

TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIP: A KEY TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

In a global knowledge driven economy, novel ideas, creativity, problem solving skills, communication skills, critical thinking, innovations and modern technologies are the central focus. TVET private sector partnership, which has the capability of putting Nigeria on the right part of development, has been inadequately harnessed. This paper therefore, considered the concept and goals of “Technical Vocational Education and Training” and Technical Vocational Institutions in Nigeria. Explanation of the concept of private sector and some recent exemplary TVET private sector partnerships were given. The concept of economic development and its indices as well as the need for TVET-private sector partnerships were discussed. How, well planned partnerships between TVET and private sector in Nigeria could translate into economic development formed the conclusion of this paper.

Key Words: *TVET, Private Sector, Partnership, Economic development, Modern technologies*

Introduction

Nigeria is considered as the most populous black nation in the world. It is highly endowed with oil and gas, different solid minerals as well as vast arable land. Yet it is a nation where poverty, hunger, illiteracy, unemployment have become the stock in trade. This ought not to be so. Long before western education was introduced into Nigeria, the children were educated and socialized by their parents, their elder siblings, older members of the community as well as expert craftsmen. This was through the apprenticeship system. According to

Egbule (2002), this was the method of education delivery in Nigeria before the establishment of formal school. Egbule (2002) citing Callaway stated that vast apprenticeship training system began as part of a wider education process in which the indigenous societies of Nigeria passed on their cultural heritage from one generation to the next. The guiding principle according to Egbule was functionalism and social conformity and in the words of Egun (2009) utilitarian.

Western Education which was introduced by the missionaries into Nigeria focused on the

learning of Grammar, History, Classics, Arithmetic, et cetera. This was the beginning of what we refer to as General Education today. This kind of education according to Egun (2009) prepares the individual for citizenship. This is the kind of education encouraged by our education system, and this is the basis of the poverty, hunger and unemployment which have enveloped the entire nation. In knowledge driven economy which is the stage the world is today, Nigeria educational system described above cannot stand the test of time.

The Concept and Goals of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Different scholars, governments and world bodies have considered TVET from different perspectives. Olaitan (1998), describes TVET as a form of education which prepares individuals for acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competence needed by the individuals to live and contribute meaningfully to the development of the society. Federal Government of Nigeria (2013) defines TVET as those aspects of education process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (2012) State that TVET is concerned with acquisition of knowledge and skills for the world of work. A close look at the definitions

shows that practical skills, scientific knowledge/abilities are common to all of them. However, coverage was also given to knowledge, understanding as well as attitudes and competencies which the learner acquires and utilizes in the world of work (in occupations)

No nation wastes scarce resources on a project without having underlying reasons. According to the Federal Government of Nigeria (2013), the goals of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) should be to;

- a. provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business, particularly at craft, advanced craft and technical levels;
- b. provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development; and
- c. Give training and impart the necessary skills to individual who shall be self-reliant economically.

According to Elogbo (2013), the purpose of vocational and technical education is to prepare people, especially young men and women to be self-reliant, making them employers of themselves and even others, instead of depending on the white collar jobs. Technical Vocational Education prepares people to understand and know that ethical behavior and work place skills are integral to successful employment either by self or another employer. TVET also provides new and emerging foundation skills needed to perform tasks proficiently at current business and industry standards.

Technical Vocational Education and Training in Nigeria is provided by both pre-tertiary and tertiary institutions. Some of the pre-tertiary institutions include: Secondary schools, Technical colleges, Non-governmental Organizations, Regional training centers, Private companies and Industrial training centers. The tertiary institutions involved include: Universities, Polytechnics, Monotechnics, Colleges of Technology, Colleges of Agriculture, Colleges of Education (technical) and Vocational Enterprise Institutions.

