria dates back to the 1969 curriculum conference (Osam, 2013) in which a cross-section of Nigerians from various walks of life gathered for the first time after political independence in 1960 to think a way ahead for the Nigerian education system which had hitherto

been acted upon by colonial education policy. The landmark-decisions reached at that conference, coupled with the presentation made by several nations and interest groups thereafter gave rise to the first National Policy on Education in Nigeria in 1977 and revised in 2013 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). The policy has since then been very dynamic as it has been revised many times. The current (2013) being the 7th version.

Similarly, UNESCO (2009) defined TVET as all forms and aspects of education that are expert and vocational in nature, provided either in educational foundations or under their authority, by public authorities, the private sector or through other kinds of coordinated education, conventional or non-formal, aiming to assure that all members of the community have access to the

pathways of lifelong scholarship. According to Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2013), the objectives of TVET are to:

- i. Provide trained manpower in applied scientific discipline, engineering and commerce, particularly at the sub-professional level;
- ii. Provide the expert knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial and economic evolution;
- iii. Provide people who can apply scientific knowledge to the improvement and solution of environmental problems for the utilization and convenience of human being;
- iv. Present an introduction to professional studies in applied science and other applied sciences;
- v. Present training and give the necessary skills leading to the production of craftsmen, technicians and other skilled personnel who will be enterprising and self-reliant; and
- vi. To enable our young men and women to hold an intelligent apprehension of the increasing complexity of engineering science.

The quality and image of TVET in Nigeria are of great concern at this given time when it is manifest that the central indicator of any country's advancement in development cannot be divulged from her success in TVET. The feeling of the society about TVET is nothing but an educational programme for the 'never do well' or students that are academically deficient. Collaborating in this view, Aworanti (2011) asserted that TVET is seen by the public and even parents as education tract as fit for only the

academically less endowed. This poor perception of TVET according to Ogunyemi (2003) in Ekong (2013) has resulted in low recognition of craftsmen graduated from TVET institutions.

In spite of several efforts by government through her different policies to make the Nigerian educational system more functional, there are still growing concerns among education stakeholders and industrialist that graduates from our educational institutions lack adequate practical background and relevant job related skills for employment in industries (Ideh, 2013; Idris & Rajuddin, 2012). Employers of labour have gone forward to express their concern over the tone of the current graduates of TVET institutions in Nigeria who are experiencing setbacks due to lack of relevant job skills for work in the 21st century.

These unique characteristics make employers of labour to find graduates unusable in the creation of employment. The skill gap in most TVET graduates in Nigeria being subjected to series of retraining programmes because most of them are considered to be ill equipped and adjudged unemployable based on the quality of training acquired (Rufai, Abdulkadir, & Kagara, 2013; Ideh, 2013). In situations when industries cannot employ and re-train our indigenous TVET graduates, they technically bring in the 'expatriates' to do the same task. The TVET institutions and industry workplace collaboration, training programmes have failed Nigerians over time to address the skill gaps which exist and diminish the usefulness of TVET graduates from the Nigerian educational institutions largely due to gaps in TVET policy implementation.

From these reviews, it is obvious that there are TVET policy implementation gaps. If these are bridged, stakeholders in TVET and the nation at

large would place more values in the production of TVET recipients through its proper implementation practices. Hence the bridged gaps in TVET implementation would enhance the products of TVET to be able to fit in industries and be an entrepreneur.

Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Policy in Nigeria

Several Nigerian governments have made different policies in favour of TVET. These policies have merits and are capable of transforming Nigeria TVET system to an enviable height. The confounding issue, however lies in their effective execution. According to Obebe (1993) in (Ekong, 2013). TVET policies are written by knowledgeable individual who have foresight and believes strongly in what they write for the future but the problem occurs when it comes to translating theory to use. The non-successful implementation of TVET policies and programmes by successive Nigerian Governments has led to gaps in TVET policy.

In Nigeria, there are five TVET institutions outside the University (African Economic Outlook, 2013). These include pre-vocational, Vocational school and technical colleges at post-primary level and at the post-secondary, polytechnics and technical teacher training colleges.

Lately, the Nigerian Government approved the formation of two types of TVET institutions namely:

- i. Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs); and
- ii. Innovative Enterprise Institutions (IEIs).

