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## TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN NIGERIA FOR JOB CREATION AND WEALTH GENERATION: MYTHS AND REALITIES

By

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### ABSTRACT

*Technical vocational education and training (TVET) is a notable instrument for producing skilled manpower for various sectors of the nation economy thereby creating jobs for her citizens and improve the economy of the nation through wealth generation. However, the case of using TVET to create jobs and as well to generate wealth has not been yielding the desired objectives of TVET as enshrined in the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) national policy on education (NPE). There are cases where some TVET graduates lack employable and occupational skills. Furthermore, some that possessed employable and occupational skills and are still unemployed. This situation of unemployment of TVET graduates is threat to the supposed job creation and wealth generation. Hence, this paper ex-ray TVET in Nigeria, TVET challenges to job creation and wealth generation, the role of stakeholders in making TVET work to achieved the desired objectives of creating jobs and generate wealth in other to improve the lives of her citizens and the nation economy. The paper concluded that TVET is a viable instrument and tool for national development because of its roles in increasing human capital of any nation, as such more emphasis and attention should be accorded to TVET by stakeholders such as government, TVET associations, industries, international organizations, philanthropists, and TVET professionals by providing the right human and material resources, infrastructures, curriculum, training facilities, and policies that will sustain TVET programmes in the country.*

**Keywords:** TVET, Job-Creation, Wealth-Generation, Myths, Realities, & Nigeria.

### INTRODUCTION

The nation Nigeria is been faced with different socio-economic problems ranging from mass youth unemployment, poverty, insecurity, decay in infrastructure, corruption, pipeline vandalism, and food shortage. Consequently, the nation which is practicing mono economic system by depending solely on revenue generated from crude oil sales is now in a precarious situation due to the persistent fall in oil prices across the globe and the modern use of alternative sources of energy. Various scholars, business analysts, economists, academicians, government, and notable Nigerians have been clamouring for a change in our economic system from a mono economic system to a diversified economic

system, as such most of these patriotic Nigerians suggested that Nigeria should focus on how to produce the goods and services needed for our daily lives instead of depending on other nations such as USA, China, Japan, India, and United Kingdom amongst others for goods and services. One of the ways suggested for the diversification of the Nigerian economy was embracing Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) to produce skilled workforce and entrepreneurs that will be employers of labour, thereby creating jobs and generating wealth to improve the nation's economy. Many countries including developed and developing, recognize the important role that TVET plays in equipping individuals with relevant skills and knowledge, hence

enabling people to effectively participate in social, economic and technological innovation processes (Netherland Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education NICHE, 2010). Ayonmike and Okeke (2015) posited that one key indicator of achieving the Nigerian economy diversification plan is embracing technical vocational education and training (TVET) which is one of the major drivers of economic growth and development. Technical vocational education and training (TVET) is a notable instrument for producing skilled manpower for various sectors of the nation economy thereby creating jobs for her citizens and improve the economy of the nation through wealth generation.

However, the case of using TVET to create jobs and as well to generate wealth has not been yielding the desired objectives of TVET as enshrined in the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) national policy on education (NPE). There are cases where some TVET graduates lack employable and occupational skills. Furthermore, some that possessed employable and occupational skills and are still unemployed. This situation of unemployment of TVET graduates is a threat to the supposed job creation and wealth generation. Therefore, this paper ex-ray TVET in Nigeria, TVET challenges to job creation and wealth generation, the role of stakeholders in making TVET work to achieved the desired objectives of creating jobs and generate wealth in other to improve the lives of her citizens and the nation economy. In the context of this paper 'myths' refers to the good outcomes and gains of TVET if well implemented, while 'reality' refers to the true state of TVET in vocational institutions in Nigeria.

### ***Concept of Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET)***

Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) are in all probability as old as humanity (Maclean & Wilson 2009). TVET has been defined by various scholars, academicians, organizations, and government amongst others to be any activities that is related to

skills acquisition and the production of skilled workforce to improve economy and livelihood. TVET sometimes also known as Vocational Education and Training (VET) or Career and Technical Education (CTE) can be regarded as a means of preparing for occupational fields and effective participation in the world of work. It also implies lifelong learning and preparation for responsible citizenship. In its broadest definition, TVET includes technical education, vocational education, vocational training, on-the-job training, or apprenticeship training, delivered in a formal and non-formal way (NICHE, 2010). According to Aftab and Mohd (2012), vocational education plays a significant role in providing the skilled work force required for the development of any country. As well, Ayonmike and Okeke (2015) citing Inyang (2012), posited that TVET provides one of the most potent means for development of skilled manpower as required by various sector in the country's economy. Nowadays TVET is regarded as an instrument in creating new employment opportunities and income-generating activities in the formal and informal sectors of the economy, the need for which has become more acute due to the financial crisis. TVET can play an important role in economic development and poverty reduction if due attention is given to customizing or targeting education and training provision to local needs (NICHE, 2010). Similarly, Abdullahi (2011) opined that TVET is an essential part of development for any nation to grow economically.