At the pre-tertiary level, efforts are made to lay a solid foundation for Technical Vocational Education and Training through the inclusion of Basic Science and Technology in the school curriculum. At the senior secondary level, thirty-four (34) trade subjects have been included in the curriculum to ensure adequate entrepreneurship education which inculcates in the learners competencies for easy employment either in an industry or by self- employments. Knowledge gained at the secondary level also prepares graduates for further studies in institutions of higher learning. At the tertiary level, practical skills as well as supervisory and managerial skills are learned before

graduation. These prepare the graduates for functional leadership roles in the world of work.

The Private Sector

Private sector according to Lienert (2009) are those entities of the economy that are owned by the private sector and are geared to making profits. The Civil Society Voices for Better Aid (2002) considered the private sector as the whole group for-profit economic actors, including international and transnational business, state enterprises, domestic enterprises, small and medium enterprises. Amy (2015) defined the private sector as the segment of the economy that is not directly controlled or operated by government-run agencies and organizations, which make up the public sector. According to Amy, other terms that are used to refer to the private sector include the “citizen sector” or the “free market”. Amy added that the private sector is made up of companies that operate to make a profit. The private sector is responsible for allocating most of the resources within an economy. This subject matter (private sector) can be highlighted on the basis of its features. This can be done by comparing the private sector with the public sector as could be seen in the adapted table below:

TABLE 1

Private Sector	Public sector
Organizations are owned and operated privately.	Organizations are owned and operated by government.
Goods and services are provided by organizations out of the government.	Services are provided by the government.
Source of income is through the profit made.	Source of income is through the collection of taxes and rates.

<p>Examples are corporations, partnerships and charities.</p>	<p>Examples are federal, provincial, state and municipal governments. In Nigeria, we have local governments.</p>
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Source: www.privacysense.net (2015)

A striking portion of the information given above is that which stressed that the private sector is ‘responsible for allocating most of the resources within an economy’. If this is true, in a knowledge driven economy which the world is passing through today, this sector should channel substantial percentage of its resources to technology and human capital development. This is the interest this paper intends to arouse and this is the awareness it tries to create.

Concept of Public – Private Partnership (PPP)

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2011) defined a PPP as a long term agreement between the government and a private partner where the service delivery objectives of the government are aligned with the profit objectives of the private partner. Such a partnership is a way of delivering and funding public services using a capital asset where project risks are shared between the public and private sector.

The Asian Development Bank (2006) considered PPP as a range of possible relationships among public and private entities in the context of infrastructure and other services. In order for the partnership to be solid, there is the need for an agreement to be reached by both parties. Both parties share the risks involved in the partnership, and they enjoy the benefits that will accrue to it

together. Some examples of TVET-private sector partnerships in Nigeria include:

1. Samsung NLNG Partnership

Samsung Heavy Industries (SHI) has entered into a partnership with Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) Limited to train sixty (60) Nigeria youths. They were sent to SHI shipyard in Geoje, South Korea. The training was aimed at bridging the gap in engineering proficiency in Nigeria. This was purely a human capacity development initiative. The youth were trained in different aspects of ship building, fabrication, painting, scaffolding, welding, naval architecture, ship design, fittings, mechanical and maintenance training, so that on completion they could man NLNG Vessels. The programme was directed at skills acquisition and this will definitely benefit the country’s economy when the skills acquired are put to work.

2. Co-Creation Hub and Oracle Partnership

These two organizations have gone into partnership aimed at empowering young tech-preneurs. The partnership provided funds for young innovators. Co-creation trains students of tertiary institutions every weekend on arrangement, also technological innovations which are the objects of training serve as a major source of revenue.

3. Rt Briscoe Plc and Highbury College, UK Partnership

The partnership was aimed at addressing manpower needs of RT Briscoe. It was training for automobile technicians which

involved the acquisition of skills. The training was done by Highbury College, UK for eighteen (18) Nigerians. At the end of the training, certificate of completion was issued to all the participants. This was also a human capital development initiative to bridge certain gaps in the auto business. It involved practical assessment of all the participants.