These institutions are to offer an alternative route to higher training TVET. They are private institutions designed to offer vocational,

technical, engineering, science or professional training at post-basic and tertiary levels to equip secondary school graduates and working adults with relevant skills and knowledge to meet the increasing demands for the various sectors of the Nation's economy (National Board for technical Education (NBTE), 2012). VELs and IEIs serve as a link between training and the world of work; guarantee a lifelong continuous training for updating of workers knowledge and sciences, as considerably as to ensure sustainable livelihood. VEIs admits those with basic minimum certificates and on completion award National Vocational Certificate (NVC) while IEIs admit those with five credits at Senior School Certificate level, and upon completion, award National Innovation Diploma (NID). The topic of building up and supporting a skilled workforce for Nigeria's industrial sector through TVET is great because of the sort of occupations and countries of technical workforce needs of the 21st century workplace and the fact that citizens need to be skilled for self-employment.

Policy Implementation Gaps in Technical Vocational Education and Training in Nigeria

1. Disproportionate numbers of TVET institution

In Nigeria, there are five TVET institutions outside the University (African Economic Outlook, 2013). These include pre-vocational, Vocational school and technical colleges at post-primary level and at the post-secondary, polytechnics and technical teacher training colleges.

Lately, the Nigerian Government approved the formation of two types of TVET institutions namely:

- i. Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs); and
- ii. Innovative Enterprise Institutions (IEIs).

These institutions are to offer an alternative route to higher training TVET. They are private institutions designed to offer vocational, technical, engineering, science or professional training at post-basic and tertiary levels to equip secondary school graduates and working adults with relevant skills and knowledge to meet the increasing demands for the various sectors of the Nation's economy (National Board for technical Education (NBTE), 2012). VELs and IEIs serve as a link between training and the world of work; guarantee a lifelong continuous training for updating of workers knowledge and sciences, as considerably as to ensure sustainable livelihood. VEIs admits those with basic minimum certificates and on completion award National Vocational Certificate (NVC) while IEIs admit those with five credits at Senior School Certificate level, and upon completion, award National Innovation Diploma (NID). The topic of building up and supporting a skilled workforce for Nigeria's industrial sector through TVET is great because of the sort of occupations and countries of technical workforce needs of the 21st century workplace and the fact that citizens need to be skilled for self-employment. These institutions are supposed to be establish in all the seven hundred and seventy four (774) local government areas of the country by policy if the desired technological breakthrough is to be achieved. This is partly why there is a low enrolment into TVET institutions.

2. Disproportionate enrolments into TVET institutions

Several Nigerian governments have made different policies in favour of TVET. These policies have merits and are capable of transforming Nigeria TVET system to an enviable height. The confounding issue, however lies in their effective execution. According to Obebe (1993) in (Ekong, 2013). TVET policies are written by knowledgeable individual who have foresight and believes strongly in what they write for the future but the problem occurs when it comes to translating theory to use. The non-successful implementation of TVET policies and programmes by successive Nigerian Governments has led to low enrolment in TVET. According to Kazaure (2009), less than one percent of secondary school education was oriented towards technical vocational skills. Likewise, African Economic Outlook (2013) postulated that the overall TVET enrolment constitutes only about one percent of total education enrolment. Ogumyemi (2003) in Ekong (2013) postulated that the proportion of secondary schools to that of technical colleges stand at 37:1. This proportion has been ascribed to the nature of manpower production in the country. This in turn has culminated in numerous inadequacies in the evolution and maintenance of the country's economic system and output industries. Such inadequacies include uneven distribution of technical vocational manpower in the manufacturing and other sectors. Analysis of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Nigeria in 2008 revealed that the capacity of labour power in technical vocational areas tilted heavily towards agriculture with 42.07 percent while manufacturing was 4.13 percent, oil and gas 17.54 percent,

telecommunication 2.9 percent, construction 1.83 percent and others 31.53 percent (Business Day, 2009). Agriculture is practiced at subsistence level, and the 42.07 percent is made up of mainly unskilled people, and then the share of skilled personnel in TVET are relatively low due largely to low enrolments into TVET institutions. The few numbers of TVET institution and its low enrolment pattern also lack adequate collaboration with industries.