In addition, TVET brings about technological advancement and aims to fit new manpower for employment and provide continuing training for those already qualified, so that they can keep pace with modern and emerging work environment. As well, TVET are design to develop skills that can be used in specific occupation or job (Olaitan, 1998 in Magida, Saba, & Namkere, 2013). Currently, UNESCO estimates that some 80% of occupations are based on the application of technical and vocational skills to the world of work (Maclean, & Wilson, 2009 citing UNESCO-UNEVOC &

UNESCO-UIS, 2006). Various types of TVET exist in different countries and these TVET programmes are established to solve the nation immediate needs regards technological development of that country.

### ***Types of Technical Vocational Education and Training in Nigeria***

According to UNESCO-UNEVOC (2006) in Ogbunaya and Ekereobong (2015), TVET is classified into three categories: formal, non-formal and informal TVET.

Formal TVET refers to organised vocational education programmes provided within an approved public or private educational or training institution and it is structured (in terms of curriculum, learning objectives and learning time) in such a way that it constitutes a continuous "ladder" where one level leads to the next and finally leads to certification. In a nutshell, formal TVET covers vocational education programmes provided within approved public and private institutions. It is intentional from the learner's perspective, it is school based, it has a rigid curriculum, and the entry qualifications of trainees are fixed. Moreover, teachers in the formal TVET delivery system are required to be trained technical/vocational teachers with relevant vocational teachers' qualifications.

Igberadja (2015) citing Moja (2000), opined that the National Board for Technical Education (NTBE), established in 1985, gives recognition to three broad classifications of technical institutions and their different missions in meeting the needs of their society. The three groups of institutions are vocational schools, technical colleges and polytechnics/ colleges of technology/colleges of education (technical) to provide a base for technological take off of this country.

Non-formal TVET is the type of vocational education and training which takes place outside the formal school system either on a regular or intermittent basis. It has the advantage of a short-term training period; it is occupation-specific; the main emphasis is on

the acquisition of practical skills for self-reliance or direct employment in a related field. For this reason, skilled craftsmen with some pedagogical training may be engaged as instructors.

Informal TVET is the type of vocational education that is provided by craftsmen of different trades in the informal sector of the economy. It is more appropriately often referred to as vocational training or experience based learning and is usually carried out in form of apprenticeship system. Thus, the informal TVET is characterised by the non-existence of any curriculum or structure as there is no well-designed scheme and the method of training is not always sequential. The master craftsman decides out of his experience what the apprentice should learn.

However, in this paper emphasis was on formal TVET, formal TVET institutions in Nigeria are faced with various challenges associated with the implementation of TVET curriculum in vocational institutions in Nigeria.

### ***Challenges of TVET for Job Creation and Wealth Generation***

TVET programme is designed to train individuals in different areas of knowledge and skills. The training offered will only be effective, if proper infrastructure, adequate training materials and competent instructors are available to implement the TVET curriculum. However, unless inputs are adequate and proper, and the process is well organized and conducted, achieving training objectives and producing competent trainees may be a formidable task (Awraris, 2013).

High quality skills training requires qualified instructors, appropriate workshop equipment, adequate supply of training materials and practice by the learners. According to Igberadja (2014), the implementation of TVET curriculum has not been yielding the expected outcome and results. This is due to the fact that the aims and objectives of TVET as enshrine in the

National Policy on Education (NPE) has not been met. However, this could be explained by the persistent petition by the labour market, that Nigerian university graduates (TVET graduate inclusive) do not possess employable skills which could be traced to the implementation of TVET curriculum in schools.

TVET delivery systems in developing countries operate in challenging socio-economic environments and contextual frameworks, which urgently need to be addressed if the potential for TVET to contribute to national development is to be realized (NICHE, 2010). In most developing countries such as Nigeria, TVET is limited in scale, scope, quality and importance. The programmes are not relevant to the needs of the indigenous labor market, the curricula and syllabi are out-of-date and the institutions lack the tools and equipment necessary for a practical education (NICHE, 2010).