This paper advocates that commercial farms and agro-related industries such as OFN Limited, Maizube Farms Limited, Sebore Farms, Anadariya Farms, Ojemai Farms, Jovana Farms, Animal Care Services Konsult, Nagari Integrated Dairy Farm, Folawiyo Farms Limited, Olani Farms Limited, Anu-Oluwa Farms, Itotec Farms, African Hydro Agric Chemical Limited, Agro Allied Dev Ent Ltd, Ajanla Farms, Avia Specialist (Nig) Limited, Cande Crop Protection, Chris-Ejik Farms and Agro Allied Ventures, Golden Fertilizer Company, Grommac Industries Plc, Saro Agrochemicals, Supreme Agro Industrial Limited etcetera, should replicate what the above mentioned industries have done in other sectors of the nation's economy, in the agricultural sector. This is the surest way for students and undergraduates to acquire saleable skills and competencies.

The Concept of Economic Development

For accelerated development of a nation, the economic sector must be well planned and the plans properly executed. If this is done, that nation could be considered as having its foundation laid on a rock. This is a major reason why several scholars, academics, writers and researchers have devoted so much

time to define and redefine the concept of economic development.

Todaro (2014) defined economic development as an increase in living conditions, improvement of the citizen's self-esteem needs and free and a just society. He suggested that the most accurate method of measuring economic development is the Human Development Index (HDI) which takes into account the literacy rate, life expectancy which in-turn has an outright impact on productivity and could lead to economic growth.

Salmon Valley Business and Innovation Centre (2011) considered economic development as the development of economic wealth of countries, regions or communities for the well-being of their inhabitants. The same centre in considering economic development from a policy perspective defined it as efforts that seek to improve the economic well - being and quality of life for a community by creating and or retaining jobs and supporting or growing incomes and the tax base. Economic development according to Atoyebi (2014) is the sustained increase in economic and social standards of living or material wellbeing of the population of a country.

The bottom line of all these definitions is that in economically developed nations, new technologies are adopted or adapted, and these result in declining poverty rates, declining literacy rates, declining infant morbidity, increasing life expectancy, increasing level of incomes and increasing job opportunities, which impact positively on the living standards of the inhabitants.

Indicators of Economic Development; Nigeria in Perspective

Todaro (2014) stated that the most accurate method of measuring economic development is the Human Development Index (HDI) which takes into account the literacy rates, life expectancy which in turn has an outright impact on productivity and could lead to economic growth. In economic development rating, Nigeria is classified as a developing nation. United Nations reported that Nigeria has a HDI of 0.504 which placed her in 152nd position out of a total of 187 nations (2014 estimates). This is an indication that our economy has a long way to go when compared to Norway (a developed nation) which has a HDI of 0.944 and ranked 1 out of 187 nations.

Concerning the poverty level in Nigeria, the National Bureau of Statistics (2014) confirmed that a staggering 112.519 million Nigerians lie in relative poverty conditions. It went further to explain that the figure represented 69 percent of the country's total population estimated to be 163 million. World Bank (2015) on its part puts Nigeria poverty rate at 33.1%. The World Bank added that there had been positive economic trend as well as significant progress made towards poverty eradication in the country. Encouraging as this figure is the masses in this country are yet to feel the impact of the improvement.

In spite of the global education for all by the year 2015 declaration, Nigeria's efforts in this direction is nothing to write home about. What one sees in this sector is a lot of motion but no movement. This becomes more glaring when the literacy rate of Nigeria

which was put at 61.3% is compared with neighboring countries such as Ghana which records 76.6% and Cameroon which has literacy rate of 75%. The advice of Omolewa (2006) that if we want to conquer poverty, ignorance and disease, we must first conquer illiteracy must be taken seriously by this country. The United Nation's Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) considered literacy as a prerequisite for national development, hence she defined literacy as something required by an individual for effective functioning of his/her group and the community and also for enabling him/her to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his/her own and the community's development. Development as used here covers economic, political as well as the social facet of life. Nigeria is also not progressing when other indices of national development are considered. For instance, infant mortality rate was still 74.09 deaths/1000 live births (2014 estimates) while life expectancy stood at 52.62 years (2014 estimates).