3. Disproportionate collaboration with TVET institutions and industries.

The issue of quality assurance in TVET presents a severe challenge to the evolution of technical manpower for Nigeria industries. Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in High Education (NICHE) (2010) posited that in most developing countries including Nigeria, TVET is limited in scale, scope, quality and relevance. Similarly, Oviawe & Uwameiye (2010) reported that most TVET institutions lack the tools and equipment necessary for virtual training. The small equipment in workshops and research labs are often obsolete, having little or no resemblance to the technologies presently employed in the 21st century workplace. In most instances, insufficient training resources lead to trainees overcrowding during classes, with most of them only observing the teacher demonstrate and not having the chance to receive hands on exercise. The effects of these are more evident on graduates who are not considered more skilled than their academic counterparts by the work. This has likewise summed to the pitiful image of TVET and also hampered the production of adequate manpower for the manufacturing and other sectors.

Obviously, TVET today face huge demands globally due to the high degree of youth

unemployment. Nigeria as one of the developing countries of the world is charged with the underlying matters of graduate unemployment and this has become a grave cause of worry. It is universally admitted that no country can rise above the degree of quality manpower resources it has. Therefore, in parliamentary procedure to fill the workforce demands of the 21st century workplace, the manpower workforce has to possess the right skills, up-to-date knowledge, the correct attitude and abilities to perform the work in line with the requirements of the job. All these can be accomplished through a useable and effective TVET /Industries collaboration policy.

In Bridging the Implementation Gaps in TVET Policy, the policy should be deliberate on:

1. TVET/Industries collaboration

Collaboration is diversity and addressing concerns unique to different TVET institutions and industries, but best global practices that are geared towards developing alternative education programmes for TVET students to acquire valuable workplace experience with industries found within and around the educational institutions is a key for meeting manpower need in industries (Soares, 2010). The central elements of smooth transition of school classroom theories to influence practice in an occupation of work to be according to Scott (2014) are: (i) collaborative partnership; (ii) integrated curriculum; (iii) technological advances (iv) Adaptable friendly workers (industry based supervisor); (v) comprehensive career guidance; (vi) work-based learning; and (vii) a step-by-step approach. These practices and key elements to school-to work transition use collaborative resources, relationships, and activities to build alternatives

to classroom theoretical instruction that would develop a student towards manpower needs of the 21st century workplaces.

Shared Resources of industries and TVET institutions would enhance the Sustainability TVET institutions. School-workplace collaboration can contribute to sustaining newly developed educational innovation and reformation in vocationalization as well as create avenues for financing TVET on specific research into job task as required by funding industries to meet a given need or modernization of the workplace. In so doing, industries can develop school workplace collaboration relationship of the industry that would enhance a sustainable workforce that would meet the industries manpower needs. To this end, Offiong, Akpan, & Usoro (2013) opined funding of TVET institutions through endowment, partnership with companies and non-governmental organizations, establishment of internally generated revenue projects, parent Teacher Associations, and Alumni Associations would make TVET institutions more effective. To this end, deliberate TVET policy is needed.

2. Curriculum and Instructional Transformation

School-Workplace collaboration can result in meaningful changes to traditional TVET curriculum and instructional practices. Employers of labour play key role in ensuring this transformation of students from school-to-workplace upon graduation (Obioma, 2015; Scott, 2014). Contextualization of Vocationalization (Scott, 2014), competency-based curriculum, workplace learning, occupation-to-job-task analysis orientation education are some forms of transformation that can be adapted into TVET curriculum in Nigeria.

3. Adequate Infrastructural Facilities for Vocationalization

A major effect of under-funding education in Nigeria is the existence of inadequate and decaying infrastructures in our TVET institutions (Obioma, 2015). For TVET institutions to meet manpower needs of the 21st century workplace, adequate provisions of the right technological work base learning facilities to train the TVET students on the current practices involved in the 21st century world of work must be made available for effective and functional learning to take place.

4. Academic and Social Support

School-workplace collaboration can create sustained academic and career navigation supports for TVET institutions and employers. The transfer of knowledge from schools to the workplaces and workplaces to the schools is imperative to enhance a better school-to-work transition of students upon graduation. In the same way, employers of labour providing social support to TVET institutions and students is vital also in building highly priced quality relationship in school-workplace collaboration.

5. Entrepreneurship and Skill Development

Entrepreneurship education is a lifelong learning process and a tool through which socio economic and political development could be attained if properly planned, funded and implemented (Alabi, Alana, & Bahal, 2014) this education would promote job creation, reduce unemployment and alleviate poverty in Nigeria.