According to Puyate in Umar and Ma'aji (2010), the present state of facilities in TVET institutions is very poor, there is no planned measures of maintenance of the already broken down equipment or means of acquiring new ones, there is hardly or no concern on the part of government, teachers and students for the development of the present state of the facilities. Similarly, Afeti (2007) in Audu, Aede, Yusri, and Muhammad (2013), stated that, the quality of training in TVET institutions in Nigeria is low with undue emphasis on theory and certification rather than on skills acquisition and proficiency testing. The researchers further posited that inadequate instructor training, obsolete training equipment and lack of instructional materials are some of the factors that combine to reduce the effectiveness of training in meeting the required knowledge and skill objectives. Due to the fact that the institutions are inadequately resourced, the education and training remain theoretical and the graduates are not considered more skilled than their academic counterparts by the labor market (Audu, Aede,

Yusri, and Muhammad, 2013). Buttressing this view, Uzoagulu (1993) in Audu, Aede, Yusri, and Muhammad (2013), asserted that where equipment and tools are not functional or adequately provided, technical training programs will suffer and will lead to the production of highly unskilled personnel who are unemployable and unproductive.

According to Ayomike, Okwelle and Okeke (2013) the challenges to the attainment of TVET goals in vocational institutions in Nigeria include: poor supervision of vocational technical education programmes, poor provision of instructional materials to the relevant institutions, obsolete or no facilities in the relevant institutions, poor funding of the programme, inadequate curriculum content for TVET programme, poor welfare packages for vocational technical education educators, lack of training and retraining of the technical education teachers and instructors, lack of incentives/motivation to the teachers, and politicization of employment of staff especially the head of vocational institutions.

In the same vein Dasmani (2012) in Audu, Aede, Yusri, and Muhammad (2013), reported inadequate instructional materials, large number of students in the class, insufficient training facilities, lack of collaboration with the local industries for hands-on-experience for both trainers and trainees lead to ineffective and inefficient training of students while undue emphasis is placed on passing examination. Also, The National Board for Technical Education (NBTE, 2011) in Igberadja (2015), reported that the challenges of TVET sector include; low societal recognition, which translate to low enrolment and inadequate skilled workforce, obsolete instructional facility, inadequate funding, poor staffing, poor linkages with industry and general deficiency in quality. In addition, evaluation in all sectors of education tends to be by conventional examinations, which generally does not factor in practical techniques in the industry. This inadequacy in preparation for the labor market brought

workplace challenges to the TVET graduates (Audu, Aede, Yusri, & Muhammad, 2013). Consequently, the effect of all these challenges is that training of the students becomes grossly impeded. They may end up not acquiring adequate skills needed for getting and sustaining employment in the relevant labour market (Ogbunaya & Ekereobong, 2015). This pathetic condition according to Audu, Aede, Yusri, and Muhammad (2013), needs to be reverted in order to meet the goals of TVET as stipulated by the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) in her National Policy on Education. Therefore government and stakeholder need to work collectively to make TVET work for job creation and wealth generation.

### ***The Role of Stakeholders in Making TVET Work for Job Creation and Wealth Generation***

Technical vocational education is recognized as that aspect of education which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge that will enable an individual to secure employment in a particular occupation for sustainable livelihood. These skills cannot be acquired in a vacuum but rather in a well established and functional workshop with the right tools, equipment and machines for effective implementation of TVET programme. Consequently, the desire to produce competent graduates of TVET programmes can be achieved when the facilities in TVET institutions are relevant and adequate for the programmes as demanded by the curriculum of the programmes (Audu, Aede, Yusri, and Muhammad, 2013).

The nature of the relationship between education and the economy has always been contentious, but not so in the case of technical and vocational education and training (TVET). Here the general maxim is that the closer the relation between TVET institutions and actual workplace practices, the greater the relevance of TVET curricula and the better the chances of TVET graduates of becoming employable. This assumption has

had a significant impact on considerations about the nature of knowledge transmitted in TVET curricula, as well as on the qualifications required of TVET lecturers, instructors and trainers (Jeanne, 2013). Based on this assumption of Jeanne, the researcher believed that where there are no linkages between the labour market/industries and TVET institutions, as well as qualified TVET professionals, adequate training facilities, and infrastructures, the outcome of the programme will be ineffective, thereby producing TVET graduates that are deficient in employable skills.