TVET Private Sector Partnership and Economic Development

Technical Vocational Education and Training, and Private Sector Partnership has the potential of positioning Nigeria to compete favourably with the Asian tigers (Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, North Korea and South Korea) between now and the year 2020 if adequately harnessed. Economic development of Nigeria could surpass that of the Asian wonders if good plans are made and executed. Specifically Nigeria stands to benefit the following from the partnership being envisaged:

Increased Food Production

TVET private sector partnership will produce highly skilled and competent manpower. Manpower so produced in the agricultural sector will make use of modern and improved methods of production and this will lead to increased food production and the attainment of food security. Good nutrition will impact positively on the health of the citizens. A healthy workforce will contribute significantly to the Gross Domestic Product of this nation and this will eventually lead to the growth and development of the economy, all things being equal.

Employment Opportunities (Job Creation)

The benefits of TVET private sector partnership in this regard cannot be overemphasized. According to Alam (2008), human capital theory has powerful influence on the analysis of labour market. He added that investment in education and training produces benefit both to the individual, society and the nation as a whole. The return on investment for society and the nation will be skilled workforce that will enable global competitiveness and economic growth. The rate of unemployment in Nigeria is put at 24.20% in the first quarter of 2015 www.tradingeconomics.com. This rate is alarming, but a TVET private sector partnership will produce individuals that are highly skilled, competent and with good attitudes that will make them fit into the world of work in industries, public institutions or their own private business. In this way jobs will be created for both youths,

women and men and this will lead to poverty reduction.

Increased Incomes (Earnings)

A TVET private sector partnership will also lead to increased incomes both at home and in the foreign market. The European Center for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop, 2011) carried out a study on Netherland which provided evidence on the positive effect of training on company profitability. Some may argue that Netherland is a developed country, but what happened there could happen in developing countries like Nigeria. Increased profitability implies increased incomes which come as a result of the creativity, innovations and modern ways of doing things which avails to the beneficiary of a TVET private sector partnership. Such partnership results in the production of more goods and services that may form the surplus to be exported. This of course is foreign exchange earning which if properly managed can lead to economic development?

Increased Productivity of Beneficiaries

The competencies, skills, abilities and attitudes that a TVET private sector partnership will avail beneficiaries, will make them fit well into relevant industries. Where jobs are non-existent beneficiaries could employ themselves and others. Education is the key to shaping young peoples attitudes, skills, and culture. The well-cultured individual approaches his/her work more efficiently and this will lead to increased productivity and a resultant positive impact on the economic development of the nation.

Better Performance of Enterprises

Remember this paper pointed out that the private sector is responsible for allocating most of the resources within an economy. If these resources are properly utilized through partnership with TVET institutions, benefits will naturally accrue to both. The well-trained graduates from TVET institutions will fit in well into the industries or enterprises. Being products of this kind gesture or goodwill, graduates will be motivated to perform better. Participants who go into self-employment will also be motivated to perform well as a result of the marketable skills they came out with. Broussard and Garrison (2004) defined motivation as the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something. TVET private sector partnership will produce highly motivated individuals with competencies, saleable skills, abilities and attitudes which a knowledge driven economy needs to develop.

Labour Market Outcomes

According to CEDEFOP (2011) the impacts of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Career Vocational Education and Training (CVET) on labour-market outcomes reflect direct or indirect aggregate individual productivity efforts. The center added that the main outcomes stressed by countries are higher participation on the labour market, lower unemployment, the opportunity to acquire a qualification for all categories which did not previously have one, and the chance to advance in a professional hierarchy. It also noted that higher remunerations offer new opportunities which lead to further economic and social outputs. TVET private sector partnership will fast track all these benefits as participants become

more competitive in the global market, they will be gainfully employed or self-employed. Those employed will also go home with higher pay packages as skilled and professional workers. All these certainly will promote economic development of the country.