6. Assembling Political Will for Vocationalization

Employers of labour, curriculum planners, policy makers, education stakeholders and law makers can identify what tools and information that are required to make school workplace collaboration evidence based best practices in the development of TVET students to secure employment or be self-employed upon graduation from school and thereby improving TVET in Nigeria. The political will of the government of the day is paramount in fostering the goals and philosophy of vocationalization and this can be achieved through:

- i. developing a typology of collaboration between TVET institutions and the workplaces that promote systematic research and innovations;
- ii. developing adequate and up-to-date data base to track the outcomes of industry collaboration participants and the students demographic characteristics; and
- iii. evaluating the return on investment from school-workplace collaboration from students, TVET institutions, and industries (Soares, 2010).

TVET policy statements should be deliberate on these issues to make it more effective.

Conclusion

Nigeria is a country with the unique distinction of having enormous resources juxtaposed with abject poverty and the solution to this situation is an effective and functional TVET policy. The implementation of a deliberate TVET policy, will provide the key to the production of manpower that would be able to utilize the abundant human and material resources through the TVET

institutions-workplace collaboration that offers TVET students the unique opportunity of developing the required manpower to meet the ever dynamic world of work. The Nigerian government at all levels and TVET policy makers should make a mandatory provision for TVET institutions to establish effective and sustainable linkages with the 21st century workplace. This collaboration could be very useful for practical training of students and therefore facilitating effective skill acquisition.

References

- African Economic Outlook. (2013). Retrieved February 11, 2020, from <http://www.oecd.org/document/33/0,3343,en2>.
- Alabi, T., Alana, O., & Bahal, M. (2014). Entrepreneurship education: A panacea to graduate unemployment in Nigeria. *Journal of sustainable development*, 16, 35-41.
- Aworanti, O. (2011). *NABTEB boss charges policy makers on technical education*. Retrieved February 12, 2020, from <http://tribune.com.ng/index.php>.
- Ekong, J. (2013). Re-engineering technical vocational education and training towards capacity building for sustainable development. *Nigerian Vocational Association*, 18(2), 1-9.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2013). *National policy on education*. Lagos: NERDC Press.
- Ideh, V. (2013). Students' perception of strategies for improving delivery of Industrial Work Experience in Delta State University, Abraka. *Nigeria Vocational Association Journal*, 18(2), 237-242.

- Idris, A., & Rajuddin, M. (2012). The influence of teaching approaches among technical and vocational education teachers towards acquisition of technical skills in Kano State – Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 3(16), 160-165.
- Kazaure, M. (2009). *Revitalizing TVET in Nigeria*. Retrieved February 11, 2020, from UNESCO: <http://www.portar.unesco.org/education/en/ev.p>.
- National Board for Technical Education. (2012). *Vocational Enterprise Institutions (VEIs) and Innovative Enterprise Institutions (IEIs)*. Retrieved February 11, 2020, from www.Note.gov.gn/iei&vei.html.
- Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in High Education. (2010). *NICHE strategy on technical vocational education and training (TVET)*. Retrieved February 11, 2020, from <http://www.nuffic.nl/internationalorganizations/>
- Obioma, G. (2015). Education in Nigeria: Meeting the UN Post-2015 Development Agenda. *National Conference of the Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan*.
- Offiong, A., Akpan, A., & Usoro, S. (2013). Funding of Vocational Technical Education in Nigeria in Times of Global Economic Recession. *An International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 2(2), 149-158.
- Osam, O. (2013). *Curriculum studies*. Calabar: University of Calabar press.
- Oviawe, J., & Uwameiye, R. (2010). Availability of human and material resources for teaching blocklaying and concrete works in technical colleges in Edo state. *Ebonyi Technology and Vocational Education Journal*, 1(1), 37-47.
- Rufai, A., Abdulkadir, M., & Kagara, A. (2013). Technical vocational education institutions and industries partnership: Necessity for graduates' skills acquisition. *International Journal of Scientific and research publications*, 3(4).
- Soares, L. (2010). *The power of the education-Industry partnership: Fostering innovation in collaboration between community colleges and business*. Retrieved February 13, 2020, from Center for American Progress.: <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/labour/report/2010/10/04/8518/the-power-of-the-education-industry-partnership/>.
- UNESCO. (2001). *Revised recommendation concerning technical and vocational education*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2009). *Regional contribution to Statistical Information Systems Development for Technical and Vocational Education and Training*. Retrieved February 10, 2020, from UNESCO: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002160/216065e.pdf>.