It is on this premises that this paper argued that embracing TVET alone cannot do the magic of creating job and generating wealth for sustainable livelihood, contrary to the common views of other Nigerians. However, TVET can only create jobs and generate wealth if giving the required attention by government and stakeholders in the direction of implementation of TVET curriculum at all levels through the provision of the required human and material resources for effective implementation of TVET programmes.

Amaechi (2013) in Ogbunaya & Ekereobong (2015), suggested the following as strategies for repositioning TVET in Nigeria: improvement of instructional and infrastructural resources in TVET institutions, regular capacity building and training workshops for teachers of TVET; increased funding for TVET institutions for procurement of equipment and more facilities for better learning; better synergy between TVET institutions and industry through exchange programmes; genuine political will by government and education policy makers; improving the conditions of service and regular motivation for TVET teachers and instructors; lastly, regular sensitization to improve the public's poor perception of TVET as desirable course option instead of tagging it as inferior course option.

Similarly, Ayonmike, Okwelle and Okeke (2013) listed the following as possible strategies for

repositioning TVET in Nigerian tertiary institution: adequate funding of TVET programmes, training and retraining of TVET teachers and instructors, adequate provision of required TVET infrastructures and facilities, adequate internal and external supervision, public private partnership, adequate planning and implementation of TVET programmes by government, adequate provision of instructional materials and adequate provision of scholarship/grants for TVET teachers/instructors.

The United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) noted that revitalizing this sector is among the ways to improve economic opportunities for the youths (Okoye & Arimonu, 2016). The question now is, how can TVET sector be revived in this current economic state of the Nigeria? Government alone cannot revive the TVET sector, therefore there is need to partner with public sector and industries through 'Public Private Partnerships' (PPPs). According to Ayonmike, Igberadja, Igberaharha, and Okeke (2015), PPPs between technical vocational education and training (TVET) institutions and industries is simply the coming together of TVET institutions and industries to achieve goals and objectives of common interest as contained in the partnership agreement duly formulated and signed by both parties. This type of partnership is beneficial with TVET institutions, TVET personnel, TVET students, partner communities, industries, and the general public. Also, in this form of partnership the industries can use TVET institutions and personnel for training and retraining of their staff. Also, TVET institutions can send their staff to the industries for training and acquisition of occupational skills as well. Furthermore, the industries can provide training materials for TVET institutions in order to produce competent and employable TVET graduates that will be functional when the graduates are eventually employed in industries.

It becomes necessary to foster PPPs between TVET institutions and industries in Nigeria. If TVET is to be meaningful and successful in creating jobs and generating wealth in Nigeria for sustainable livelihood and economic prosperity, then relationships should be established between TVET institutions and industries to partner (Ayonmike, Igberadja, Igberaharha, & Okeke, 2015).

## CONCLUSION

It is absolutely true that TVET is a viable tool for job creation, wealth generation, and sustainable livelihood. But in Nigeria, TVET cannot yield the desired job creation, wealth generation, and sustainable livelihood plans due to the way and manner of administration and implementation of TVET programmes in vocational institutions in Nigeria. For example, out of 122 universities in Nigeria, only 21 universities have TVET accredited programmes, also, out of 83 colleges of education, only 10 are colleges of education (technical). As well, we have just 110 technical colleges in Nigeria which are located in 110 Local Government Areas (Lgas) out of 774 Lgas. In addition, the vocational institutions in Nigeria are faced with numerous challenges ranging from inadequate human and material resources for effective implementation of TVET. In a situation like this, TVET will neither create jobs nor generate wealth, except urgent steps is taken in the direction of revitalizing TVET by proper administration and implementation of TVET programmes through the provision of the required infrastructural facilities, human and material resources, and proper funding. In addition, more technical colleges should be sited in the remaining Lgas and all the universities in Nigeria should have TVET accredited programmes.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In addressing the issue of job creation and wealth generation through TVET, the following recommendations were suggested to put TVET on the right track to make it work as a viable tool for job creation, wealth generation, and sustainable livelihood.

- ❖ Government and TVET stakeholders should work collectively to revitalize TVET at all level.
- ❖ Government should establish at least one technical college in every local government areas of the federation.
- ❖ Private investors should invest on TVET by establishing private technical colleges since government alone can implement TVET.
- ❖ Government and TVET stakeholders should review TVET curriculum to address the areas of the nation needs at the moment.
- ❖ Government should make sure that all the universities in Nigeria should have accredited TVET programme running.
- ❖ Government should introduce a policy that addresses school to work/practice scheme for all TVET graduates.

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