TVET Private Sector Partnership and Wealth Creation

Afet (2013), posits that Technical and Vocational Education delivery systems are planned to train the skilled and entrepreneurial workforce that Africa needs to create wealth and emerge out of poverty. A TVET private sector partnership will enhance the training of individuals that are highly competent and possess entrepreneurial skills in vocational agriculture, such as crop and animal production. This will contribute up to 30% or more of the Gross Domestic product of this country. This of course will form a sectoral contribution to the development of the nation's economy.

TVET Private Sector Partnership and Poverty Reduction

UNESCO (2010) maintained that a quality technical and vocational education programme plays an essential role in promoting a country's economic growth and contributing to poverty reduction as well as ensuring the social and economic inclusion of the marginalized communities. A TVET private sector partnership will avail beneficiaries of problem-solving skills, critical thinking abilities, good communication skills as well as creativity and innovative skills which would be put into the production of goods and services. These

enabling skills would make the recipient employable by industry. On the other hand the recipient could go into self-employment. In both cases the beneficiary is sure of reasonable income. This of course reduces poverty which is occasioned by unemployment in Nigeria.

TVET Private Sector Partnership and Industrialization of Nigeria

Effiong, Anangabor, and Eyam, (2013) considered industrialization as an increase in the share of manufacturing in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and in the occupations of the economically active population. Industrialization has been considered also as the process in which a society or country (or World) transforms itself from a primarily agricultural society into one based on the manufacturing of goods and services (www.investopedia.com. 2015). While TVET is oriented towards the world of work and acquisition of employable skills, the private sector actually employs substantial part of the populace who possess marketable skills. A partnership between both will ensure that those in vocational agriculture will produce raw materials through the use of modern and improved technologies and industry will make use of both the raw materials and the competent manpower for massive production (manufacturing). The goods and services produced will increase the Gross Domestic Product of the country. If the GDP of the country increases through the activities of industries which rely on the raw materials from the agricultural sector, the partnership could rightly be considered as contributing to the economic development of the country.

Conclusions

Based on the findings so far, this paper concludes that:

1. Utilitarianism and social conformity should once more be the guiding principle of our education, and knowledge-based economy should remain the focus.
2. Technical Vocational Education and Training private sector partnership should be encouraged, so that technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development could be acquired by beneficiaries.
3. The private sector should channel substantial percentage of its resources (profits and assets) to technology and human capital development; and the private sector should invest massively on the society from where it has made so much profit. This is the surest way to having a just society that will be comfortable for both the rich and the poor.
4. Technical Vocational Education and Training private sector partnership should be encouraged, so that acquisition of new technologies to cause a home-grown industrial revolution would be possible. In life, it is not over until it is over.
5. The problem of illiteracy should be tackled with a passion because knowledge is light and knowledge is power.

Recommendations

Premised on the conclusion of this paper, the following recommendations have been made;

1. The tempo of Technical Vocational Education and Training should be sustained in Nigeria. Improvement should also be targeted at the area of training the trainers (tutors).
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2. Technical Vocational Education and Training should emphasize the need for economic self-reliance of all graduates, mainly the youths.
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3. Technical Vocational Education and Training programmes should be funded by private corporations and international donors.
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4. There should be value re-orientation of the citizens to enhance Technical Vocational Education and Training which will place our economy on the fast lane.
Broussard, S.C & Garrison M.E.B. (2004). The relationship between classroom motivation and academic achievement in elementary school – aged children. Family and consumer sciences research journal. 33(2), 106 – 112.
5. Literacy programmes in Nigeria should be implemented thoroughly.
6. Public – private partnerships should be encouraged. This will aid the funding of Technical Vocational Education and Training, lead to effective use of the expertise of the private sector, and acquisition of saleable skills and competencies by recipients, mainly from the public sector.
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